

150 years of faith

St. Titus Parish in Titusville celebrates anniversary, page 3.



FaithLife

Saints alive

Religious education programs mark All Saints' Day, page 4.



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BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

November 18, 2012

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



Christ the King St. Francis Xavier

- Nov. 21 Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Nov. 22 St. Cecilia
- Nov. 23 St. Clement I, St. Columban, Blessed Miguel Agustin Pro
- Nov. 24 St. Andrew Dung-Lac and companions
- Nov. 25 Christ the King
- Nov. 30 St. Andrew
- Dec. 3 St. Francis Xavier
- Dec. 4 St. John Damascene
- Dec. 6 St. Nicholas
- Dec. 7 St. Ambrose
- Dec. 8 Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (holy day of obligation)

Thanksgiving Day - Nov. 22

Thank you, Father, for having created us and given us to each other in the human family. Thank you for being with us in all our joys and sorrows, for your comfort in our sadness, your companionship in our loneliness. Thank you for yesterday, today, tomorrow and for the whole of our lives. Thank you for friends, for health and for grace. May we live this and every day conscious of all that has been given to us.



— From "The Catholic Prayer Book," compiled by Msgr. Michael Buckley

Advent begins Dec. 2

Beginning the church's liturgical year, Advent (meaning, "ad-venio in Latin or "to come to") is the season leading up to the celebration of Christmas. The Advent season is a time of preparation that directs our hearts and minds to Christ's second coming at the end of time and also to the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas. Advent devotions remind us of the meaning of the season. Special Advent devotions include the lighting of the Advent wreath; the Advent calendar which helps remind us of the season with daily thoughts and activities; Advent prayers that prepare us spiritually for the birth of Jesus Christ. — United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Dec. 8 (holy day of obligation)

The solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is the patronal feast day of the United States of America.

Through the centuries the church has become ever more aware that Mary, "full of grace" through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Pope Pius IX proclaimed in 1854:



The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin. — Catechism of the Catholic Church, Nos. 491-492

Retirement 'a gift and a challenge' for Bishop Trautman

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

ERIE — When asked about his retirement, the Most Rev. Donald Trautman has been quoting St. John the Baptist—"He must increase; I must decrease" from John 3:30.

The "he" to whom Bishop Trautman is referring is the Most Rev. Lawrence Persico, who was ordained Oct. 1 as the 10th bishop of the Diocese of Erie.

"Most of my co-workers know I was a hands-on bishop," Bishop Trautman said. "It is a whole new life when you are no longer hands-on, but you have a new dimension of your ministry. Retirement for a bishop requires a period of adjustment."

He likened his retiring from being a bishop for 27 years—22 years as the shepherd of the Diocese of Erie—to "standing under a waterfall that suddenly stops."

But his ministry hasn't stopped. He recalls Psalm 92:15—"They shall bear fruit even in old age."

"That's my goal: to bear fruit in old age," he said. "Retirement for me has been a gift and a challenge. Luckily I have great support in the diocese, my brother priests and others to make this adjustment period."

On Sept. 30, Bishop Trautman presided and preached during evening prayer the day before Bishop Persico's ordination. The poignant moment was not lost on the faithful present at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie, with many realizing it was the final time Bishop Trautman would preside from the bishop's chair.

During his homily, his voice was breaking, not with emotion but due to laryngitis. When it came time to for him to deliver a welcome Oct. 1 during the ordination Mass, his voice was nearly gone.

"That's never happened to me before," Bishop Trautman said. "I've never had any trouble speaking, certainly not at any key moment. It was an act of humility. I think the Lord was humbling me."

He cited being drained and tired from all the preparation



Photo by Tim Robbach

Bishop Donald Trautman processes down the main aisle Sept. 30 at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie following evening prayer. The service, a day before the ordination of Bishop Lawrence Persico, marked the final time Bishop Trautman would preside from the bishop's chair in his 22 years as shepherd of the Diocese of Erie.

for Bishop Persico's arrival as possible contributors to his condition.

Msgr. Robert Smith, vicar general of the diocese, gave most of the ordination Mass welcome. However, Bishop Trautman, in a hoarse wis-

per, finished his remarks.

