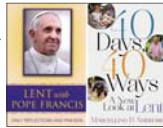


Books for Lent

Local priest, sister among authors of Lenten publications.

PAGE 2



FaithLife



POPE TWEET

Pope Francis @Pontifex
 "How often we forget to dedicate ourselves to that which truly matters!"

www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

February 15, 2015

Three pillars of Lent



The three traditional pillars of Lent are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. In the Latin-rite church, Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, Feb. 18.

Get your Rice Bowl on!



This is the 40th anniversary of Catholic Relief Services' Rice Bowl Collection. Get a box at your parish or simply donate at crsricbowl.org.

Clergy Appointments

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



Father Michael Polinek, diocesan director of vocations, with residence at St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, effective Feb. 27, 2015, for a term of five years.

Father Brandon Kleckner, parochial vicar, St. George Parish, Erie, effective Feb. 27, 2015, for a term of three years.

St. Thomas School in Corry to close

FAITHLIFE staff

CORRY—St. Thomas School in Corry will close at the end of this academic year, due to a trifecta of difficulties that include declining enrollment, finances and demographic projections.

"We have hoped and prayed that enrollment numbers would increase and the financial responsibility would become more manageable," said Father Mark Hoffman, pastor of St. Thomas Parish.

St. Thomas currently has 34 students enrolled in kindergarten through grade 6. It's a significant decline from the large numbers that prevailed over the 121 years that Catholic schools have served the Corry community.

Father Nicholas Rouch, vicar for Education, said the closing involves the complexities of finances, demographics and enrollment.

"On the surface, these things don't sound like the heart of Catholic school education. But without the right practical matters solidly in place, a Catholic school, sadly, loses its viability," Father Rouch said. "The parents, parishioners and pastors made many sacrifices to try to avoid this step but it just wasn't enough. Certainly, we wish things were different."

The decision to close St. Thomas School was made separate from the two-year pastoral planning process that began in the diocese last fall. The school's situation was evaluated as part of the ongoing operation of the parishes and ministries of the diocese.

Bishop Lawrence Persico, in announcing the closing, acknowledged the hurt that some may feel, but has asked everyone concerned to recognize the realities that face parishes. The financial burden on the parishes in Corry, which includes St. Thomas and St. Elizabeth, had become untenable for ongoing viability.

"Transitions such as this are a challenge," the bishop said.

Five full-time positions and several part-time positions will be eliminated as a result of the decision to close St. Thomas. The diocese will ask other Catholic schools to give affected employees priority consideration when looking to hire in the future.

Elderly sister helps form coalition

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

Standing behind Sister Mary Claire Kennedy of Erie is a long line of state and local police officers, attorneys, the U.S. Border Patrol, mental health and crime victim counselors, college students and even hotel owners.

They're all following this 86-year-old firebrand as she takes on one of the most pressing concerns of our time: human trafficking.

Despite her advanced age, Sister Mary Claire, SSI, has managed to inspire and help coordinate the newly formed Northwest Pennsylvania Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition. With some 20 members, the coalition's goal is to educate the larger community about labor and sex trafficking and, eventually, seek the prosecution of anyone who exploits women and children for their own personal and financial gain.

"We're just following Sister's lead," says Chuck Trabold, a coalition member and an assistant U.S. attorney in Erie.

After a recent coalition meeting at the Crime Victims Center of Erie County, Trabold and others discussed the challenges of exposing incidents of human trafficking. Many of its victims still are viewed as criminals, caught in such unsavory locations as brothels, strip clubs and massage parlors. Transported quickly through the interstate highway system, young women and children are often coerced into begging on the streets or working in sweat shops, construction sites or hotels.

"People said it doesn't happen here. People are still saying it," Sister Mary Claire says. "It's the complexity of these cases that makes it difficult to prosecute. It's a hidden crime."

According to Carol Finotti, a counselor and victim advocate with the Crime Victims Center, the agency knows there is labor and sex trafficking in this area, but law enforcement authorities have not been able to nail down enough evidence to prosecute.

"It's very difficult because people are moved so quickly," says Finotti, who serves as chief coordinator of the coalition.

As an advocate to victims of rape, domestic violence, robbery and a number of other crimes, Finotti has helped some clients see that they actually may have been exploited and caught in the vicious cycle of human trafficking.

"The language has changed. It wasn't called human trafficking before. It's a hard stretch for some people to see that someone is a victim and not a criminal," Finotti says.

For 10 years, Sister Mary Claire has been at the forefront of educating the public about human trafficking. Spurred on by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 and her own religious community's commitment to end such suffering, she has worked tirelessly to form a community-wide coalition. In 2011, the U.S. Federation of Sisters of St. Joseph recommitted itself to the issue.



Sister Mary Claire Kennedy, SSI, center, talks to members of the newly formed Northwest Pennsylvania Anti-Human Trafficking Coalition in Erie County, which she helped create. Pictured with her, left to right, are: Robert Signorino with the U.S. Border Patrol in Erie; Chuck Trabold, assistant U.S. attorney in Erie; and Carol Finotti with the Crime Victims Center of Erie County.

