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SEARCH this edition of *FaithLife* for the hidden answer to this question:

**Q: WHAT DID MOSES PART?**  
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HINTS: ■ The answer is not in any ads.  
■ Consider a play on words.

Email your answer to: [faithlife@ErieRCD.org](mailto:faithlife@ErieRCD.org) by March 2, 2014.

One entry per person. If there are multiple winners, the names will be put in a random drawing. The winner will be announced in the March 9, 2014 edition of *FaithLife*. Employees of St. Mark Catholic Center are not eligible to participate.

## Lenten practices and regulations

The season of Lent begins this year on Ash Wednesday, March 5, and concludes when the Paschal Triduum of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of the Lord begins at the start of the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday evening, April 17, 2014.

Traditional Lenten practices of **PRAYER, FASTING and ALMSGIVING** and other forms of self-denial are recommended most warmly by the church. Daily Mass is particularly encouraged.

### Lenten observances:

■ **ASH WEDNESDAY, ALL FRIDAYS IN LENT and GOOD FRIDAY** are days of abstinence from meat for those 14 years of age and older.

■ **ASH WEDNESDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY** are also days of **fasting** for those ages 18 to 59 inclusive. *(On these days, those bound by the law of fasting may take one full meal, two smaller meals, sufficient to maintain strength according to one's needs, are also permitted. Eating between meals is not permitted, but liquids including milk and fruit juices are allowed. When health or work is seriously affected, the law does not oblige.)*

# FaithLife

BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

## POPE QUOTE

INSPIRING WORDS  
FROM POPE FRANCIS

"I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt."

February 23, 2014

## HOMELESS

### Catholic parishes offer food, warmth

Mary Solberg  
*FaithLife*

At 51, Jim is homeless and on disability. One night—during this endlessly long frigid winter—he found himself on a cot at St. Joseph/Bread of Life Parish in Erie.

"I like to read about rock stars," Jim said as he flipped through the pages of *No Regrets*, the 2011 biography of Ace Frehley, the former lead guitarist and founding member of the rock band KISS.

*No Regrets* seems to be a fitting book for the surroundings...not because the 30 homeless people who found shelter at the parish this January night don't have regrets. They have plenty of them. But like Frehley, so many homeless find themselves in desperate situations because of bad decisions.

Unlike rock stars, though, the estimated 1,500 homeless people in Erie County are faceless and nameless. Jim, for example, chose not to give his last name. He was one of about 62 people who found refuge from the sub-zero temperatures for two weeks this winter at St. Joseph/Bread of Life, located near W. 24th and Sassafras streets in Erie.

The parish opened its doors as part of Community Shelter Services' overnight overflow shelter project. Local churches take turns providing dinner, breakfast, a bed and, mostly, warmth. With so many homeless people wandering the streets, particu-



Photo by Mary Solberg

The frigid temperatures in the region this winter have forced many homeless people to search for overnight shelter. Here, people wait to be welcomed inside the social center of St. Joseph/Bread of Life Church in Erie.

larly in the cold weather, the need is great.

"We have volunteers from all denominations," said Bob Schell, a chaplain with Community Shelter Services. "We're all coming together to work for Christ."

Besides St. Joseph/Bread of Life, other Catholic parishes that have been involved in the overflow shelter service this winter are St. Patrick, which helped the Russian Orthodox Church of the Nativity in December and in February, and St. John Parish, which is scheduled to host March 12-26.

According to Nancy Murray, pastoral minister at St. Joseph/Bread of Life, there were an average of 30 to 35 homeless people who stayed per night in the parish gymnasium from Jan. 29 to Feb. 11. At least half of the parish's 512 families volunteered in some capacity to make it a success.

Workers opened the doors for dinner every day at 7:30 p.m. and closed at 7 a.m. after breakfast. Pa-

rishioners volunteered to work one of three shifts: 7 to 11 p.m., 11 p.m. to 3 a.m., and 3 a.m. to 7 a.m. Murray worked the first shift, but always returned the next day at 5:30 a.m. to prepare breakfast and help with the departure of guests.

