

Cardinal John Foley dies

Former Vatican communications chief battled leukemia, page 2.



FaithLife

Top stories of 2011

Roman Missal, pope named top story, newsmaker of the year, page 2.



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BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

December 25, 2011

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton



St. John Neumann

Dec. 26	St. Stephen
Dec. 27	St. John
Dec. 28	Holy Innocents
Dec. 29	St. Thomas Becket
Dec. 30	Holy Family
Dec. 31	St. Sylvester I
Jan. 1	Mary, Mother of God
Jan. 2	Ss. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen
Jan. 3	Most Holy Name of Jesus
Jan. 4	St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
Jan. 5	St. John Neumann
Jan. 6	St. André Bessette
Jan. 7	St. Raymond of Peñafort
Jan. 8	Epiphany of the Lord
Jan. 9	Baptism of the Lord
Jan. 13	St. Hilary

National Migration Week – Jan. 8-14



Catholics are called to offer hospitality to those in need during National Migration Week, observed in dioceses around the country Jan. 8-14. This year's theme of "Welcoming Christ in the Migrant" is depicted by the disciples welcoming a stranger on the road to Emmaus.

Resources for National Migration Week can be found on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website at www.usccb.org.

Additionally, the U.S. bishops continue to encourage advocacy efforts by the Catholic community on comprehensive immigration reform. For more information, visit the Justice for Immigrants Campaign at www.justiceforimmigrants.org.

National Vocation Awareness Week – Jan. 9-14

The Catholic Church in the United States will celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week (NVAW), Jan. 9-14. The celebration heralds a week dedicated to promoting vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and consecrated life through prayer and education.

This distinctive week gives Catholics an opportunity to renew prayers and support for those who are considering one of these particular vocations.

Visit the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Facebook page (www.facebook.com/usccb) during the week to read the stories of clergy and religious. View reflections under the Vocation Retreat tab where each day a Scripture passage, reflection and prayer will be posted.

Resources such as prayer cards, Holy Hour materials, prayers of the faithful and quotes are available on the USCCB vocations webpage at www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations.

2012 directory

The 2012 Directory of the Catholic Diocese of Erie contains updated information on diocesan administration, parishes, clergy, agencies and groups, schools, religious and more.

Copies are \$22 each. Download an order form at www.ErieRCD.org or call the Office of Communications at 814.824.1166.



Christmas is the joyful reminder that God has not left us alone

A Christmas message from Bishop Donald Trautman

Everywhere you look this Christmas, you see bright, colorful lights. On every street you see outdoor lights, house after house draped in shining glimmering lights, Christmas decorations glowing in the dark, windows and doors and porches all decked out with flickering lights, crèches and Christmas trees and wreaths—Christmas decorations inside and out—all beaming with sparkling lights.

Why all these lights? What prompts people to decorate and light up their homes? On the surface people would answer, it's the season of joy and

love, the season of gift-giving and friendship shared. But below the surface there is a deeper reason. All those bright shining lights recall that Jesus, the savior, came into a darkened world. He came as the light of the world.

Why does he come? Scripture tells us: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Sin had plunged the world into darkness. People could not see. They had lost their

way. But then in the silence of a Bethlehem night, Jesus came as the light of the world. He pierced straight through the darkened world into the hearts of people. His rays of love and new life spread throughout the world and down through 21 centuries.

We profess in our creed that Jesus is "light from light." At times we have turned Jesus, the light of the world, on and off, and yet darkness does not overcome him. We even tried to extinguish that light; we tried to snuff it out on Calvary. Our sins brought about the crucifix-

ion of Jesus but the light did not go out. On Easter morning the light shined brighter than ever, and 21 centuries later the light continues to shine in the darkness, continues to show us the way. Born in the darkness of a Bethlehem night, he comes as our savior. His death and resurrection bring us a radiant new day.

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah foretold: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light." We are those people. We see Christ living and risen in the Eucharist.