Photo by Mary Solberg

Sister Mary Claire and other sisters and associates of the Sisters of St. Joseph have regularly given talks to area parishes and organizations about human trafficking. Their efforts have been affirmed most recently by a series of bipartisan legislation passed by the U.S. House of Representatives to further tighten the screws on human trafficking. And this winter, Pope Francis and leaders of other churches and religions signed a declaration pledging to work together to help end modern slavery by 2020.

NWPA United Against Human Trafficking Conference

Waldron Campus Center
 Gannon University, Erie

Saturday, March 14
 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Continuing education credits may be available for professionals
 Email: suaht.erie@gmail.com

It's as if a spotlight has finally been placed on human trafficking in the modern world, with stepped up law enforcement efforts at major national sporting events—like the Super Bowl.

Locally, Finotti of the Crime Victims Center has been approached by hoteliers who want to learn more about the issue. In March, Gannon University's Students United Against Human Trafficking will host a Northwest Pennsylvania United Against Human Trafficking Conference.

Robert Signorino with the U.S. Border Patrol in Erie credits Sister



CNS photo

ROME—Pope Francis and other faith leaders attend a Dec. 2 ceremony at the Vatican in observance of the U.N. Day for the Abolition of Slavery. See video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cnms_c5c7c.



Mary Claire for her "grassroots" work.

"She's not like any nun I have ever encountered," Signorino says.

"She's knowledgeable of everything going on. And she's tenacious, which is so important from our perspective because human trafficking is something we're trying to dismantle and disrupt."

In Sister Mary Claire's view, the facts are enough reason to keep fighting: the average age of girls entering into prostitution is 12 to 14.

"I take it from the point of view of slavery," Sister Mary Claire says. "There's nothing more egregious than using someone for personal gain."

Listening sessions set to begin on March 2

FAITHLIFE staff

The two-year pastoral planning process underway in the Diocese of Erie is gearing up for the next level.

Beginning March 2 and continuing through April 9, parish leaders, clergy and school principals throughout the 13 counties of the diocese will have a chance to gather for listening sessions designed to provide the clearest possible picture of parish life.

In a letter to pastors this month, Bishop Lawrence Persico pointed out the necessity for such sessions, saying, "They give the bishop and the pastoral planning team an insight into the workings of each unique parish in our diocese."

Bishop Persico has asked each pastor of a parish or mission to invite 10 parishioners to attend the sessions. Those selected must "understand the seriousness of this undertaking," the bishop stated,



and be willing to participate in a prayerful, honest and constructive manner.

During the meetings, scheduled in each deanery of the diocese, participants will have an opportunity to review data collected recently from parishes and schools. The data has been compiled by the Meider consulting firm that is supporting the diocese in its pastoral planning.

Participants, additionally, will discuss how demographics and societal trends are shaping the

mission and ministry of the church. Further discussion is expected to include how parishes may need to organize more effectively to carry out the mission of Jesus Christ in the Diocese of Erie.

Further, Bishop Persico will invite participants at the listening sessions to give suggestions for new directions that might strengthen ministries and outreach in individual communities and in the larger church.

Two trained teams will lead sessions in Meadville, Hermitage, Oil City, Ridgway, Warren, Bradford, DuBois, Erie and Houtzdale.

As a final component of the parish listening sessions, all members of parishes in the Diocese of Erie will be invited to share their insights in a survey that will be made available online.

Look for details on how to participate in this online survey in a future edition of FaithLife.



A chilly church

BALEA IAC, Romania—A group of priests representing various congregations arrive for the inauguration of a church made entirely from ice at Balea Lac resort in the Fagaras Mountains of Romania Jan. 29. Romanian Orthodox and Catholic priests, as well as Protestant ministers, participated in the ceremony.

CNS photo

Newsmakers



Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world

from Catholic News Service

■ Pope to youth: Discover your treasure and share it

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Everyone is born with a treasure chest of gifts and talents they need to discover and share, Pope Francis told a group of young people with disabilities.

Seven young people from six countries shared their stories with the pope and asked him questions Feb. 5 during a Google Hangout, a live video conversation online.

"You help us understand that life is a beautiful treasure that has meaning only if we share," the pope told the



CNS photo

VATICAN CITY—Pope Francis is greeted as he arrives to lead his weekly audience in Paul VI Hall at the Vatican Feb. 4.

young people.

Alicia, a 16-year-old amateur filmmaker from Spain, asked Pope Francis if he, too, likes to take photographs and upload them to his computer.

"Do you want me to tell you the truth?" he asked the young woman with Down syndrome. "I am a disaster with machines. I don't know how to deal with a computer. It's embarrassing, isn't it?"

