

Program promotes stewardship as way of holiness

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

Stewardship must be seen in a broad sense of evangelization and as a way of holiness and spirituality, says Fr. Daniel Mahan.

More than 250 people, including clergy and lay ministers, heard Fr. Mahan's message during the Erie Diocese's first-ever Stewardship Days Oct. 25-26 at Sacred Heart Parish, St. Marys, and St. Mark Catholic Center, Erie, respectively.

Fr. Mahan, a priest from St. Louis Parish in Batesville, Ind., is the author of *More Than Silver or Gold: Homilies of a Stewardship Priest*, published by Saint Catherine of Siena Press. A well-traveled speaker, he offered his reflections on the spirituality of stewardship in his keynote talk.

"When I'm at a parish on a weekend and announce that I'm here to talk about stewardship, sometimes I see the eyes roll because people think they know exactly what I'm going to talk about," Fr. Mahan says. "Stewardship, after all, they think

is a word that begins with the capital letter S with a line running right down the middle of it. Sometimes we can say one thing, and people will hear another."

Rather than thinking of it as just giving money, Fr. Mahan says true stewardship is giving and sharing of one's blessings in the form of time and talent. Stewardship should be thought of as a way of life, he said, that is deeply rooted in the person of Jesus Christ.

"Jesus who came to do not his own will but the will of his heavenly father; Jesus who came to serve, not to be served; Jesus who came to give everything that he had to give so that we might have life with him forever," he says. "Stewardship is a way of life deeply rooted in the person of Jesus, and as such we can call stewardship a way of holiness or spirituality. After all, if we are imitating Jesus and his self giving, we draw closer to him. We also draw closer to his bride, the church. We have a better sense of our mission in life. The Lord has given each of us



Fr. Daniel Mahan

something to do that no one else on earth can do."

Fr. Mahan referred to the U.S. bishops' 1992 pastoral on stewardship, which described good stewards as people who are grateful, responsible and generous with the blessings and gifts they have been given by God.

"Blessings need to be taken care of," he says. "Gifts need to be nurtured and developed lest they atrophy. Back in Indiana, as soon as a kid shows the slightest inclination of being able to dribble a basketball, there's a hoop

mounted on the garage. The same must be done with the gift of faith, as well. Good stewards are generous in sharing those gifts. God doesn't give us gifts so we can cling onto them tenaciously but rather so that we might share them with others. Passing on blessings we have received to others makes a return to the Lord with increase."

The practice of stewardship not only benefits individual stewards as they grow in holiness, but also results in there being more people involved in the life of the parish and who are committed to the work of the church.

"But we must not think of stewardship only as a means by which to bring benefits to the parish," Fr. Mahan says. "That would be a very narrow view. Stewardship is about the individual steward seeing the opportunity to make a difference in the world and doing so."

While lay Catholics may exercise the mission of the church as lectors, extraordinary ministers, catechists and parish

council members, the parish is not the primary place where this occurs, he said.

"Those are all good things. But that's not the primary place. The primary place is out in the world, beginning in the family and extending in wider circles to a place of work, school, marketplace, laws, government, arts, any place that the Catholic interacts with our society. That's where the lay Catholic is to exercise the mission. And in doing so, our troubled world will be changed, transformed by the power of stewardship."

Other Stewardship Days events included sessions on becoming a stewardship parish and practical ways to encourage gifts of time and talent, a clergy study session on the role of the pastor in stewardship and panel discussions. The program was sponsored by the Erie Diocese's Office of Stewardship and Development.

For more information on Fr. Mahan's book or to order, visit www.saintcatherineofsienapress.com.

5 new saints canonized

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — At a Mass celebrated Oct. 23 in St. Peter's Square, Pope Benedict XVI canonized five new saints.

The newly canonized were:

- **St. Jozef Bilczewski**, 1860-1923. During World War I, as Polish archbishop of Lviv in what is now Ukraine, he helped numerous Catholics, Orthodox and Jews.