Living on four hours of sleep

per night for two weeks, Murray said, "I am so exhausted that I can't even stand up, but that's OK. It's a very nice exhaustion."

Murray actually was inspired to undertake the project last year when Community Shelter Services asked

See HOMELESS, page 3

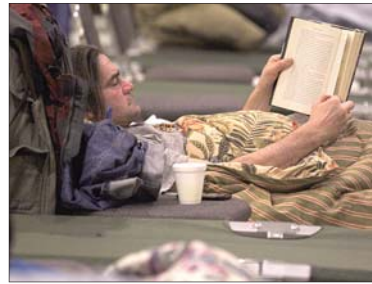


Photo by Mary Solberg

Jim, a guest at the overnight shelter at St. Joseph/Bread of Life Parish, Erie, reads *No Regrets* in the warmth of his cot.

## 2014 Catholic Services Appeal begins in Diocese of Erie

Warren parish raises 200% to 300% over assessment every year

*FaithLife*

Holy Redeemer Parish in Warren wants to get new carpeting in a meeting room this year and also replace the block-long concrete sidewalk outside the front of the church on Pennsylvania Avenue. Both projects likely will happen—with no debt accrued—as long as parishioners keep giving to the church the way they have for several years.

"The people here just love the church. Anything that needs to be done, they just do it," says Virginia Swoger, 78, a longtime parishioner with her husband, Pete, 80.

For the past 12 years, the Swogers have served as the chair-couple of the annual Catholic Services Appeal at Holy Redeemer. And for about as long, the parish has exceeded its annual diocesan assessment by 200 to 300 percent.

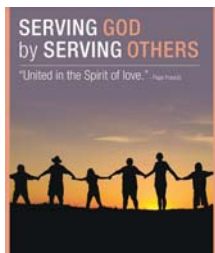
"Holy Redeemer always exceeds its goal, like many parishes, but it is the one that raises the most over what it is assessed," says Bill Grant, director of stewardship and annual giving for the Diocese of Erie.

The Catholic Services Appeal has been used by the diocese for more than 30 years to assist in outreach to the people of the 13 counties of northwestern Pennsylvania. The appeal generates 48.1 percent of the total diocesan income, which is used in various ministries: schools, administration, clergy formation, communication and evangelization.

But asking people for money, especially in light of a difficult economy, can be a challenge. The Swogers, however, are committed for the long haul. Their special brand of fundraising and the commitment of the people to their parish have spelled success.

"I guess giving to the church is one of the priorities," Pete Swoger says.

The Swogers, who have been parishioners at Holy Redeemer for nearly 40 years,



The 2014 Catholic Services Appeal theme is, "Serving God by Serving Others — United in the Spirit of Love."

have gathered a force of about 40 people to make personal phone calls asking fellow parishioners to contribute to the Catholic Services Appeal. Years ago, the calls were harder to make, but now people have simply grown used to hearing the phone ring at this

[www.ErieRCD.org/CSA.asp](http://www.ErieRCD.org/CSA.asp)

See a 10-minute video message from Bishop Lawrence Persico as well as the stories of many who have benefited from Catholic Services Appeal dollars.

time of the year.

"For the most part, people are ready to pledge when we call them anyway," Pete Swoger says. "But I attribute the success of our appeal to the personal contact. It's a tad easier to say 'yes' when you're talking to somebody."

Like most people in the diocese, parishioners at Holy Redeemer give anywhere from a small amount to into the thousands. However, the number of families that participate at the Warren parish is more than most. About half of the estimated 600 families make a pledge.

Bill Grant is looking to increase the numbers of families who participate in the appeal this year. The average participation rate in diocesan parishes is 31 percent.