See CHRISTMAS, page 3

Despite setback, bishop encounters pope during 'ad limina'

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

VATICAN CITY – Despite a rough start to his trip, Bishop Donald Trautman concluded his "ad limina" visit to Rome by meeting with Pope Benedict XVI and celebrating Mass at one of the Eternal City's major basilicas.

Bishop Trautman left Erie Nov. 29 and planned to return Dec. 10. However, upon his arrival, the bishop fell ill and was admitted to a Rome clinic for testing and observation. There he spent several days and was treated for dehydration and an infection. He was released Dec. 4.

"The Lord had his reasons for giving me this little setback there," Bishop Trautman said.

Bishop Trautman was making his "ad limina" visit with the United States bishops from Region III, which includes the dioceses of Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

Ad limina is short for "ad limina apostolorum" in Latin, which means "to the thresholds of the apostles."

Even though he did not

feel well enough to participate in the Dec. 1 meeting of the Pennsylvania bishops with Pope Benedict XVI, he joined the contingent of bishops from New Jersey who met with the Holy Father on Dec. 5.

"I was very surprised that he remembered me right away," Bishop Trautman said of the pope. "When they introduced me as Bishop Trautman from the Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania, he said 'Oh, I know him.' He spoke to me and said, 'this bishop has studied in Innsbruck, Austria, under Karl Rahner,' I said, 'Yes, Holy Father.' He said, 'You met me before.' I said, 'Yes, I have.'"

The meeting Pope Benedict XVI recalled was when he, the former Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, was the prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Bishop Trautman was representing the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on liturgical matters.

"It was a joyful conversation," Bishop Trautman said. "I was amazed that with all that's on his mind he would remember my background in Innsbruck, Austria, and remember my meeting with him



Photo courtesy of L'Osservatore Romano

Bishop Donald Trautman is greeted Dec. 5 by Pope Benedict XVI during the bishop's "ad limina" visit to Rome.

on liturgical matters."

The individual meeting lasted about five minutes, the bishop said. The pope met with each bishop individually before inviting them to sit in a circular arrangement for a group discussion. He opened up the conversation by giving each bishop a chance to talk on a topic of their choosing.

"It was a free dialogue back and forth," Bishop Trautman said. "(The pope) went to each bishop, pointing to speak, and they could speak on whatever they wanted and he would dialogue with them about what they brought up. It turned out very well. We connected."

Because of the seating ar-

rangement, Bishop Trautman said he spoke last. The previous bishops talked about their dioceses' efforts to evangelize. Several of them will be beginning Catholics Come Home, an outreach program using TV spots to invite Catholics back to the church.

See AD LIMINA, page 3

Knights of Columbus build confessionals for mall chapel

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

ERIE – While Bishop Donald Trautman has yet to have his resignation letter accepted by Pope Benedict XVI for reasons of age, the bishop has already received a retirement gift from the Knights of Columbus.

The Knights recently completed a renovation project at the Roman Catholic Chapel at Millcreek Mall in Erie, which included the construction of two confessionals.

"We did it for the bishop, for the service he's given to the church and the diocese," said Steve Cash, former state master of the Knights of Columbus who helped coordinate the project. "We did it for his retirement, really."

The idea for a mall chapel came from Bishop Trautman. On Ash Wednesday in 2008, the diocese opened the chapel—located just outside the concourse entrance to Bon Ton, one of the mall's anchor stores—primarily for hearing confessions.

The chapel is open Monday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Priests are available to hear confessions on Wednesday from 2 to 4 p.m. and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

An empty storefront was transformed into a chapel with a welcoming area, a tabernacle, a reading area and confessionals. The confessionals themselves were reconfigured office partitions that offered both traditional and face-to-face options for penitents.

The Greater Erie Chapter and the Central West Region of the Knights of Columbus decided to take on building two confessionals, Cash said, adding that all the funds for the project were given by the Knights' membership as a private or council donation.