- **St. Zygmunt Gorazdowski**, 1845-1920, also a Pole. As a priest in Lviv, he was known as the "priest of the homeless," founding two homes for the hungry and destitute. In 1884, he founded the Sisters of Mercy of St. Joseph.

- **St. Alberto Hurtado Cruchaga**, 1901-1952. After growing up in poverty in Chile, he became a Jesuit priest and began teaching and working with the poor. He founded the Hogar de Cristo movement, which provides vocational training and other services for young people.

- **St. Felice da Nicosia**, 1715-1787. As a Capuchin friar in Sicily, he often was humiliated for his illiteracy. He collected donations for the monastery and visited prisoners every Sunday.

- **St. Gaetano Catanoso**, 1879-1963. The Italian founder of the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Veronica, he was dedicated to the holy face of Christ. He founded an organization to help subsidize education for poor seminarians.

Synod closes with emphasis on eucharistic renewal

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Synod of Bishops closed with a strong call for eucharistic renewal, urging a deeper understanding of the Eucharist among the world's Catholics but no major changes in church rules on priestly celibacy or shared Communion.

Pope Benedict XVI, who presided over the three-week assembly, formally closed the synod Oct. 23 with a Mass in St. Peter's Square. He thanked the more than 250 bishops for their input and invited Catholics to contemplate the Eucharist as the key to revitalizing their faith. The Mass also officially closed the Year of the Eucharist.

Catholics should also understand that "no dichotomy is admissible between faith and life," he said.

On Oct. 22 the synod handed the pope a list of 50 propositions, or final recommendations, which acknowledged a priest shortage in some parts of the world but said eliminating priestly celibacy and ordaining married men were not the solution.

"I think it is significant that there has been a massive restatement of the tradition in the Latin Church of mandatory celibacy for priests," Australian Cardinal George Pell of Sydney told reporters.

In an unusual move, the pope immediately ordered the propo-

sitions published; normally they are considered confidential. He said he would use the bishops' recommendations in preparing his own document sometime in the future.

The synod also published a final message, which asked Catholics to allow the Eucharist to transform their lives and the life of the world.

The message expressed pastoral concern and sadness for the situation of Catholics who have divorced and remarried civilly without an annulment, but offered no relaxation in church rules that prohibit them from receiving Communion.

The status of divorced and remarried Catholics was one of several sensitive pastoral issues raised by bishops on the synod floor, leading some to expect the synod to call for revision of church policies. But in the end the assembly recommended no significant changes.

Instead, the synod:

- Praised the value of priestly celibacy and called for a greater push in vocations as the answer to the priest shortage. It said ordaining married men in the Latin church was "a road not to follow."

- Reaffirmed that shared Communion with non-Catholic Christians "is generally not possible" and said an "ecumenical concelebration" of the Eucharist would be even more objectionable.

Overall, the synod offered a



Parishes in the Erie Diocese held their own closing of the Year of the Eucharist services. Fr. Paul Seibert presides at an outdoor eucharistic procession Oct. 23 for St. Mark Parish, Emporium. More than 100 people attended the service.

strong endorsement of the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council, saying they had greatly benefited the church. Abuses have occurred in the past, but have substantially diminished today, it said.

Despite recent speculation over wider latitude for celebrating the pre-Vatican II Tridentine Mass, the synod's final documents did not even mention that possibility.

The synod encouraged promotion of eucharistic adoration, but stressed that the practice should be seen in relation to Mass.

To promote better Mass attendance, the bishops recommended better liturgies, strong preaching and improved education of Catholics in their understanding of the Eucharist.

They also emphasized that while the Eucharist is the center of Christian life not everyone has an automatic right to receive it at all times.

The synod's other recommendations included:

- Better emphasis on the missionary aspect of the Eucharist.

- Study and possible change in the order of the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist.