The videochat with the pope came at the conclusion of a gathering in the Vatican of Scholas Occurrentes, a project Pope Francis supported as archbishop of Buenos Aires and expanded as pope.

■ Catholic college students urge Congress to reform immigration

WASHINGTON (CNS)—More than two dozen undocumented students at Catholic colleges sent a letter Feb. 5 to 79 members of Congress who graduated from Catholic colleges and universities, urging them not to cut off funding for the president's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, known as DACA.

"Enable us, successful students and valued members of the United States workforce, with the opportunity to continue to serve our community, country and the world as we have been taught to do by our Catholic education," the letter stated.

The U.S. Senate is currently debating a Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill, approved by the House in mid-January, with an amendment to revoke the DACA program.

Homeless sheltered from ice, snow



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

What's a little ice?

It didn't stop several members of the Family Program at Our Lady of the Lake Parish in Edinboro from journeying one recent wintry night to volunteer at an Erie homeless shelter.

As a member of the Edinboro group, I felt such empathy with those who walk the streets during these frigid winter days in northwestern Pennsylvania. Getting in our warm cars—despite the treacherous road conditions along Interstate 79 and Route 99—didn't seem like much of a sacrifice when you consider that an estimated 1,500 people are homeless in Erie County.

Many homeless who came to the St. Joseph/Bread of Life overflow shelter that night were more than a little chilled. Covered in snow and ice, they savored the home-cooked meal and warmth, looking for dry clothes and a cot.

Several of our young students from Our Lady of the Lake had quite an eye-opening experience. They left their cell phone/video game world behind to serve food and distribute give-away bags of toiletries and snacks, along with socks and hats.

It is transformative for young people to be present physically to the homeless—to talk to them, to look them in the eyes. For kids, it may not seem life-changing right away, but if they regularly serve the needy, they will be changed forever...a little more compassionate or, perhaps, more aware.

Many of us from Our Lady of the Lake were thrilled to see **Father John Jacquiel**, former pastor, who stopped by at St. Jo-

seph that night. Currently the pastor at St. John the Baptist and Holy Rosary parishes in Erie, he had been making a visit at Saint Vincent Hospital, across the street from St. Joseph, and decided to catch up with his former parishioners and students.

Father John knows all about the homeless overflow shelters that are a project of Erie's Community Shelter Services. His parish of St. John's already hosted a two-week shelter in January and will do so again in March. Parishioners from Holy Rosary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Our Lady of Mercy and St. Luke churches all have contributed to the effort.

St. Patrick and St. Jude the Apostle



Nancy Murray, far left, talks to religious education students from Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Edinboro.

parishes in Erie also are collaborating this month at an overflow shelter being held at the Russian Orthodox Church of the Nativity on Erie's east side.

Nancy Murray, the pastoral assistant at St. Joseph/Bread of Life, graciously talked to the Edinboro students about what it means to serve the poor. She has been organizing her parish shelter effort the past couple of years.

"Until you see it, you wouldn't believe that so many people are out in the middle of the night," Nancy says.

Mary Solberg is the editor of FaithLife.

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Call 814-824-1171

Twitter: @ERIERCDsolberg

Books for Lent

Two new releases from Erie priest, sister

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Here is a selection of recent publications that might be suitable for spiritual reading during Lent or throughout the year. Among the new releases are a volume by Erie Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister and a desk calendar created by Father Larry Richards, pastor of St. Joseph/Bread of Life in Erie.

• **Lent with Pope Francis: Daily Reflections and Prayers**, edited by Donna Giaimo, FSP. Pauline Books & Media (Boston, 2014). 124 pp., \$7.95.

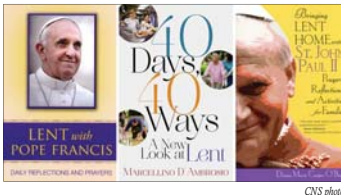
• **40 Soul-Stretching Conversations: Writing a Spiritual Journal with Joan Chittister** by Joan Chittister. Benetivision (Erie, 2015). 92 pp., \$6.95.

• **No Bible, No Breakfast! No Bible, No Bed! Father Larry Richards' Scripture Desk Calendar** by Father Larry Richards. Word Among Us Press (Frederick, Md., 2014). 365 pp., \$13.95.

• **Sacred Silence: Daily Meditations for Lent** by Phyllis Zagano. Franciscan Media (Cincinnati, 2014). 132 pp., \$9.99.

• **40 Days, 40 Ways: A New Look at Lent** by Marcellino D'Ambrosio. Servant Books (Cincinnati, 2014). 127 pp., \$14.99.

• **Bringing Lent Home with St. John Paul II: Prayers, Reflections and Activities for Families** by Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle. Ave Maria Press (Notre Dame, Ind., 2014). 96 pp., \$2.95.



CNS photo

• **Breaking into Joy: Meditations for Living in the Love of Christ** by Anne Costa. Word Among Us Press (Frederick, Md., 2014). 220 pp., \$10.95.