Nine Knights and a number of their wives worked on the labor and management side of the project, Cash said. He singled out two members whom he said went over and above what was asked of them: Mark Urban Sr. offered



Members of the Knights of Columbus pose Dec. 14 in front of their newly built confessionals at the Roman Catholic Chapel at Millcreek Mall in Erie. Pictured left to

right are Kenneth Rettger Sr., Father Jason Feigh, Steve Cash and Mark Urban Sr. Father Feigh was hearing confessions at the chapel that afternoon.

his workshop to pre-assemble the walls of the confessionals and Kenneth Rettger Sr. spent several hours daily finishing construction in the chapel.

Most of the work was done at night, Cash said, as not to disturb chapel visitors.

"The guys working were just fantastic," he said.

The confessionals are free-standing structures which nearly touch the ceiling. They include carpeted walls and offer both traditional and face-to-face opportunities for

confession. One of the confessionals is handicapped accessible.

"The diocese is very indebted to our brother Knights who have truly transformed

See MALL CHAPEL, page 3

IN THE U.S.

Changes in parishes coming for Detroit

Nine metro Detroit parishes will close over the next five years if Archbishop Allen Vigneron accepts the recommendations a mostly lay advisory board approved Nov. 30. Another 60 parishes would be merged down to 21 if the recommendations of Detroit's Archdiocesan Pastoral Council are accepted as presented. Archbishop Vigneron said he expects to announce a revised pastoral plan for the Archdiocese of Detroit by mid-February, after reviewing the recommendations and considering the input of other consultative bodies. Altogether, the changes would reduce to 222 — down from 270 — the number of parishes in the six counties of the archdiocese. The archbishop emphasized that parish reorganization was only one aspect of a pastoral plan intended "to move the life of the church forward." It is necessary to reorganize the parishes so the archdiocese will be in a better "position to bring people back to the practice of the faith and also offer the graces of church membership to new people."

Sainthood causes advance for blessed Marianne Cope, Kateri Tekakwitha

Pope Benedict XVI advanced the sainthood causes Dec. 19 of Blessed Marianne Cope of Molokai and Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha. A date has not been set for the canonization ceremonies. Blessed Marianne, who worked as a teacher and hospital administrator in New York, spent the last 30 years of her life ministering on the Hawaiian island of Molokai to those with leprosy. She died on the island in 1918 at age 80. Blessed Kateri, known as the Lily of the Mohawks, was born to a Christian Algonquin mother and a Mohawk father in 1656 in upstate New York along the Hudson River. She was baptized by a Jesuit missionary in 1676 when she was 20, and she died in Canada four years later.



Blessed Marianne Cope
Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha

You are not alone, Hispanic bishops tell undocumented immigrants

An emotional pastoral letter to immigrants from the U.S. Hispanic and Latino Catholic bishops offers love, encouragement, welcome, sympathy and assurance that "you are not alone or forgotten."
"We recognize that every human being, authorized or not, is an image of God and therefore possesses infinite value and dignity," begins the strongly worded letter released on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Dec. 12. "We open our arms and hearts to you, and we receive you as members of our Catholic family. As pastors, we direct these words to you from the depths of our heart. We urge you not to

despair," said the letter signed by 33 bishops. "Keep faith in Jesus the migrant who continues to walk beside you. Have faith in Our Lady of Guadalupe, who constantly repeats to us the words she spoke to St. Juan Diego, 'Am I, who am your mother, not here?'"

AROUND THE WORLD

Cuban bishops announce Marian jubilee year, confirm papal visit

The Cuban bishops announced that 2012 would be a Marian jubilee year and that Pope Benedict XVI would come to Cuba as a "pilgrim of La Caridad," the popular name for the Virgin of Charity of El Cobre, the country's patroness. In a Dec. 8 pastoral letter, they declared a jubilee year from Jan. 7, 2012, through Jan. 6, 2013, and said Cubans need the joy of faith, the strength of Christian love and the light of hope that can come from "a reunion with our Christian roots" and with the "enthusiastic reception of the teachings of Jesus Christ." The bishops did not announce dates of the papal visit but said it would be part of national observances of the 400th anniversary of the discovery of Virgin of Charity of El Cobre, the small statue of Mary found floating in the Bay of Nipe, which came to be the country's most revered icon.