When he was finished, the faithful gave him a special moment. He received a lengthy standing ovation from bishops, priests, religious and laity that lasted for a minute-and-a-half.

"People were very kind," he said. "I'm very grateful to the people for their applause. It certainly touched my heart. I appreciate sincerely and deeply the applause of our

See RETIREMENT, page 2

SHARE IN THE CARE

Retirement Fund for Religious collection Dec. 8-9

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

For more than 60 years, Sister Irene Warchol, OSB, would rise at 4 o'clock every morning and head to the kitchen at Mount St. Benedict Monastery to bake bread.

"It was a labor of love," said Sister Irene, a Benedictine Sister of Erie.

She would bake many kinds—white bread, sweet potato, chocolate zucchini, raisin kuchen and hobo, among others—for her religious community, friends and family. She began selling bread to the community at large to support the ministries of her religious community.

"With the breaking of bread, we form friendships," Sister Irene said. "We find Christ in the breaking of the bread."

She entered the community 64 years ago with the caveat that she didn't want to teach, she said. She soon found herself in the kitchen

as cook and food service manager for the monastery. In the '80s, she went strictly into baking.

"It was good therapy because I have arthritis in my hands," she said.

It was also a good time for prayer. Alone in the kitchen in the early morning hours, Sister Irene said the quiet atmosphere helped her pray and meditate.

The community prays together three times each day. Sister Irene would find time to break from her bread making to join her sisters in the chapel.

At age 88, Sister Irene has retired from baking. The loss of most of the sight in her left eye, difficulty hearing and chronic aches and pains forced her to hang up her apron for good in January.

"I'm retired but not because I wanted to," she said. "The Lord thought it was time."

Now her ministry is prayer. She prays with her commu-



Photo by Art Becker

Sister Irene Warchol, OSB, is pictured in the kitchen of Mount St. Benedict Monastery in 2011 baking bread. Sister Irene said she would typically make three batches of bread each morning—with 20 to 24 loaves in a batch.

nity each day, but most of her time is spent in private prayer. In the afternoon, she listens to retreat tapes from the monastery library.

"My prayer life is the most important thing," she said.

Sister Irene is one of many women religious in the diocese who are active in ministry beyond retirement age.

The 25th annual collection for the Retirement Fund for Religious will be taken up Dec. 8-9 in the Diocese of Erie. Sponsored by the National Religious Retirement Office (NRRO) in Wash-

ington, D.C., the appeal asks Catholics to "Share in the Care" of more than 34,000 women and men religious past age 70.

Last year, the faithful in the diocese contributed \$167,112.47 to this collection. In 2012, the Benedictine Sisters of Elk County, Benedictine Sisters of Erie and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania received a combined total of \$194,190.49 in financial assistance made possible by the national appeal.

Additionally, religious who

serve or have served in the diocese but whose communities are based elsewhere may also benefit from the Retirement Fund for Religious.

Contributions to the 2011 appeal totaled \$27.4 million and enabled the National Religious Retirement Office to distribute \$23 million in financial assistance to 453 religious communities. Additionally, nearly \$2.9 million was disbursed to assist religious communities with the greatest needs and to support ongoing education in retirement and elder-care delivery.

Fifty-four join highest degree of Knights of Columbus

ERIE — On Oct. 14, the Archbishop John Mark Gannon Assembly of the Knights of Columbus welcomed 54 new Sir Knights into its ranks after making the Fourth Degree exemplification at the Ambassador Center in Erie.

In addition to the Sir Knights joining the Archbishop John Mark Gannon Assembly, which encompasses the Diocese of Erie, 54 Sir Knights joined 15 other assemblies which were represented at the exemplification.

The Fourth Degree is the highest degree of the Knights of Columbus. The four degrees follow the principles of the order: charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism.



Pictured (left to right) are several new Sir Knights: Bruce Williams, St. Luke, Youngsville; Father John Neff, pastor of St. Luke, Youngsville; Mark Baur, St. Joseph, Warren; Father Rich Toohy, pastor of St. Joseph, Warren; and Rick Casey, St. Luke, Youngville.

are five priests, a deacon and a seminarian.

The Knights of Columbus is the world's largest Catholic fraternal service organization with membership open to Catholic men age 18 or older.