• **Three Minutes a Day, Volume 49**, by the Christophers. The Christophers (New York, 2014). 365 pp., \$10.

• **Flunking Sainthood Every Day: A Daily Devotional for the Rest of Us** by Jana Riess. Paraclete Press (Brewster, Mass., 2014). 290 pp., \$23.99.

• **5 Minutes With the Saints: More Spiritual Nourishment for Busy Teachers**, edited by Lou DeFra, CSC, and Ann Primus Berends. Ave Maria Press (Notre Dame, Ind., 2014). 192 pp., \$12.95.

• **A Little Daily Wisdom From the Early Church**, edited by Bernard Bangley. Paraclete Press (Brewster, Mass., 2014). 386 pp., \$12.99.

• **A Daily Catholic Moment: 10 Minutes a Day Alone with God** compiled by Peter Celano. Paraclete Press (Brewster, Mass., 2014). 192 pp., \$15.99.

• **Peace and Good: Through the Year With Francis of Assisi** by Pat McCloskey, OFM. Franciscan Media (Cincinnati, 2014). 397 pp., \$19.99.

• **Abide in My Word: 2015 Mass Readings at Your Fingertips**. Word Among Us Press (Frederick, Md., 2014). 578 pp., \$16.50.

Grants distributed from two collections

FAITHLIFE staff

The Diocese of Erie in 2014 distributed more than \$65,000 from two collections to support food banks and charities serving the needy in northwestern Pennsylvania.

According to diocesan officials, thousands of people are now benefiting from the grants, which were collected through the annual Campaign for Human Development and the Catholic Relief Services' Rice Bowl collection.

"These funds will make a significant difference to all of the good organizations that serve people in our diocese," said Mary Maxwell, executive director of Catholic Charities. "This is much needed work that is done by all of these agencies."

Donations made to the 2013 Campaign for Human Development were distributed in 2014 to the national office and to nine social service agencies in the region. Parishes collected more than \$90,000, with more than half staying in the Diocese of Erie.

Among the agencies receiving Campaign for Human Development funds were:

- Susquehanna Free Clinic, Clearfield
- Prince of Peace Center, Farrell
- St. Elizabeth Center, Oil City
- Mental Health Association (Warming Center), Erie

- The Upper Room, Erie
- Catholic Rural Ministry, Oil City
- Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network (East)
- St. Martin Center, Erie
- Erie Dawn, Erie.

Last year's Rice Bowl collection in the Diocese of Erie netted \$65,371. Sixty percent was sent to Catholic Relief Services to support its programs in Tanzania, Nicaragua and many other countries. About \$28,000 remained in the diocese for distribution to area food banks and church-related mission outreach for the hungry.

According to Bill Grant, director of Stewardship and Annual Giving for the diocese, many children in Catholic schools and religious education programs throughout the diocese collect money for the Rice Bowl collection every Lent.

"It gives young people an opportunity to participate and address poverty issues in our world and in our diocese," Grant said. "People in our diocese are asked to give a lot, but everyone is just keeping giving. They're very generous."

Although Rice Bowl uses the traditional Rice Bowl box for collections, anyone can donate to the effort simply by making a contribution on the Catholic Relief Services website at www.crsricebowl.org.

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**Save the date:
Golf event remembers Msgr. John Lucas**

RUSSELL—There's still snow on the ground, but plans are underway for a golf scramble to remember the late Msgr. John Lucas, who would have celebrated his 50th anniversary to the priesthood this year.

The public is invited to participate in a four-person scramble May 30 at Cable Hollow Golf Club, Russell. The event includes 18 holes of golf, a riding cart, lunch and a barbecue chicken dinner. A gift auction and a 50-50 also will be featured. All proceeds will go to Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Erie.

Those who do not wish to golf are invited to donate in Msgr. Lucas' memory. For information, contact Rose Lucas-Panko at 814-860-9605 or email gp2548rp@twc.com.



Course offered for catechist certification and adult enrichment

SYKESVILLE—A course in the Old Testament will be offered at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary social hall in Sykesville on the following dates: Feb. 16 and 23, and March 2, 9, 16 and 23. Father Rick Tomason will teach the classes, which will be held from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Pre-registration is not necessary.

Lenten series scheduled in Grove City

GROVE CITY—Church of the Beloved Disciple in Grove City invites interested individuals to participate in its Lenten series, "Living the Eucharist."

Beginning after the Ash Wednesday Mass, Feb. 18, one-hour sessions will be held every Wednesday of Lent from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Small groups will be formed to contemplate the Scripture and share a lesson in a *lectio divina* manner. Call Laura Coulter at 724-458-4448 for more information or to register.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter offers weekends for good marriages

STATE COLLEGE—Worldwide Marriage Encounter is a faith-based marriage enrichment experience that helps couples improve communication while focusing on their relationship. WWME is open to married couples in a good marriage. Although this is a Catholic weekend, couples from other faith expressions are welcome to attend.