Virgin of Charity of El Cobre

PEOPLE OF FAITH

Cardinal John Foley, former Vatican communications chief, dies

U.S. Cardinal John Foley, who spent more than two decades leading the church's social communications council and later worked for the church in the Middle East, died Dec. 11 after a battle with leukemia. The cardinal, who had been residing at Villa St. Joseph, the home for retired Philadelphia archdiocesan priests, was 76. Cardinal Foley's media-friendly style and quick sense of humor shone in person and throughout the numerous speeches and homilies he delivered around the world. Last February he retired from his post as grand master of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, a chivalric organization dedicated to supporting the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and to responding to the needs of Catholics in the Holy Land.



Cardinal John Foley

By the Way...

Bishop Donald Trautman was not the only diocesan official to meet Pope Benedict XVI during the recent ad limina visit to Rome. Father Michael Kesicki, rector of St. Mark Seminary, had a brief encounter with the Holy Father, as well.



Jason Koshinski

During the official visit, which took place Dec. 5 in the formal study of the Apostolic Palace, the New Jersey bishops were lined up alphabetically for their individual introductions to the pope. With Bishop Trautman the only Pennsylvania bishop attending the audience, he was slated to be introduced last.

Each bishop introduced the priest who was with him. Cardinals and archbishops typically travel with an auxiliary bishop while some are accompanied by chancery officials. Bishop Trautman brought the rector of his seminary, which is seeing its highest enrollment in more than 30 years.

"I greeted the Holy Father in English because that's what he was speaking," said Father Kesicki, who is fluent in several languages. "The bishop told him that I was the rector of the seminary, and he was pleased to know that. I thanked him for greeting me. At the end, I thanked him in German."

Father Kesicki had met the pope as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger before, but this was his first glimpse of him up close at the Holy Father.

"He's gentle, he's personable, he looks you in the eye. He meets you as a human being for that one moment," Father Kesicki said. "I was just particularly moved that he remembered the bishop studied at Immsbruck. He was aware that the bishop was not feeling well and said he was praying for him."

During their ad limina visit, the bishops were using the new English translation of the Roman Missal for the Masses in Rome. Bishop Trautman said it went well at St. Mary Major, although it was something of an adjustment to pray at a chapel where the altar is placed against the wall, meaning his back was to his fellow bishops, concelebrating priests and the small congregation.

"I opened up my homily by saying that as a former student and a graduate of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, I want to point out that St. Jerome, the great biblical scholar, is buried in the crypt under the main altar," Bishop Trautman said. "And I want to observe that also since we are using the new missal that St. Augustine and St. Jerome fought vigorously over translation issues and both are saints, both are holy men. I think the bishops all chuckled and got the message."

The bishop, who has served two terms as chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Liturgy, worked for years to make the texts proclaimable.

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

Missal, pope named top story, newsmaker of 2011

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
Catholic News Service

The poll was the 50th annual survey conducted by CNS.

WASHINGTON — The introduction of the English translation of the Roman Missal topped the religious news stories of 2011, and Pope Benedict XVI was again the top newsmaker, according to the annual poll conducted by Catholic News Service.



The continued effect of the global economic downturn was second among the 30 news stories on the ballot, Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, was second and U.S. President Barack Obama was third.

Editors were asked to vote for the top 10 news stories from a list of 30, and the top five newsmakers from a list of 24.

Rounding out the top five for religious news stories were the Irish church's sex abuse scandal and the issue of religious freedom. Pope Benedict, who has been the top religious newsmaker in the CNS poll every year since 2006, took first place this year for his travels to Croatia, Benin, Germany and Spain; his declaration of the upcoming Year of Faith; and his meetings with U.S. bishops, which were to continue into 2012.

Among newsmakers, Blessed John Paul II, who was beatified in May, and Fordham University theologian Sister Elizabeth Johnson, whose 2007 book "Quest for the Living God" was declared "seriously inadequate as a presentation of the Catholic understanding of God" by the bishops' Committee on Doctrine, were fourth and fifth, respectively.