- Possible relocation in the liturgy of the sign of peace exchange.

- Reminding the faithful of the importance of genuflection or other gestures of adoration before the consecrated host.

- Better awareness of the Eucharist's connection with social justice issues, including ecological concerns.

News Briefs

U.S.

Vocations campaign hinges on inviting men to priesthood

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A new vocations campaign is being launched by the U.S. bishops with the idea that more men simply need to be invited to become priests by priests who are happy with their lives. Announced in Washington Oct. 14, the program, called Priestly Life and Vocation Summit: Fishers of Men, is based on having dioceses and religious orders convene priests to discuss their vocations, emphasizing the positive aspects, and then encouraging them to invite other men to consider following them. Father Edward Burns, director of the Secretariat for Vocations and Priestly Formation at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, cited a survey of the 2003 U.S. ordination class in which 78 percent of the men about to be ordained said a priest had invited them to consider the priesthood.

WORLD

In Poland, 10 married men begin studying for diaconate

WARSAW, Poland (CNS) — For the first time in Poland, 10 married men started training for the diaconate in mid-October. Deacons will help their bishops, evangelize in their workplaces and might find it easier to welcome "lukewarm or religiously frigid" Catholics, said Father Krzysztof Debiec, director of the newly established Permanent Deacons Formation Center in Torun. In an Oct. 19 interview with Poland's Catholic Information Agency, KAI, Father Debiec said that after a three-year course of study the deacons will be able to conduct baptisms, marriages and funerals, preach and distribute Communion. Single men, eligible at age 25, are required to take celibacy vows; married men, eligible at 35, must have written consent from their wives, he said. More than 30,000 permanent deacons minister within the worldwide church. About half of them serve in the United States.

Hong Kong bishop calls ordinations 'breakthrough'

ROME (CNS) — The recent ordinations of Chinese bishops with the explicit approval of both the Vatican and Beijing were "a breakthrough" in relations between the two sides, said a Hong Kong bishop. Although officially China and the Vatican have no diplomatic ties, the recent ordinations of at least two Chinese bishops represent signs that things "are moving," said Hong Kong Bishop Joseph Zen Zekun. Bishop Paul He Zeqing's ordination was the most recent; he was consecrated auxiliary bishop of Wanxian Oct. 18. According to AsiaNews, an Italian missionary news agency, Bishop He was the third bishop to have been consecrated with Vatican approval into the official or government-supported church in China in a public ceremony. The Wanxian bishop told people attending the ceremony that the ordination was taking place with the approval of the Vatican, the Rome-based news agency said Oct. 19. Bishop Zen, who was in Rome attending the Oct. 2-23 Synod of Bishops on the Eucharist, told Catholic News Service Oct. 21 that the last two ordinations have been unique in that the government did not pressure the church leaders to keep the Vatican's approval a secret, "so I think this is a breakthrough."

PEOPLE

In Polish TV interview, Pope Benedict talks of legacy of JPPII

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI said he does not plan to issue many new documents in his papacy, but instead will focus on assimilating the teachings of his predecessor, Pope John Paul II. The pope also said he hopes to visit Poland, the late pon-

tiff's homeland, sometime next June. He made the comments in an interview broadcast by Polish television Oct. 16, the 27th anniversary of Pope John Paul's election. Vatican Radio made a transcript of the interview available online. Pope Benedict spoke movingly of his continued affection for the late pope and said he was engaged in a "permanent dialogue" with him. "A man who goes to the Lord doesn't disappear. I believe that someone who goes to the Lord comes even closer to us," the pope said. "The pope is always close to me through his writings. I hear him and I see him speaking, so I can keep up a continuous dialogue with him," he said.