There are 65 Knights of Columbus councils located in the Diocese of Erie. Internationally, there are more

than 1.8 million members in 15,000 councils. Last year, in addition to raising and donating more than \$158 million to charitable needs and projects, Knights volunteered more than 70 million hours of their time to charitable causes.

For more information on the Knights of Columbus, visit www.kofc.org.

Helping Sandy victims



ERIE — Villa Maria Elementary School in Erie held a food and clothing drive Nov. 10-11 for victims of Hurricane Sandy. For several hours each day, students, parents, faculty and other volunteers collected items in the school's athletic center. The drive netted 125 boxes of goods including non-perishable food items, clothing, baby wipes, batteries, flashlights, hand warmers, toiletries and other items along with 25 cases of water and \$175 in donations. The items were sent to Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Trenton, N.J., to distribute to those in need.

Ebony Williams, a Villa Maria Academy graduate, is pictured sorting through new clothing donations. Williams and her four sons helped unload cars and sort through items.

IN THE U.S.

Cardinal congratulates Obama, urges he give priority to most vulnerable

Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, congratulated President Barack Obama on his re-election in a Nov. 7 letter. "The people of our country have again entrusted you with a great responsibility," Cardinal Dolan said. "The Catholic bishops of the United States offer our prayers that God will give you strength and wisdom to meet the difficult challenges that face America." Cardinal Dolan added the bishops pray that Obama will "help restore a sense of civility to the public order, so our public conversations may be imbued with respect and charity toward everyone." He said, "In particular, we pray that you will exercise your office to pursue the common good, especially in care of the most vulnerable among us, including the unborn, the poor and the immigrant. We will continue to stand in defense of life, marriage and our first, most cherished liberty, religious freedom." In the press release containing the text of the letter, the words "our first, most cherished liberty" were in italics. The bishops and the Obama administration have clashed for the past year on a federal Department of Health and Human Services mandate that would require most religious employers to provide contraceptive coverage to their employees, allowing for few exceptions.



Cardinal Timothy Dolan

Massachusetts defeats assisted suicide; California keeps death penalty

Massachusetts voters narrowly defeated a "death with dignity" measure, rejecting attempts to legalize assisted suicide. In California, an initiative to end the use of the death penalty was defeated as well in another close vote. The Massachusetts initiative, known as Question 2, was defeated by fewer than 39,000 votes — 1,395,227 to 1,356,899 — with the largest opposition rising in counties in the center of the state and those north and south of Boston. Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston was pleased with the outcome, saying the common good was served in the measure's defeat.

Four states approve laws permitting same-sex marriage

Voters in Maine, Maryland, Minnesota and Washington Nov. 6 approved ballot measures legalizing same-sex marriage. The Catholic bishops in each state had urged voters to uphold the traditional definition of marriage between one man and one woman and warned that religious liberties could be threatened by legalizing same-sex marriage. Maryland and Washington voters upheld laws permitting same-sex marriage that were passed earlier in the year by their legislatures and signed by their governors, but challenged in the referendum process. Minnesotans rejected a measure to ban same-sex marriage. Thirty other states have passed laws prohibiting such marriages. Previously six states and the District of Columbia had allowed same-sex marriages through legislative action and court rulings. Voters in Maine approved

a referendum authorizing same-sex marriage, a measure that bypassed courts and the Legislature, and reversed a 2009 referendum to ban such unions.

Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of San Francisco, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage, called for renewed efforts to strengthen and protect marriage and family life and expressed gratitude to marriage protection supporters.

AROUND THE WORLD

Pope sends \$1 million in aid for Syria, cardinal delegate to Lebanon

Instability and increasing violence in Syria have prompted Pope Benedict XVI to cancel the planned visit to the war-torn nation by a delegation of cardinals and bishops.

Instead, the pope announced Nov. 7, he has sent a smaller group to Lebanon to deliver a \$1 million donation and boost the church's humanitarian response to the crisis. The pope also appealed for dialogue to end the Syrian conflict, saying, "We have to do everything possible because one day it could be too late. I renew my invitation to the parties in conflict, and to all those who have the good of Syria at heart, to spare no effort in the search for peace and to pursue through dialogue the path to a just coexistence, in view of a suitable political solution of the conflict."