Here are the choices for top 10 stories and top five newsmakers of 2011:



Top STORIES of 2011

1. Roman Missal
2. Economy
3. Arab spring
4. Health care
5. Irish church sex abuse scandal
6. Religious freedom
7. World Youth Day
- 8 (tie) Sex abuse
- 8 (tie) Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan
10. Natural disasters

The introduction of the new English translation of the Roman Missal was the top Catholic story of the year, according to editors' picks in annual poll by Catholic News Service.

Top NEWSMAKERS of 2011

1. Pope Benedict XVI
2. Archbishop Timothy Dolan
3. President Barack Obama
4. Blessed John Paul II
5. Sister Elizabeth Johnson

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Italy: April 14-22, April 18-May 06, May 05-13, May 12-20, May 19-27, June 02-10, June 09-17, June 16-24, ...
Holy Land: April 09-19, April 15-25, April 30-May 10, May 07-17, May 14-24, May 21-31, June 18-28, ...
Holy Land/Italy: March 20-April 02, April 09-22, April 23-May 06, May 07-20, May 14-27, June 18-July 01, ...

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Have a safe and happy holiday.

Briefly

Diocesan study week Jan. 9-12

ERIE — Diocesan study week will be held Jan. 9-12 at St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 E. Grandview Blvd. in Erie.

The theme is "Vatican II: Locating the Council in its Religious and Secular Contexts." Father John O'Malley, SJ, will be the keynote presenter.

Registration deadline is Friday, Dec. 30. To register, contact the Office of Religious Education at 814.824.1210 or 1.800.374.3723 Ext. 210 or register online at www.ErieRCD.org.

Youth Stand 4 Life bus trip Jan. 22-23

ERIE — Join the Youth Stand 4 Life bus trip Jan. 22-23 to Washington, D.C., for a youth rally, Mass and the March for Life.

Students and chaperones will board buses Jan. 22 at St. Mark Catholic Center in Erie and travel to a Maryland parish for Mass, overnight hosting and breakfast Jan. 23. Activities include a rally and Mass at the DC Armory in Washington. Youth will then join the March for Life at the National Mall.

Plans call to leave Washington at 4 p.m. and arrive in Erie between 11-11:30 p.m.

Cost is \$100 and includes bus transportation, overnight accommodations, meals, a pro-life youth rally and the March for Life.

Youth in grades 8-12 are invited. The deadline to register is Jan. 9. Seating is limited. To make a reservation or for more information, contact Kathleen Peterson in the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry at 814.824.1218 or visit www.ontrevine.us.

March for Life bus trip Jan. 22-23

ERIE — Attend the March for Life in Washington, D.C., on Monday, Jan. 23. Buses chartered by People for Life will leave Erie Sunday evening, Jan. 22 at 11 p.m. and return about 1:30 a.m. Jan. 24.

Students and families on tight budgets are encouraged to inquire about sponsorships. Reservations should be made as soon as possible. Send \$40 per seat to People for Life, P.O. Box 1126, Erie, PA 16512.

For more information or to use a credit card, call 814.882.1333 or visit www.peopleforlife.org.



DEATH NOTICES

Sister Mary Karen Crawford, SSJ

Sister Mary Karen Crawford, SSJ, 77, of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, died Nov. 22, 2011. She was in her 60th year of religious life.

She was born Shirley Crawford on June 5, 1934 in Erie, daughter of the late Norbert and Catherine Crawford.

She graduated from the former St. Michael School and Villa Maria Academy, both in Erie. She earned a bachelor's degree in education from Villa Maria College, Erie.

She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph on August 30, 1952 from her home parish, Blessed Sacrament. She professed her final vows on August 15, 1958 and celebrated her 50th anniversary as a

Sister of St. Joseph in 2002.

Sister Mary Karen taught at St. Andrew, St. Ann, Blessed Sacrament, St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph and St. Patrick elementary schools in Erie. She attended many workshops in education, pastoral ministry, Head Start and intergenerational programs.