"We'd like to see an increase not only in terms of dollars but in engagement," Grant says.

The Catholic Services Appeal goal this year is \$3.9 million. One hundred percent of what parishes

raise over their individual assessments stays in the parish. The 2012 appeal raised a record amount: about \$6 million. That meant \$2 million stayed in the 117 parishes of the diocese.

Bishop Lawrence Persico says it's no coincidence that the Catholic Services Appeal is launched every year before Lent, a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

## Tykes talk to bishop



Photo by Cory Byknish/Sharon Herald

HERMITAGE—Bishop Lawrence Persico visited kindergartners at Blessed John Paul II Elementary School in Hermitage during Catholic Schools Week in January.



## Faith keeps Canadian speedskater grounded and calm

TORONTO (CNS)—Danielle Wotherspoon-Gregg had big skates to fill at her first Winter Olympics, but the Catholic Canadian who competed in the 500-meter speedskating race, has faith to keep her calm.

Wotherspoon-Gregg, 33, made her inaugural Olympic appearance as a competitor in Sochi, Russia, Feb. 11. "I've had kind of a longer journey with achieving this goal because the last two Olympic trials I wasn't really healthy," said Wotherspoon-Gregg. "In 2006, I was sick so I wasn't really competing at a competitive level, not competitive enough to make the team, and in 2010 I pulled my hip flexor really bad."

In an interview with the Canadian national weekly *The Catholic Register*, she credited her strong faith, her family and her friends for getting her through.

"It just helps knowing that there is always someone with you and watching you," said Wotherspoon-Gregg.



CNS photo

Danielle Wotherspoon-Gregg of Canada, left, and Vanessa Bittner of Austria compete during the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics in Russia Feb. 11.

## Aides discuss Benedict's lifestyle

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In retirement, Pope Benedict XVI follows a daily schedule similar to that of any retired bishop or religious. He prays, reads, strolls, talks with people and offers them spiritual advice, a Vatican spokesman said.

Although he "lives in a low-key way, without public attention, that does not mean he's isolated or enclosed in a strict cloister," Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi told Vatican Radio.

Marking the one-year anniversary of Pope Benedict's resignation Feb. 11, Father Lombardi and Archbishop Georg Ganswein, the retired pope's longtime personal secretary, spoke about the normal daily life of a man who is in the unusual position of being a retired pope.

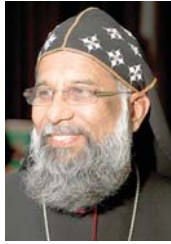
## New president named to Catholic Bishops' Conference of India

PALAI, India (CNS)—The new president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India said the church should draw strength from spirituality to engage in works of charity.

"Energy for charitable works should come from our spiritual strength," Cardinal Basilio Thottunkal of Trivandrum said at a news conference Feb. 12.

Quoting an incident in the life of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, the 54-year old major archbishop said that when a reporter asked Blessed Teresa "what is the source of your energy?" she took the reporter to the chapel and pointed to the tabernacle.

"There is need for deep spiritual renewal in the church," reiterated Cardinal Thottunkal.



CNS photo

## Benedictines release Lenten CD

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Twenty-two nuns beat "Fifty Shades of Grey: The Classical Album" on *Billboard* magazine's classical traditional chart last year. Now, they're at it again with a new album that might top the charts.

On Feb. 11, the award-winning Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles in Missouri released their third album, "Lent at Ephesus," with De Montfort Music/Decca/Universal Classics—just in time for the penitential season. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year is March 5.

"The Benedictines of Mary have outdone themselves with what can only be described as an artistic masterpiece," Monica Fitzgibbons, co-founder of De Montfort Music, said in a Carmel Communications press release.

After the success of the first two albums, *Billboard* magazine named the nuns Top Traditional Classical Album Artist in 2012 and 2013, making them the first order of nuns to receive an award by *Billboard* magazine.



## Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

On Jan. 31, Pope Francis tweeted, "No one saves oneself. The community is essential."

His words could not have come at a more meaningful time for me and anyone who has had contact with the homeless in our region this winter. I recently spent a couple of hours at St. Joseph/Bread of Life Parish in Erie, where 30 to 35 homeless men and women were provided meals and cots each night for two weeks. St. Joseph's experience (discussed in further detail on page 1) shows that it takes many people, churches and agencies to pull together to alleviate the suffering of our homeless brothers and sisters.

I say "suffering" because being outside in sub-zero temperatures—even if you have a coat and boots—can be challenging, even life-threatening. Consider Steve DeBolt, a homeless man, who told me that he has diabetes but still takes his medication.

Volunteers like Nancy Murray, Deanna Baker, Domenica Huston and the hundreds of other parishioners at St. Joseph eased that suffering just a little bit this winter.

It's good to hear that St. John Parish in Erie will open its doors overnight to the homeless March 12-26. Parishioners of St. Patrick, also in Erie, are helping this month with shelter services offered at the Russian Orthodox Church of the Nativity.

The communities of Gannon University and Cathedral Prep in Erie had to deal this winter with the tragic loss of two young people.

Deepest sympathies to the families and friends of David Hallman III, a 2010 graduate of Prep, and Abrielle Brynda, a student at Gannon. Counselors were available at both schools, offering students help in coping with the deaths.

Father Scott Jabo, president of Erie Catholic Preparatory School, which includes Prep and Villa Maria Academy, said

Hallman was "well-liked" and was an "excellent student." He was a member of the high school's swim team and also swam for Denison University in Ohio.

Father Michael Kesicki, associate vice president for Mission and Ministry at Gannon, said about 350 students attended a Sunday Mass at Gannon's Mary, Seat of Wisdom Chapel in downtown Erie. A busload of students also attended viewing hours at Brynda's hometown of Zelionople.

"This university is a community of faith and a community that cares," Father Kesicki said.

Keith Taylor, president of Gannon, issued an email to the Gannon community, saying, "With faith and love, we will remain a strong Gannon family."

St. Vincent Archbishop in nearby Latrobe welcomed Archbishop Rino Fisichella, a renowned scholar in the new evangelization, for its Benedict XVI Annual Lecture on Feb. 18. Fisichella is the president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, which addresses the need to announce the Christian message with greater impact and freshness. Bishop Lawrence Persico attended the lecture.

"The proclamation of the Gospel cannot be delegated to others; rather, it requires the awareness specific to the believer that he or she is to be a bearer of Christ wherever they go," Fisichella said.

There's nothing like a prayer from Pope Francis to help your marriage get off on the right foot. On the feast of St. Valentine, 10,000 engaged couples from all over the world gathered with the pope at St. Peter's Square at the Vatican.

Since his election as pope, the Holy Father has shown an unflagging support of families. During the meeting with couples on Feb. 14, Pope Francis gave some sage advice, too. "A marriage does not succeed just because it lasts; its quality is also important. To stay together and to know how to love each other forever is the challenge Christian married couples face."

The sight of 10,000 couples at St. Peter's was amazing. Now that's a smor!

Mary Solberg is the editor of *FaithLife*. Email: msolberg@ERIEKCD.org Call 814-824-1171 Twitter.com/ERIEKCDsolberg

# Parishioner bequests more than \$150,000

"Wow!" exclaimed Principal Mary Beth Ek as she stood in front of students and parishioners who gathered at Our Lady of Peace Church in Erie on Jan. 30.

Ek couldn't contain her excitement—and neither could the children—when it was announced that parishioner Frank Amoroso had left the W. 38th Street school \$153,160.82.

"Today you are a witness of the most generous gift from a very humble man," Ek told the children who gathered for a Mass during Catholic Schools Week.