Former secretary says he expects late pope's beatification in June

WARSAW, Poland (CNS) — Pope John Paul II's former secretary has said he expects the late pontiff to be beatified in June, when Pope Benedict XVI is expected to make his first visit to Poland. "I hope it can happen as early as next year — a lot of people yearn for him to be proclaimed a saint straight off," said Archbishop Stanislaw Dziwisz of Krakow, who began serving as Pope John Paul's secretary in 1966, when the late pontiff was archbishop of Krakow. "No one doubts his sanctity, not only here in Krakow or in Poland. The whole world saw and knew him and has already canonized him in practice. The current beatification process serves to gain moral certainty." Archbishop Dziwisz said in an interview before John Paul II Day, celebrated Oct. 16 as a public holiday in the late pope's homeland. In an Oct. 16 interview with Italy's Avvenire daily, Archbishop Dziwisz said he personally knew of "many miraculous healings" through Pope John Paul's intercession and believed the pontiff's beatification awaited "only official confirmation" by his successor.

Pope Benedict's first encyclical to be released in December

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI has finished writing his first encyclical and is expected to release it in early December, Vatican sources said. The sources told Catholic News Service Oct. 20 that the encyclical was a 46-page spiritual meditation focusing in large part on "eros" (love) and "logos" (the word) and their relationship to the person of Christ. The pope worked on the encyclical during his summer stay at the papal residence outside Rome. The text was being translated into various languages, including English, the sources said. In two articles written before his election and published in a recent issue of the magazine Communio, Pope Benedict wrote about the unity of the word and love, as personified in Christ. He highlighted the importance of the personal encounter with Christ, which stirs up love, and said love of God helps define the correct idea of human autonomy. He also wrote that Christ as "logos made flesh" implied reconciliation between supernatural revelation and reason.

New U.S. ambassador to Vatican arrives in Rome

ROME (CNS) — The new U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, Francis Rooney, arrived in Rome Oct. 23, hoping to meet quickly with Pope Benedict XVI. The ambassador's job officially begins once he has presented his letters of credential to the pope. Arriving at the Rome airport with his wife, Kathleen, Rooney told reporters that "at the core" of the U.S.-Vatican diplomatic relations "lies a common vision and task — to promote and defend the dignity of every man, woman and child." "The United States is committed to the vigorous defense of human rights, the promotion of religious freedom and the advancement of dialogue and tolerance among people of different faiths and cultures," said Rooney, 51. The new ambassador said cooperative efforts between the U.S. and the Vatican have helped spread freedom, democracy and respect for human rights around the world, but "there is still much to be done to make our world a better place." The U.S. Senate confirmed Rooney's appointment as ambassador Oct. 7.

By the Way...



Jason Koshinskie

St. Mark Parish in Lawrence Park launched a new apostolic work last summer, becoming an affiliate of the **Angel Food Ministry**. According to Fr. Scott Katren, pastor, AFM is a non-profit, Christian, non-denominational organization headquartered in Georgia committed to providing people with quality, low-cost groceries. All are welcome to purchase \$25 units of food which are guaranteed to be worth at least \$50. Purchases made by families with more robust budgets help make the program possible for those who need to stretch their budgets. Nearly 1,000 families took advantage of the program at the end of October, a 500-percent growth since the first distribution in July. Watch for a feature on this exciting new program in the January/February 2006 issue of *Faith*.

The Office of Justice and Peace/Respect Life notes that a **support group for caregivers** has been formed in **Meadville**. The Christian, non-denominational support group meets at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of each month at **St. Brigid Church**, 967 Chancery Lane in Meadville. The meetings are free of charge; call Darlene at 814.724.6829 or St. Brigid Church at 814.336.4459 for more information.

Gannon University welcomed **296 freshmen from the Diocese of Erie** this fall. One-hundred-twenty-four (124) of these students identified themselves as members of one of the parishes in the diocese, including your parishioner(s) and are receiving the Gannon University Parish Grant of \$1,000 per year. Fifty-three (53) freshmen graduated from one of the seven Catholic high schools in the diocese, the second highest in five years. These students are also receiving the Gannon University High School Grant of \$1,000 per year. In total, Gannon awarded over \$1.8 million in financial aid and scholarship money directly from Gannon to this year's freshmen from the diocese.