Children play soccer amid destroyed buildings in the streets of Homs, Syria.

Synod members propose ways to promote evangelization

Members of the Synod of Bishops recommended the Vatican establish a commission to monitor religious freedom, develop guidelines for training evangelizers and ensure there is a church in every diocese where confession is always available. At the end of the three-week World Synod of Bishops on New Evangelization, members of the gathering approved 58 propositions to give to the pope, although synod rules say the proposals are secret. Pope Benedict authorized their publication Oct. 27. The propositions were designed as recommendations for the pope to use in a post-synodal apostolic exhortation. Many of the propositions described current challenges and opportunities that the church faces in sharing the Gospel, strengthening the faith and reaching out to lapsed Catholics.



By the Way...

Bishop Lawrence Persico attended a United States Conference of Catholic Bishops meeting for the first time last week. Statements on preaching and ways that bishops can respond using new technologies to modern day challenges to their teaching authority were among the items considered during the USCCB's fall general meeting Nov. 12-15 in Baltimore. Look for coverage of the meeting in the next issue of *FaithLife*.



Jason Koshinski

Speaking of our next issue, we'll publish again Dec. 9 which is three weeks out, not the customary two. The additional week allows us to time the bishop's Christmas message to come out the Sunday prior to Christmas.

George Weigel, highly-acclaimed author and public policy expert, will be the featured speaker at People for Life's 35th annual Pro-Life Breakfast Jan. 19 in Erie. Weigel is a Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., and has written 20 books including "The Cube and the Cathedral: Europe, America and Politics Without God" and "Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II."

The breakfast, which is always well attended by parishes and groups throughout the diocese, will be held for the first time at the Bayfront Convention Center. For complete ticket information, visit www.peopleforlife.org.

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania will sponsor their 24th annual Thanksgiving dinner, which will be hosted by Gannon University, for anyone who is alone, in need or would otherwise not celebrate the holiday. The dinner will be served from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 22 at Gannon's Waldron Campus Center, 124 W. Seventh St. in Erie.

The meal is free and reservations are not required. Individuals who are homebound due to illness or age can have a dinner delivered. Arrangements for home delivery can be made by calling 814.836.4100 on Tuesday, Nov. 20 between 9-11 a.m.

Last year, close to 1,000 meals, including approximately 400 home deliveries, were served. The effort continues to grow and the collaboration with Gannon University provides a large space.

"Once again, it is our privilege to provide Thanksgiving dinners to those who otherwise would be unable to celebrate this uniquely American holiday," said Sister Mary Claire Kennedy, SSJ, social justice coordinator for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Monetary donations help cover the cost of the dinner and provide needed resources to local shelters, food banks and agencies throughout the year. Donations may be sent to the Thanksgiving Dinner Fund, Sisters of St. Joseph, 5031 West Ridge Road, Erie PA 16506-1249. For more information, call 814.836.4198.

Jason Koshinski is editor of *FaithLife*. Contact him at JKoshinski@ErieRCD.org or 814.824.1171.

Retirement 'a gift and a challenge' for Bishop Trautman

RETIREMENT, from page 1

people, especially coming from my co-workers. But I do send it heavenward to the Lord in gratitude for his help for me during the past years."

It has taken some time and effort for him to downsize. He has moved from the Episcopal residence in downtown Erie to a cottage home on the campus of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwest Pennsylvania and Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge in Millcreek Township. He will continue to keep an office at St. Mark Catholic Center in Erie. The sorting of books, papers and files is coming to an end, he said.

"I'm now well ensconced in my new residence and in my new ministry which I welcome with open arms," Bishop Trautman said.

Since moving into bishop emeritus status, he has been inundated with requests for keynote addresses, preaching and teaching opportunities and to celebrate the sacraments.

"I welcome those opportuni-



Photo by Tim Rohrbach

Bishop Donald Trautman observes Bishop Lawrence Persico signing an oath of fidelity during evening prayer Sept. 30 at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie. The service, held the day before Bishop Persico's ordination, marked the final time Bishop Trautman would preside as the acting bishop of the Diocese of Erie.

ties," he said. "I find myself pretty well booked, even up to March."