She worked in parish ministry at St. Agatha Parish, Meadville, and at St. Mary Parish, Reynoldsville. She ministered to children and adults at Houtzdale Catechetical Center, traveling to teach religious education to 16 parishes. She also worked with toddlers at St. Joseph's Home, Erie.

Her most recent ministry prior to retirement was as an intergenerational coordinator between Saint Mary's Home of Erie and the Mercyhurst Child Learning Center.

Father Donald Cooper

Father Donald Cooper, 75, died December 16, 2011 at Saint Vincent Hospital in Erie. Look for a complete obituary in Jan. 15 issue of *FaithLife*.



Sister Mary Karen Crawford

Christmas is the joyful reminder that God has not left us alone

CHRISTMAS from page 1

We have seen a great light.

Perhaps there is some darkness in our life this Christmas: sickness, loneliness, unemployment, divorce, alcoholism, the break up of family and friendship. We may be surrounded by different kinds of darkness both personal and global—the darkness of a world haunted by threats of terrorism, the darkness of war in the Near East. There is also a growing darkness of secularism in the West and a rampant religious fanaticism in the East. So we pray: Christ, light our darkness, scatter our darkness, show us the way to a new day. If we embrace Christ present in the Scriptures and the sacraments, he can take away our darkness.

Christmas is the joyful reminder that in spite of our unfaithfulness, in spite of all the darkness in our lives, in spite of the trials and tragedies in our midst, God has not left us alone. God has not abandoned us. A savior has been born for us and that savior dwells in the tabernacles of our churches until the end of time. He is present to us in the Scriptures and in the sacraments. The risen Jesus, savior of the world, is in our midst and he is the way, the truth and the life.

This Christmas there is no one without a gift. Did not the angels tell the shepherds, "A savior has been born for you?" We are all recipients of this divine gift. We all receive the perfect gift—Jesus, the savior—the greatest gift ever given.

The light shines in the darkness and the darkness will never overcome it. Christmas is the assurance of God's love for us. Sin and sinful habits can be strong, but God's love is stronger. Sadness and sorrow can consume our strength, but God's love is stronger. Trials and tragedies can sap our spirits, but God's love is stronger. The light shines in the darkness but the darkness will never overcome it. Rejoice and give thanks. It is Christmas, the birth of Christ, the light of our world.

Donald W. Trautman
Most Rev. Donald W. Trautman, STD, SSL
Bishop of Erie

Despite setback, bishop encounters pope during 'ad limina'

AD LIMINA from page 1

Bishop Trautman said he noted that the Diocese of Erie has already participated in Catholics Come Home.

"I think programs are very, very important," he said. "But the basic structure—the foundation of the church—is still the parish. When the parish is strong, the diocese is strong. Everything rises and falls basically at the parish level. That's the faith community that encounters Christ in the Scriptures and in the sacraments. And when that faith community is strong, the church is strong."

Pope Benedict XVI then asked Bishop Trautman about the number of parishes the diocese has been forced to close.

"I said very few," the bishop said. "We've been blessed. We've been able to manage certain situations differently without closing many. We've merged some, but haven't closed many."

Bishop Trautman said he explained the geography of the diocese.

"When you close a parish, you have to consider the distance people have to travel to receive the sacraments," he said. "We've been able to maintain our general pattern of parish coverage. The Holy Father was very pleased and very happy to know that."

Other topics, the bishop said, included the U.S. bishops' growing concern that religious liberty is being eroded by government action



Photo courtesy of L'Osservatore Romano

Bishop Donald Trautman poses Dec. 5 with Pope Benedict XVI during his "ad limina" visit to Rome.

and policymaking, the growing Hispanic influence in the church in the U.S. and the secularization of our culture.

"It was a good meeting with good dialogue," Bishop Trautman said. "The Holy Father seemed very intent and vibrant in terms of following the conversation. His English was very, very good."

Each bishop had a moment to greet the pope privately at the end of the dialogue, as well.

"I wished him in German—'Gott segne dich'—which means God bless you, and we parted," Bishop Trautman said.