The next weekend starts on Friday night, Feb. 27, and continues through March 1 at the Atherton Hotel in State College. Another weekend is scheduled April 24-26 at the Wyndham Garden Hotel near the Pittsburgh Airport. A non-refundable \$75 application fee reserves a space; a free-will offering helps continue the mission of WWME. Space is limited.

To learn about Marriage Encounter, call 814-823-4600 or 412-635-7775. To apply online, visit www.yourmarriageisworthit.org.

Real Love & Real Life program planned at schools in Erie and Elk County

ERIE—Seventh- and eighth-graders and their parents are invited to attend Family Honor's Real Love & Real Life program to be held in Elk County and in Erie this spring.

Family Honor aids parents in helping their children understand the gifts of their sexuality, chastity and purity.

The Real Love & Real Life program is scheduled at St. George School, Erie, March 27-28, and at Elk County Catholic High School chapel, St. Marys, April 7, 14 and 21.

The St. George program will be held March 27 from 6 to 9 p.m. and March 28 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For information, contact Bernadette Carroll at 814-572-1016 or email berndette26@hotmail.com.

The Elk County Catholic program will be held Tuesdays, April 7, 14 and 21 from 7 to 9:15 p.m. For more information, contact Laury Kraus at 814-781-6746.

Father Larry Richards to lead meditation on the Passion of Jesus Christ

COUDERSPORT—Father Larry Richards, pastor of St. Joseph/Bread of Life, Erie, will lead a meditation on the Passion of Jesus Christ on March 29 at 6 p.m. at St. Eulalia Church, Coudersport.

The evening is a dramatic presentation that will be followed by a thorough examination of conscience and the sacrament of reconciliation.

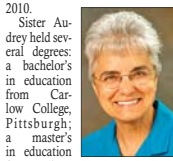
Benedictine Sister Audrey Berdis was educator, counselor, outdoor enthusiast

Erie Benedictine Sister Audrey Berdis—surrounded by her sisters in community and members of her family—died Jan. 26 after a two-day illness.

At the time of her death at age 74, she was service coordinator at Benetwood Apartments in Harborcreek, a position she held since 2007.

A native of Holy Family Parish, Erie, she was born Dec. 18, 1940, a daughter of the late Joseph and Mary Ann (Janosik) Berdis. She attended the parish school and St. Benedict Academy. Sister Audrey entered the School Sisters of St. Francis in Pittsburgh in 1958, and pronounced her perpetual vows in 1965.

She celebrated her silver jubilee in 1985. In 1992, after discerning a call to the monastic way of life, she began the process of transferring her vows. Sister Audrey was fully incorporated into the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in 1995 and celebrated her golden jubilee in



Sister Audrey Berdis, OSB

2010. Sister Audrey held several degrees: a bachelor's in education from Carlow College, Pittsburgh; a master's in education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania; a master's in administration from the University of Dayton, Ohio; and a master's in counseling psychology from Gannon University, Erie. She also participated in numerous workshops, seminars and retreats in support of professional, personal and spiritual development.

For many years, she served as elementary principal and teacher in the Pittsburgh and Erie dioceses, eventually returning to Erie to become principal of Holy Family

School in 1984. Sister Audrey's ministry to others through social services in Erie began with her directorship of Hope House for Women, 1989-1993. From 1994-95, she worked as a counselor at Mercy Center for Women. She served as a counselor and treatment specialist at Community House, Inc. until 1996, when she became a counselor and case manager at St. Benedict Education Center.

Sister Audrey's interests extended to other areas, including healthy living, exercise, outdoor activities and travel. She visited the Mission of Friendship in Merida, Yucatán, Mexico, and spent some time in South Africa. Most recently, she was involved in the revival of the Stillpoint Contemplative Prayer Days at Mount Saint Benedict Monastery.

Sister Audrey was a gentle woman who served others with kindness, care and compassion. She enjoyed life fully and was

enriched by the bonds of community and family. Her ever-present delight in God's goodness endeared her to many.

Besides her parents, Sister Audrey was preceded in death by six siblings: Eleanor Tarasovich, Mildred Merski, Sister Eileen, OSF, and Joseph, Francis and Thomas.

Survivors include her Benedictine community; her community of origin, the School Sisters of St. Francis; seven brothers and sisters: Lawrence Berdis, Father Donald Berdis, James (Barbara) Berdis, Robert Berdis, Sister Kevin Berdis, OSF, Ann Krausz (Paul), and Jean Abate (Frank); and numerous nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

Services and a Mass of Christian Burial were held at Mount Saint Benedict Monastery. Interment was at Trinity Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie, PA 16511.

Sister Claire Hudert, OSB, was chaplain at Polk State

Erie Benedictine Sister Claire Hudert, 71, died Jan. 26.

Since 2006, Sister Claire was chaplain at Polk State Center, Franklin, where she served mentally challenged adults, teaching them about Jesus and God's love for them.