Cardinal Adam Maida, archbishop of Detroit, recently issued a statement on the Oct. 24th death of **Rosa Parks**, whose act of civil disobedience in 1955 inspired the modern civil rights movement. She was 92. Parks' moment in history began in December 1955 when she refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man in Montgomery, Alabama.

"In her own simple way, Rosa Parks changed the history of our nation," Cardinal Maida said. "She forced us to recognize the dignity of every person. She was a prophet — a common instrument of God inviting us and challenging us to a new vision of solidarity, equality and justice."

Facing regular threats and having lost her department store job because of her activism, Parks moved from Alabama to Detroit in 1957.

The Mass celebrated Oct. 23 in St. Peter's Square brought together several threads that have tied together the **pontificates of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict**. The pope formally ended the Year of the Eucharist and the synod, both projects convened by his predecessor to refocus on the basic elements of the faith. He canonized five new saints and said they exemplified how the Eucharist was "the source of holiness and spiritual nourishment for our mission in the world." All the new saints' causes were advanced under Pope John Paul. And Pope Benedict celebrated World Mission Sunday, an event for which Pope John Paul wrote a message before his death, reminding Catholics of the sacrifice made by missionaries around the globe.

Jason Koshinskie is editor of *FaithLife*. Contact him at JKoshinskie@erieRCD.org or 814.824.1171.

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Bishops to deal with liturgy, lay ministry at fall meeting

WASHINGTON (CNS) — When the U.S. bishops meet this month, major items on their agenda will include decisions on a statement about lay ecclesial ministry, a new text of Scripture readings for Masses with children and a new statement calling for an end to the use of the death penalty in the United States.

The annual fall meeting of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops will be held in Washington Nov. 14-17.

This fall the conference plans to issue a major resource document on lay ecclesial ministry, a phenomenon of growing importance in the church. U.S. bishops will vote on the proposed document, *Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: Resource for Guiding Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry*. The introduction calls the document a "pastoral and theological reflection on the reality of lay ecclesial ministry," an "affirmation of those who serve in this way," and an attempt to pull together the current "best thinking and practice" in that field.

The proposed document discusses the appropriate human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation of those who seek to engage in lay ministerial leader-

ship in the church. It also addresses the role of lay ecclesial ministers in the church community, their relationship to the church's ordained leaders, guidelines and procedures for authorizing lay people to enter such roles and concerns that should be dealt with in the ministerial workplace.

If the proposed *Lectionary for Masses With Children* is adopted by the bishops and confirmed by the Holy See, it will replace the experimental children's Lectionary that has been in use since 1993. The Lectionary is the book of Scripture readings used at Mass. In the children's Lectionary many of the texts are shortened and some vocabulary is simplified.

Along with the new set of texts for use with children are proposals that would set stricter rules for its use. Where the current version describes the intended audience as "children of elementary grades," the proposed new version says it is meant for use with "children who have not yet entered preadolescence, that is, those 10 years old or younger."

The bishops will consider their first major statement on the death penalty in 25 years, calling on Catholics to take up the cause of ending the use of capital punishment. A draft proposed for the

meeting builds upon their 1980 statement that urged the abolition of capital punishment. Since then, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life)* of 1995 and a series of statements by the late pope have clarified church teaching on the subject. Although the catechism and the other documents acknowledge the state has a right to execute some dangerous criminals to protect the general public, they emphasize that in modern society the situations in which that is necessary are so rare as to be essentially nonexistent.

Among other items on the agenda are a proposal to make May 22 an annual National Day of Prayer for Mariners and People of the Sea and proposed revisions in guidelines for the support of retired bishops.