The bishops celebrated a late-



CNS photo

Pope Benedict XVI meets Dec. 5 with bishops from New Jersey and Pennsylvania during their "ad limina" visit to the Vatican. Bishop Donald Trautman is seated at far right.

Knights of Columbus build confessionals for mall chapel

MALL CHAPEL from page 1

the confessional space at the Millcreek Mall chapel," Bishop Trautman said. "It is now more soundproof, more presentable and a more fitting environment for the celebration of the sacrament of our Lord's mercy. Thank you, brother Knights."

Bishop Trautman is a fourth-degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

The Knights also donated several additions to the chapel. They include a new front desk, a tapestry behind the crucifix, refurbished statues of the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph with matching tables, end tables and lamps outside each

Did You Know?

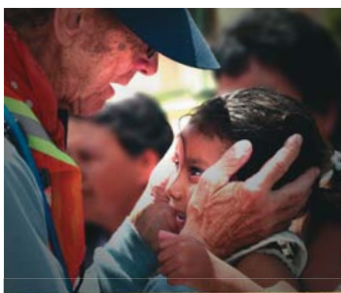
746 confessions were heard at the Roman Catholic Chapel at Millcreek Mall in Erie from January through November this year.

Source: *Roman Catholic Chapel*



confessional, the United States and Vatican flags and a coffee table for the reading area.

The new mall chapel confessionals feature both traditional and face-to-face options.



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You may also qualify for other financial or weatherization assistance — a Crisis Grant up to \$300 may help if your service is shut off. Don't wait. For a LIHEAP application, call toll free at 1-866-857-7095 or go online at www.compass.state.pa.us.

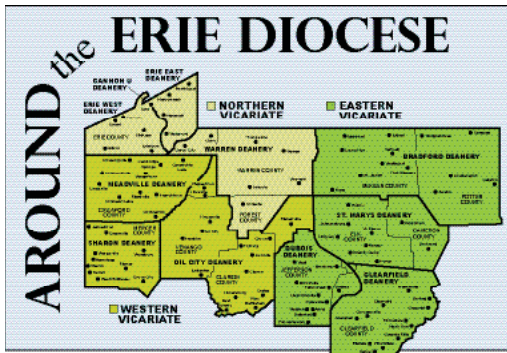
NEW 2012 LIHEAP GUIDELINES (effective 11/1/2011)

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	INCOME LIMIT
1	\$16,335
2	\$22,065
3	\$27,795
4	\$33,525
5	\$39,255
6	\$44,985
7	\$50,715
8	\$56,445
9	\$62,175
10	\$67,905

For Each Additional Person Add \$5,730.



1-866-857-7095 www.compass.state.pa.us



All parishes, missions, schools and groups are encouraged to choose a **correspondent** who can regularly e-mail news items to "Around the Erie Diocese" at <mailto:FaithLife@ErieRCD.org>

Photo Tips
Quick, important tips for taking good digital pictures.
<http://www.ErieRCD.org/faithlife.asp>

Warren box village raises awareness for homelessness

WARREN — To raise awareness for homelessness, 37 students and eight adults from the religious education programs at St. Joseph and Holy Redeemer parishes in Warren recently spent an evening living outside in cardboard boxes.

The students created their own box city Oct. 8-9 on the grounds of St. Joseph Parish and solicited monetary pledges for a cause. The event, organized by Betsy Williams, raised more than \$2,200 for A Safe Place, a crisis prevention center in Warren.

Organizers said they are looking to make this an annual event in Warren.



Catholic Youth (CCY) group (grades 6-12) presenting a check to A Safe Place: (standing) Bryce Cole, Father Michael Polinek, Laura Smoulder, Betsy Williams, (kneeling) Joey Close, Sherman, Ryan Shattuck, Sam Sherrard, Emily Sherman, Terri Allison from A Safe Place, Will Nick Pellegrino, Jason Peterson, Eric Cecco and Bob McAvoy.