Many of the requests have been regarding Vatican II. The church's Year of Faith began Oct. 11, which was the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council.

a secretary to bishops and cardinals from all over the world during the Second Vatican Council. His work included helping bishops by translating speeches they wanted to give into Latin, the official language of the council. He would arrange microphones, pass out documents and collect ballots.

"It's truly an awesome memory to be privileged to be present there and now to see 50 years later the council still being implemented, fulfilled, unfulfilled," he said. "But to have been there and to witness it first-hand was a great grace and privilege that the Lord gave me."

He gave Vatican II talks Oct. 9 at St. Edward Parish in Richmond, Va., and Oct. 10 at St. Therese of Lisieux Parish in Chesapeake, Va. He was the keynote speaker Nov. 10 for a regional Year of Faith ministry conference—Vatican II—Fifty Years Later—sponsored by Notre Dame Parish in

Hermitage and St. Joseph Parish in Sharon.

Hermitage and St. Joseph Parish in Sharon.

"I have had many requests to speak outside the diocese on Vatican II and on Scripture, but I've really got to start saying no," Bishop Trautman said. "I don't want to say no to any of the priests in the diocese because they've been so good to me through the years."

His ministry in the diocese continues. He'll give an Advent retreat Dec. 9 at St. Eulalia Parish in Coudersport and participate in the Presence for Christmas program at St. George in Erie during Advent. He's already booked for a Lenten retreat at Our Lady of the Lake in Edinboro.

He said he might explore teaching and writing opportunities, as well.

"Right now it's been too hectic to finalize," he said. "I've turned down some offers from several of our area colleges and even outside our area. But I think I need

to just be retired for a bit. I need to just pace myself."

While the perpetual motion life that he's had in the diocese for 22 years has abruptly come to an end, he is comforted and energized by a new beginning.

"You set new goals," Bishop Trautman said. "Certainly I have more time for prayer and reflection, service to others. I'm interested in all that is happening in our diocese. I continue to support our new bishop and his co-workers and hope that we can have continuity between our two ministries."

He recalled the words of Gen. Douglas MacArthur in his speech to Congress in 1951—"Old soldiers never die; they just fade away."

"Retired bishops do not just fade away," Bishop Trautman said. "They just begin a new phase of their ministry. That's what I feel I'm about these days."

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Briefly

Reflection afternoon for women

PORT ALLEGANY — To celebrate the Year of Faith, the sisters of Catholic Rural Ministry of the Bradford Diocese will host a reflection afternoon for women on Sunday, Nov. 25 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Catholic Rural Ministry Center, 472 Sartwell Creek Road in Port Allegany.

The afternoon's program, "Women & Spirit: Catholic Sisters and Vatican II," will include a video, discussion, reflection and prayer.

To register, contact Sister Phyllis Schleicher, OSB, at 814.544.8017 or e-mail crm@zitomedia.net by Nov. 20.

Advent vigils at Mount St. Benedict

ERIE — The public is invited to attend the Advent vigils observed each year in the chapel at Mount St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 East Lake Road in Erie, each Saturday at 7 p.m.

As part of the vigil, the following sisters will offer Scripture reflections:

- Dec. 2 — Sister Margaret Zeller, OSB
- Dec. 9 — Sister Sallie Harrington, OSB
- Dec. 16 — Sister Audrey Berdis, OSB
- Dec. 23 — Sister Ann Hoffman, OSB

Advent retreat for women

COUDERSPORT — Bishop Emeritus Donald Trautman will be the guest speaker at an Advent retreat for women Sunday, Dec. 9 at St. Eulalia Parish, 6 E. Maple St. in Coudersport.

The retreat is from 12:15 to 6 p.m. Cost is \$15 which includes dinner, a holy hour, confession and Mass. The topic is "New Testament Women: Lessons of Faith and Hope for Contemporary Women."

To register, call 814.274.8646 or 814.642.2847

YCEA — Young Church Eucharistic Adoration

Young Church Eucharistic Adoration (YCEA) — (ya-kee-ah), is a new effort of the Diocese of Erie's Youth and Young Adult Ministry to bring the young people of the diocese together once a month in front of the Blessed Sacrament.

YCEA evenings include praise and worship music, exposition and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, a short reading and reflection, reading of youth intentions, benediction and fellowship.