Born Aug. 17, 1943, in Baltimore, Md., she was baptized Elaine Claire, the third child of the late A. Joseph Sr. and Helen (Sramek) Hudert. She entered the Benedictine Sisters of Bristow, Va., in 1961 and pronounced perpetual monastic vows in 1968. In 1982, she discerned the decision to transfer from her community of origin to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. She was fully incorporated in 1985. She marked her golden jubilee in 2013.

Sister Claire held an associate's degree in liberal arts from Marymount University, Arlington, Va., a bachelor's in math-



Sister Claire Hudert, OSB

ematics and Spanish from Carlow College, Pittsburgh, and a master's in theology from Notre Dame University, South Bend. She began her teaching ministry in 1965 and taught in both elementary and secondary education.

She was also a director of religious education before coming to Erie, where she taught at St. Benedict Academy from 1984-88.

In 1988, Sister Claire began her work as a missionary in the diocese-sponsored Mission of Friendship in Merida, Yucatán, Mexico. While there, she taught basic reading and math to women who

had not had the opportunity for education. Upon returning to the United States, Sister Claire became the associate director of the Mission Office of the Diocese of Erie in 1991.

In 1993, she resumed her hands-on missionary work at the Mission of Friendship until 2002, at which time she became the director of the Office of Healing Ministries in the Diocese of Erie. She returned to the classroom in 2004 and taught theology as an adjunct lecturer at Gannon University, Erie.

Sister Claire's various ministries provided her opportunities to show God's love through action in teaching, feeding, healing, listening, assisting, supporting, comforting. It pleased her to provide direct service to those whom she preferred not to call poor, but rather, "people who live humbly."

For Sister Claire, the word "poor" suggested that someone is less because they have less. She touched the lives of many students, her community, her family and friends, bringing them the gifts of light and laughter, spontaneity and joy.

Besides her Benedictine community, survivors include her 10 siblings: Joseph, Regina Corcoran (Richard), Carl (Becka), Anthony (Cynthia), Elizabeth Watkins, Marianne Hudert, Linda Spach-Korepta, Cathleen Shutt (Michael), Christopher (Peggy) and David (Caroline); and many nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

Services and a Mass of Christian Burial were held at Mount Saint Benedict Monastery. Erie. Burial was at Trinity Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie, PA 16511.

Father Sypinski graduated from Cathedral Prep

SHELBY TOWNSHIP, Mich.—Father Leonard Sypinski, OSFS, 81, a native of Erie and a graduate of Cathedral Preparatory School, Erie, died Jan. 16 in Michigan.



Father Leonard Sypinski, OSFS

Born and raised in Erie, he was the son of the late Edward and Leokadia Sazypinski. He graduated in 1952 from Cathedral Prep and went on to study for the priesthood in Childs, Md., with the Oblates of St. Francis DeSales, who, at the time, taught at Cathedral Prep.

He was ordained an Oblate priest on April 11, 1964. He earned a bachelor's degree from Niagara University in New York, and a master's

from Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. He was later assigned to the Oblate Providence in Toledo, Ohio, and continued as an educator, pastoral assistant, and a chaplain for the Knights of Columbus. After 15 years of service with the Michigan Child Protective Services, Father Sypinski retired in Michigan.

Survivors include his three sisters: Sister Dorothy Sazypinski, OSB, Joanna Jacobson and her husband, Dennis, and Esther Cross and her husband, Gerald, all of Erie. A memorial Mass was celebrated by Msgr. William Biebel on Jan. 31 at Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie. Inurnment was private. Memorials may be made to St. Therese of Lisieux Parish, 4811 Schoenherr Road, Shelby Township, MI 48315, or to Mount St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie, PA 16511.

Presidents visit Kennedy Catholic



HERMITAGE—Five college and university presidents visited Kennedy Catholic High School recently as part of College & University Presidents Week. The presidents spoke to students about a variety of topics, including leadership, academic and career success, and the importance of serving others. Pictured with the school mascot, portrayed by Kyle Ricketts, are Jim Tressel, president of Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio; and students Alivia O'Brien, Jesse Micco, Tatum Kress, Alex Hudson and Teddy Haaz.

Other participating institutions were Gannon University, Slippery Rock, Lourdes University and Westminster College.

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Correction: The St. Eulalia Maternity Closet recognized in the last issue of *FaithLife* is located in Coudersport, not Smethport. We regret the error.

McKean and Potter counties represented at March for Life



WASHINGTON, D.C.—Twenty-five youth and adults from St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Smethport, St. Eulalia Parish in Coudersport, and St. Gabriel Parish in Port Allegany attended this year's March for Life in Washington, D.C. Adult participants were Father James Campbell, Jan Brown, Marian Bush, Matt Miller, Heather Ritts, Michelle Valenti and Crystal Woodard. Students were Mary Confair, Emily Conklin, Brynne Kiesel, Nathan Lowery, Cullen McDowell, Kaitlyn McDowell, Teagan Miller, Brooke Morgan, Ahna Nelson, Connor Newton, Kiara Orner, Julia Raymond, Brianna Scott, Chelsey Streich, Kendra Valenti, Mason Valenti, Abby Woodard and Alan Yeager.