Operation Christmas Child at Elk County Catholic High School

ST. MARYS — As part of Elk County Catholic High School's November community outreach project, students, faculty and staff held a dress down day in exchange for a small gift. The gifts collected were then sorted and packed for Operation Christmas Child, a program that brings joy and hope to children in desperate situations worldwide through simple, gift-filled shoe boxes and an opportunity to tell them the Good News of God's love.

Last year, 8.2 million shoe boxes were delivered to children living in places like earthquake-devastated Haiti and war-scarred Sudan. This project taught Elk County Catholic High School students about the power of a simple gift.



Pictured, left to right, sorting and wrapping gifts are Kennedy Ginther, Laurel Pierotti, Kelsey Karpinski, Corey Koss and Lina Weisner, Kyle Prouditt, Larissa Stager.

Sacred Heart parishioners help provide 'White Christmas'

SHARON — Parishioners from Sacred Heart Parish in Sharon recently collected bedding items for their "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas" program. These items were blessed during Mass on Thanksgiving Day before they were distributed to needy families in the area in time for Christmas.

Pictured left to right are Margaret Scully, Agnes Gilliland and Theresa Rodgers.



Saints alive for Clearfield Deanery youth

HOUTZDALE — Fifth grade religious education students from Christ the King Parish in Houtzdale, Holy Trinity Parish in Ramey and Immaculate Conception Mission in Madera celebrated the Nov. 1 feast of All Saints with a look into the lives of some of the holy men and women.

Some of the students picked well-known saints to study, said catechist Shelly Hansel, while others picked saints who shared their name or the name of a loved one. Each student did research, dressed as their featured saint and shared some interesting facts about their saint with the other students in grades K-6.

Pictured, left to right, are: (front row) Emma Kiko, Alex Kiko, Caleb Gresh, Jacob Matchock, (back row) Nick Hansel, Olivia

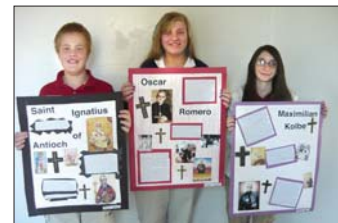


Kirko, Jordan Flango, Paige Tiesi and Tess Randolph. Missing from the photo is Brooke Thompson.

SSCD School learns about saints

PUNXSUTAWNEY — Seventh and eighth grade students at St. Cosmas and Damian School in Punxsutawney are studying church history during the first half of the school year. They've discussed how the early church was challenged to carry out Christ's teachings to the world and how the faithful struggled to continue his mission.

To further enhance the understanding, teacher Liz LaBance had each student research the life of a martyr and then complete a report on that person, along with a poster



illustrating important aspects of that person's life. Robert Welsh, Maggie Prutzal and Nina Test display their posters on the martyr they researched.

St. Bonaventure presents 'Life in the Town of Nazareth'

GRAMPIAN — On Nov. 6, the parish life committee and religious education staff of St. Bonaventure Parish in Grampian presented "Life in the Town of Nazareth—When Jesus was a Kid," a day of authentic Hebrew culture.

The afternoon event, which showed how Jesus lived as a boy, was well attended by all ages within the parish. There were songs and a dance; a visit to Mary's home (complete with lambs, roosters and a rabbit); workshops on making jewelry and olive oil scrub; a visit to a period playground to see some toys and learn the games of Jesus' time; and Hebrew school sessions in which students learned to write in the language of Jesus' day.

Attendees were assigned to one of eight tribes of Judah, given



A tribe of Judah makes olive oil scrub with herb and olive oil market shop owner Terri Clarkson.

headbands to identify their tribe and sent off in groups to experience life in Nazareth. The event

ended with a song of praise and the sharing of a meal of bread and grapes.

St. James School takes second place in Lego robotics competition



ERIE — A team of seventh and eighth grade students from St. James School in Erie took second place out of 40 teams in a Lego robotics competition Nov. 12 at Penn State Behrend. The team is

coached by John Madura. Pictured left to right are: John Groshek, Jacob VanSlyke, Kevin Bello, Ben Ladaika, Daniel Serafin, Mark Gorski, Timothy Snyder and Jayme Cooper.

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