December YCEA locations will be:

- Dec. 6 at Beloved Disciple in Grove City at 8 p.m. and St. Thomas the Apostle in Corry at 7 p.m.
- Dec. 12 at St. Peter Cathedral in Erie at 7 p.m.
- Dec. 19 at Elk County Catholic High School in St. Marys at 6 p.m., Our Lady of the Lake in Edinboro at 6 p.m. and St. Michael in Fryburg at 7 p.m.

If your parish is interested in holding a YCEA event, contact Kathleen Peterson in the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at 814.824.1218.

Year of Faith speaker series

Ed Curtin, assistant principal and chair of the Theology Department at Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie, will be the first speaker in a Vatican II lecture series celebrating the Year of Faith.

Curtin will present "Lumen Gentium: What Does It Mean to be a Person of Faith?" at two locations:

- Tuesday, Dec. 4 at 7 p.m. in the Yehl Room of Old Main at Gannon University in Erie
- Wednesday, Dec. 5 at 7 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Parish in Clarion.

The lecture will be followed by questions and discussion. These events are free and open to the public.

Curtin has a master's degree in pastoral studies/religious education and is an adjunct instructor at Mercyhurst University's Religious Studies Department.

The Vatican II lecture series is sponsored by Gannon University.

St. Titus Parish in Titusville celebrates 150 YEARS

TITUSVILLE — While Titusville and its surrounding area have seen its share of economic difficulties and job losses, the faith of the people has proved to be resilient.

"Despite the downsizing due to industry leaving the area, the faith commitment on the part of the people is very, very strong," said Father Walter Packard, who has served as pastor of St. Titus and St. Walburga parishes in Titusville and the mission church of Immaculate Conception in Maageetown since 2011.

The three faith communities, known as the Catholic Community of Titusville for the past 10 years or so, recently celebrated the 150th anniversary of St. Titus Parish.

A two-month celebration began Sept. 2 with the dedication of an historical marker recognizing the presence and ministry of the Sisters of Mercy in Titusville.

"We used that as the kickoff for our anniversary," Father Packard said. "It was a great celebration." Nearly 40 Sisters of Mercy, Mercy associates and others traveled from Erie to Titusville by bus for the unveiling and blessing of the marker. The sisters also visited St. Catherine's Cemetery where many Sisters of Mercy are laid to rest.

The parish also held a two-part



A statue of St. Titus, a disciple of St. Paul and early bishop of the church, greets parishioners and visitors in the vestibule of the church at St. Titus Parish in Titusville.

lecture series. In September, Dr. Michael Desantis, a professor from Gannon University in Erie, presented a discussion on the liturgical elements of the church including its architecture and worship space. In October, Father Justin Pino, diocesan archivist, gave a talk on the beginning of Catholicism in Crawford County leading up to the establishment of the parish.

On Sept. 23, the parish celebrated an outdoor Mass which was followed by a pig roast.



St. Titus Parish in Titusville concluded a year-long observance of its 100th anniversary with a Mass Oct. 21 celebrated by Bishop Lawrence Persico.



St. Titus Parish, Titusville

The anniversary culminated with a Mass with the Most Rev. Lawrence Persico Oct. 21, followed by a banquet at Cross Creek Resort in Titusville.

The parish has received proclamations from State Senator Bob Robbins and Titusville Mayor Esther Smith acknowledging its anniversary.

St. Titus Parish owes its existence largely to the discovery of oil in the area in 1859. Father Marc Antoine Delaroque became the first resident priest in Titusville in 1862. He was succeeded by Father Napoleon Mignault in 1864. The church at St. Titus was dedicated Jan. 6, 1865. The church has undergone a number of renovations and restorations but is still in use today.

DEATH NOTICE

Sister Maria O'Connor, RSM

Sister Maria O'Connor, RSM, 84, died November 11, 2012 at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Erie. She was in her 61st year of religious life.

Sister Maria was born August 28, 1928 in Pittsburgh, the daughter of the late Edward and M. Alethaire Spalding O'Connor and given the baptismal name Mary Alethaire.

Sister Maria entered the Sisters of Mercy from Resurrection Parish in Pittsburgh on August 15, 1951. At the time of her reception, she was given the name Sister Maria. She pronounced her final vows on July 30, 1957.