Small faith sharing group visits Rouse Suites



YOUNGVSILLE—Members of a small faith sharing group visit residents of Rouse Suites, an assisted living facility in Youngsville. Members of Holy Redeemer and St. Joseph parishes in Warren, and St. Luke Parish in Youngsville, go to the center Wednesday evenings to share faith, fellowship and fun. Seated, left to right, are: Rose Claire, Carl Russo, Sandi Mineweaser, Joyce McNaughtin and Joyce Meyer. Standing, left to right, are: Pat Stanton, Mary Sullivan, Kim McFate and Troy McFate.

St. Mike's celebrates Schools Week



GREENVILLE—St. Michael School in Greenville celebrated Mass followed by an open house for January's Catholic Schools Week. Pictured enjoying the event, left to right, are: fifth-grader Will Toth, teacher Patrick Matusz, and seventh-grader John Michael Yurisc.

Knights at St. Boniface win awards



ERIE—Knights of Columbus Council #13427, St. Boniface Parish in Erie, won the international Columbian and Father McGivney Award for the 2013-2014 fraternal year. The Father McGivney Award, named for the founder of the organization, is given in recognition of outstanding membership recruitment and retention efforts. The Columbian Award is presented for excellence in sponsoring programs that serve the church, community, families, pro-life efforts, youth and council members.

Raymond Barber, past state secretary for Pennsylvania, presented the engraved plaque to the council at a special ceremony in December. Pictured are: Paul Vallimont, John Altman, Raymond Barber, and Father Jay Schultz, pastor of St. Boniface and council chaplain.

Kicking up their heels for Catholic schools



Photo by Rich Papalia

ERIE—These kindergartners from Our Lady's Christian School in Erie enjoyed a walk through the school's parking lot during the inaugural Blizzards Walk in support of Catholic education. Students from preschool through eighth grade joined more than 150 parents, relatives and teachers who walked laps to raise funds for tuition as-

istance for students in need. The school community raised more than \$4,600; another \$2,100 was raised through business sponsorships. Pictured, left to right, are second-graders Kendra Gomez, Maria Costa, Ireland Kaercher and Laura Morphy.

2015 Lenten Dinners

ALL SAINTS

11264 Route 97 N., Waterford
 February 20, 27 / March 6, 13, 20, 27
 4:30-7:00 pm

BAKED OR FRIED WHITE FISH
 Adult \$9; Child 12 and under \$4

Toddlers FREE
 Includes choice of baked potato or French fries, coleslaw/applesauce, homemade desserts and drink.
 *Takeout available. (814) 796-3023

BELOVED DISCIPLE

Grove City Knights of Columbus #3658
 and Rosary Altar Society
 Knights of Columbus Hall
 1342 S. Center St. Ext. (Rt. 208), Grove City
 February 20, 27 / March 6, 13, 20, 27
 4:30-7:00 pm

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT-FISH
 Adult \$10; Child 5-12 \$5 (under 5 FREE)
 Immediate families: no more than \$40.
 Includes fried fish, 1 piece baked fish, mac and cheese, scalloped potatoes, green beans, salad, coleslaw, applesauce, roll, beverage and dessert. *Dine in or take out.

BLESSED SACRAMENT

School Cafeteria, 1626 W. 26th St., Erie
 February 20 / March 6, 20
 4:30-7:00 pm

BAKED SCROD, MAC AND CHEESE OR CHEESE RAVIOLI

All dinners include green beans, coleslaw, roll and butter, sherbet and beverage; fish dinners also include French fries or mac and cheese.

FISH OR CHEESE RAVIOLI Adult \$9

MACARONI AND CHEESE Adult \$5
 Child (12 and under):
FISH OR CHEESE RAVIOLI \$5
MACARONI AND CHEESE \$3
 *Takeout available; bake sale tool
 (814) 454-0171

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Gaughan Hall, Mercer
 February 20, 27 / March 6, 13, 20, 27
 and April 3; 5:00-7:00 pm

FRIED FISH: Adult \$9; Child 12 and under \$4; 3 and under FREE
 Includes French fries, mac and cheese, coleslaw, bread and butter, coffee, tea, lemonade and cake. *Takeout available.
 (724) 662-2999

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Scheffner Hall
 1553 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie
 February 27 / March 13, 27
 4:00-7:00 pm

FRIED FISH AND/OR CHEESE PIEROGI
 Adult \$9.50; Child \$4.50
 (**Takeout 50 cents extra)
 Includes choice of French fries, potato salad or macaroni (cont'd on next column)

and cheese, coleslaw or green beans and ice cream dessert. (814) 825-7313

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE

Social Hall, 128 Sunset Drive, Edinboro
 February 20, 27 / March 6, 13, 20, 27
 5:00-7:00 pm