The bishops will also be asked to approve the writing of a document on the relationship between the sacrament of confirmation and stewardship and a project to revise *Fulfilled in Your Hearing*, a guide and resource on preaching. If those projects are approved, the documents will be brought back to the bishops for a vote at a later meeting.

Mercy Center for Women holds wreath sale

The Mercy Center for Women is currently holding its annual wreath sale.

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Grants have been awarded, in urban and rural areas, to organizations working to achieve living wages, affordable housing, accessible health care, better-quality schools and other services that make up the safety net of life.

Most Catholic parishes will take up the annual collection in support of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development on the weekend of Nov. 19-20.

For more information on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, visit www.povertyusa.org and www.usccb.org/cchd.

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SBA alumnae present 'Gift of Peace' Nov. 25

St. Benedict Academy Alumnae Association members together with the Benedictine Sisters will present a concert, "Gift of Peace," at downtown Erie's historic Warner Theatre at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 25. The concert will be an evening of enjoyable holiday music in anticipation of the Christmas season, directed by Sr. Marilyn Schauble with Sr. Charlotte Anne Zalot on keyboard.

The concert is part of the alumnae association's first-ever Homecoming Weekend, "Alive in '05," as the women join the sisters in celebration of 150 years of Benedictine presence in the Diocese of Erie.

More than 140 alumnae and sisters have been practicing weekly for the concert since April. Each Monday evening they gather at Mount St. Benedict Monastery, find their nametags from the specially designed rack and take a place in their voice section of the chapel. Sr. Marilyn begins

with voice warm-up drills and then the rehearsal is underway.

"The practices are truly a spiritual experience for me," says Sr. Marilyn, who holds advanced degrees in liturgical music with a concentration in voice, and theology, with a concentration in monastic studies. "We are literally praying together through music. The sound, the enthusiasm, the dedication, the unity of these women contribute to the making of beautiful music."

In addition to the choral event, the homecoming weekend includes the annual alumnae Christmas party on Nov. 26 and Sunday Liturgy followed by a reception at the monastery on Nov. 27. "As former students of St. Benedict Academy, we gladly join in the sisters' 150th anniversary year celebration," says Barbara Hamill Brown, class of '67 and SBA alumnae association president. "We are grateful for the education we received and



Sr. Marilyn Schauble conducts concert practice at Mount St. Benedict, Erie.

the relationship we built with the sisters and with one another at the academy."

Although St. Benedict's Academy ceased operations as a high school in 1988 after almost 120 years of meeting the needs of young women, the SBA

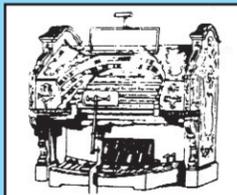
Alumnae Association is alive and strong in 2005. Regular social gatherings throughout the year are well attended and the association continues to support the Benedictine community and its ministries through an annual appeal.

Tickets for the Nov. 25 *Gift of Peace* concert may be purchased at the Erie Civic Center box office, Ticketmaster, Summit Giant Eagle, Harborcreek Giant Eagle and Kaufmann's at the Millcreek Mall. Tickets are \$16 and all seating is reserved.

For more information, contact Ann Cornstock (class of '61), director of alumnae relations at 814.899.0614 ext. 573 or e-mail at sbaalum@mtstbenedict.org.

For more information on the Benedictine Sisters' 150-year jubilee celebration, visit www.ErieBenedictines.org.

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FaithLife

November 6, 2005

**Stewardship as a way
of holiness**

**U.S. bishops to discuss
liturgy, lay ministry**

At Vatican Mass, pope:

- Canonizes five new saints
- Closes the Year of the Eucharist
- Ends World Synod of Bishops

Pilgrims attend the canonization Mass of five new saints in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Oct. 23. Celebrating the Mass and closing the Year of the Eucharist, Pope Benedict XVI said the new saints, whose banners hang from the basilica, exemplified the role of the Eucharist as "the source of holiness and spiritual nourishment."