She received her bachelor's degree in history from Mercyhurst University in 1950, her master's in religious education from Catholic University of America in 1960 and a Ph.D. in theology from Saint Mary's School of

Theology, South Bend, Ind., in 1965. She also did post-graduate work in theology at Yale Divinity School in 1973-74.

Sister Maria taught at St. Joseph Academy in Titusville, St. Catherine High School in DuBois and Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie.

She served as a professor of theology at Mercyhurst University from 1958-76. From 1976-83 she was the director of Christian education at St. Teresa of Avila Parish in Union City. She served as co-occupational director for the Sisters of Mercy from 1965-69



Sister Maria O'Connor, RSM

and as a member of the leadership team of the Sisters of Mercy from 1969-73 and 1983-87.

Sister Maria was campus minister at Penn State Erie, the Behrend College from 1987-89 and then assumed the role of pastoral minister at St. George Parish in Erie from 1989 until 2008.

Sister Maria also served in the diocesan Marriage Tribunal from 1978-79. In her retirement years, she offered RCIA and baptismal preparation at St. Julia Parish in Erie and gave volunteer service to ref-

uges and immigrants in the City of Erie.

Sister Maria served on a number of boards including Avila Retreat Center (president); Board of Trustees for Mercyhurst University, Mercy Center for Women and the Multi-Cultural Community Resource Center.

In 2005 she was named Outstanding Religious of the Year by the Serra Club of Erie. She authored articles in *America*, *Theology Today*, *Spiritual Life* and *Sisters Today*.

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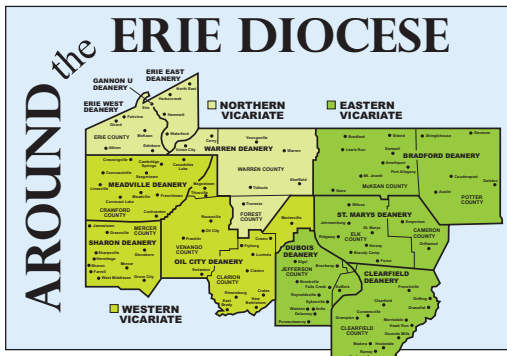
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AROUND the

ERIE DIOCESE

Religious education classes celebrate All Saints' Day

KANE — The elementary religious education teachers at St. Callistus Parish in Kane each dressed as their favorite saint Oct. 31, a day before All Saints' Day. Each class then presented the life of a saint.

Pictured left to right: Deborah Wensel (St. Scholastica), Ellen Perry (Blessed Mother Mary), Bonnie Drost (St. Ann), Marianne Rook (St. Anthony) and Mary Sewell (St. Francis).



DuBois Central Catholic's enrichment course shows math in action

DUBOIS — DuBois Central Catholic 6th grader Zach Edwards finds the diameter of his pumpkin during Math Enrichment, a course required for every 6th grader at Central. Edwards successfully found the answer by measuring his pumpkin's circumference and then dividing by pi (3.14).

After meeting the math activity requirements, all 6th grade students could then decorate their pumpkin and enjoy pumpkin snacks. According to instructor Starleen Young, the use of pumpkins helped reinforce a math concept in a unique and fun way.



OIL CITY — Each year, the students in the elementary grades of the Oil City Area Catholic Religious Education Program choose a saint to research. On the class day closest to All Saints Day, they come dressed as their chosen saint and share their saint's story with other classes.

Pictured left to right are students from Grade 1A: (top row) Mary Johnston (teacher, St. Mary), Christian Speece (St. Francis of Assisi), Jacob Teeter (St. George), Lincoln Kaufman (St. Francis of Assisi), Amelia Slater-Heil (St. Therese of Lisieux), Hudson Fratus (St. Thomas Aquinas), (bottom row) Nova



Andres (St. Rose of Lima), Meagan Warner (St. Francis of Assisi) and Kristina Crabtree (St. Elizabeth Ann Seton).