BAKED OR FRIED FISH

Adult \$9; Child donation \$4
 Includes baked potato or mac and cheese, coleslaw, green beans, bread, refreshments and dessert. *Tickets and takeout available at the door. (814) 763-2986 or jchfarm@hotmail.com

SS. PETER AND PAUL BYZANTINE

Social Hall, 3415 Wallace Street, Erie
 February 20 / March 6, 20; 4:30-7:00 pm

FISH AND/OR PIEROGI

Adult \$10; Child 6-12 \$5; Child under 6 FREE
 Includes choice of baked fish, potato/cheese pierogi or combo. *Takeout available.
 Nut roll bake sale too!
 (814) 825-8140

ST. ANTHONY

St. Paul Center (Sponsored by St. Anthony Knights of Columbus)
 Rt. 6 (Saybrook), Sheffield; February 20 and every Lenten Friday; 5:00-7:00 pm

FISH FRY: Adult \$9

Includes large portion of haddock, French fries, coleslaw, roll, beverage, homemade dessert; 50/50 drawing!
 (814) 968-5915

ST. BONIFACE SCHOOL

School Cafeteria, 359 Main St., Kersey
 Ash Wed., February 18 and every Lenten Friday including April 3
 4:00-7:00 pm

FRIED OR BAKED FISH

Adult \$10.50
 Extra piece of fish \$6
CHICKEN FINGERS Adult \$8; Child \$4
 Includes baked potato or French fries, macaroni salad or coleslaw and homemade desserts.
 (814) 885-8093

ST. BRIGID

St. Brigid Social Hall, 383 Arch St., Meadville
 February 20 through March 27
 4:30-6:30 pm

FISH Adult \$8; MAC AND CHEESE OR GRILLED CHEESE Child (5-12) \$4

ICE CREAM BAR \$1.50
 (814) 336-4459

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

Pastors' Hall
 26th and Wallace Streets, Erie
 Ash Wed., February 18
 4:30-7:00 pm (Distribution of ashes 5:00 pm)

DEEP FRIED PERCH OR BAKED COD

Adult \$9; Senior \$8; Child under 12 \$5
 Includes potatoes, mac and cheese, green beans, salad and homemade desserts.
 (814) 454-2873

ST. JOSEPH

17735 Bennetts Valley Highway, Force
 Ash Wed., February 18 and every Lenten Friday; Noon-6:30 pm

BAKED OR FRIED HADDOCK

Adult \$10; Child 10 and under \$6
 Includes choice of French fries or baked potato, cup of soup, dinner roll, coleslaw, dessert and drink. *Eat in or takeout (soup and drink not included with takeout).
 (814) 787-4819; Delivery in Bennetts Valley!

ST. LUKE

Knights of Columbus
 Msgr. Robert Goodill Center #11229
 School Cafeteria, 421 E. 38th St., Erie
 February 20, 27 / March 6, 13
 5:00-7:00 pm

FISH Adult \$9; Child (6-12) \$5.50
5 and under FREE; SHRIMP BASKET \$7
CAPTAINS PLATTER \$12; *Takeout available starting at 5:00. (814) 434-4167

ST. SEVERIN

Social Hall, 6786 Kylertown-Drifting Hwy., Drifting (Exit 133 on I-80, 5 mi. N. on Rt. 53)
 February 20, 27 / March 6, 13, 20, 27
 4:00-6:30 pm

BAKED OR FRIED FISH

Adult \$9, Small \$6. Includes parsley potatoes, vegetable, slaw or applesauce, mac and cheese, stewed tomatoes, roll and butter, dessert and beverage.
 *Eat in or take out. (814) 345-6665

ST. STANISLAUS

516 E. 13th St., Erie
 February 20 / March 6, 20; 4:00-7:00 pm

FISH OR PIEROGI

Adult \$10; Child (6-12) \$5; under 6 FREE
 *Takeout: \$10.25; (814) 452-6606

ST. TERESA

Parish Center, 9 Third Ave., Union City
 February 20, 27 / March 6, 13, 20, 27
 4:30-7:00 pm

BAKED OR FRIED HADDOCK

Adult \$9; Child \$4
 Includes choice of baked potato, French fries or mac and cheese, coleslaw or applesauce, dinner roll with butter, homemade dessert and beverage. *Takeout available.
 (814) 438-2783; More info: (814) 438-2000

VENANGO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

1505 W. First St., Oil City
 February 20, 27 / March 6, 13, 20, 27
 5:00-7:00 pm

ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT FISH FRY

Adult \$9.50; Senior \$9; Child under 12 \$7; Child under 5 \$4; Includes baked potato or French fries, coleslaw, rolls, dessert and beverage. PIZZA \$2.50/slice.
 *Takeout available. (814) 676-9429

If a parish/school is not listed, please contact them directly for their Lenten dinner information.