Confirmation at St. Callistus, Kane



KANE — The Most Rev. Lawrence Persico visited St. Callistus Parish in Kane Nov. 4 to administer the sacrament of confirmation to students. It was the second confirmation administered by Bishop Persico as bishop of the Diocese of Erie; the bishop confirmed stu-

dents at Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Harborcreek Oct. 28. Pictured left to right: (first row) Dawn Saquin, Nerissa Rich, Nicole Sicher, Kyla Hoag, Jessica Szymanski, (second row) Robert Grumley, (Holy Rosary, Johnsunberg) Jeannine Smith, Tyler

Ennis, Makayla Anderson, Alex Walker, Dominique O'Rourke, Bishop Lawrence Persico, Audrey Perry, Ryan Lorenzo, Shannon Kojancic, Austin Hoag, Elizabeth Carlson, Nathan Anthony and Father Philip Pinczewski, pastor of St. Callistus.

Knights of Columbus donate Bibles to OLMC religious education students

ERIE — The Jesus, Mary and Joseph Council No. 4071 of the Knights of Columbus recently made a \$350 donation to the religious education program at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish in Erie. The donation will cover the expense of new Bibles for students in grades 9-11, which includes the confirmation class.

"Hopefully the Bibles will enrich their lives on their journey into adulthood of the church and become a keepsake for years to come," said Grand Knight Mike Goodemote.

Pictured (left to right) are Grand Knight Mike Goodemote presenting a check to



Sue Berdis, religious education facilitator at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and Paul Caron, council treasurer.

Initiates commit to Benedictine oblate way of life



ERIE — On Oct. 27, an oblate commitment ceremony was celebrated at Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie. More than 280 women and men renewed their commitment to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie as oblates, with more than 100 able to be present. During the ceremony, which took place within the context of the community's Evening Prayer, the initiates and oblates expressed a desire to live out the charism statement and the Corporate Commitment of the sisters. This included 21 new oblates, 12 of whom were present for the ceremony.

After expressing their desire to

spend the upcoming year studying the Rule of Benedict and living the Gospel values of peace and justice more intensely, the initiates each received a copy of the Rule.

Pictured left to right are new oblates: (front row) Ann Chadowski, Berea, Ohio; Jim Chadowski, Berea, Ohio; Lisa Chimenti-Foster, Erie; Jan Fier, Madison, Ohio; Karen Groucutt, Erie; Paul Groucutt, Erie; (back row) Sister Ann Hoffman, OSB, new oblate co-director; Sister Marilyn Schauble, OSB, outgoing director; Alyssa Harpst, Erie; Pat Mc-

Carthy-Hohl, Tonawanda, N.Y.; Carrie Parsons, Erie; Hal Richardson, Fairview; Betty Schlickman, Michigan; Marie Wolf, Erie; Sister Audrey Steff, OSB, new oblate co-director; and Sister Anne Wambach, OSB, prioress.

Unable to be present: Terry Arnold, Painesville, Ohio; Nelda Brunner, Lima, Ohio; Sharon Frankart, Mason, Ohio; Tina Green, Madison, Ohio; Ruth Hamilton, Madison, Ohio; William Lynch, Lima, Ohio; Betsy Page, Kent, Ohio; Elizabeth Rechter, Laguna Beach, Calif.; and Katie Schott, Rochester, N.Y.

Sister Mercedes Miskovich, OSB, longtime pastoral minister at St. Mark, Emporium, retires

EMPORIUM — St. Mark Parish in Emporium recently held a brunch in honor of Sister Mercedes Miskovich, OSB, who is retiring after 22 years as its pastoral minister.

Throughout her years at St. Mark, she served with a number of priests including Father William Rice, Father Robert Rarick, Msgr. Charles Kaza and Father Paul Siebert, the current pastor.

Sister Mercedes recalled that one of the most special aspects of her ministry was her visits to local shut-ins and residents at Felt Manor Nursing Home in Emporium.

"Sister's First Friday visits were always accompanied by cleverly designed homemade gifts which the people looked forward to every month," Father Siebert said. "In addition to this, many people would stop in her office for advice or just to spend time because they enjoyed her so much."

A Benedictine Sister of Elk County, Sister Mercedes resides at St. Joseph Monastery in St. Marys.



Father Paul Siebert, pastor of St. Mark Parish in Emporium, poses with Sister Mercedes Miskovich, OSB, at her retirement brunch.

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