Also on hand was Jean Sappington, executrix of Amoroso's estate and a longtime friend of Amoroso, who died last September at the age of 82. He left the money to Our Lady of Peace School as an unrestricted gift, meaning that the parish—under the leadership of Father Ted Marconi, pastor—could use it in whatever manner it thought best.

"Frank had faith in this church and this school," Sappington said. "He had enough faith to hand the money over to be used in a fashion that would benefit everyone."

Sappington, who had been friends for many years with Amoroso and his late wife, Dolores, was excited to share the news and present a check to Father Marconi during the Mass at Our Lady of Peace.

"Frank was one of the most dedicated, hardworking individuals I have ever met," Sappington told the attentive students. "He just gave his best to everything he did."



Frank Amoroso, a longtime parishioner at Our Lady of Peace Parish in Erie, left more than \$150,000 to the school when he died last fall. On hand to announce the gift were: Principal Mary Beth Ek; Ashley Caldwell, advancement director; Jean Sappington, executrix of the Amoroso estate; and Father Ted Marconi, pastor.

Father Marconi and his staff—including Ek and John Plavcan, school computer technician, have opted to use the money to bolster the technology imprint at the school. Two computer labs will be completely equipped with state-of-the-art technology and software and teachers also will receive new computers

and software. Teachers are researching the most current advances available today, with the hopes of making technology more portable at the school. "Frank helped us vault into the future," Father Marconi said.

## DEATH NOTICES

### Mercy Sister Jeannette Denslinger taught music most of her life

Mercy Sister Jeannette Mary Denslinger, 101, formerly Sister Philip Nen, died at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse in Erie on Jan. 31. She was in her 70th year of religious life.

Born Dec. 6, 1912, in Greenville, Pa., she entered the Sisters of Mercy at St. Joseph Convent in Titusville on Sept. 24, 1944. She professed perpetual vows on June 21, 1950. In 1972, she celebrated her silver jubilee; in 1995, her golden jubilee; and in 2005, her diamond jubilee.

Sister Jeannette earned a bachelor's degree in music from Mercyhurst College, now Mercyhurst University, Erie, and a master's degree in music education from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh.

Throughout her life, she served as a teacher of organ, piano and music at these Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Erie: St.

Catherine, DuBois; St. Cosmas & Damian, Punnasutaway; St. Thomas, Corry; and St. Michael, Greenville. Also, she taught at St. Justin School in Pittsburgh.

In 2008, Sister Jeannette retired from teaching piano at Mercy Center of the Arts. In her retirement, she continued providing private lessons for several years.

Survivors include a brother, Francis J. Denslinger of Erie; several nieces and nephews; and members of her religious community.

A Mass of Christian burial was celebrated at the Our Lady of Mercy chapel on Feb. 3. A rite of departure was held Feb. 4 before burial at Gate of Heaven Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Sisters of Mercy Ministry Fund, 444 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie, Pa. 16504.



Sister Jeannette Denslinger, RSM

### Sister Marie Paul Ashworth, SSI, dies in 64th year of religious life

Sister Marie Paul Ashworth, SSI, 82, of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, died Feb. 4 in her 64th year of religious life.

A native of Erie, she entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Andrew Parish on Sept. 1, 1950. She professed her final vows on Aug. 15, 1956, and celebrated her diamond jubilee in 2010.

Sister Marie Paul graduated from Villa Maria Academy, Erie, in 1950 and continued her education at Villa Maria College, graduating in 1967 with a bachelor's degree in nursing.

She taught elementary school for six years at Villa Maria Elementary and Blessed Sacrament schools in Erie, St. Bernard in Bradford, and Holy Rosary in Johnsonburg.

She entered the nursing profession in 1959 and ministered in various positions at Saint Vincent Health Center, now Saint Vincent Hospital, for more than 34 years. She retired from active ministry in 2013.

Besides the members of her religious community, she is survived by her sister, Mary Anne Ashworth of Erie; her sisters-in-law, Carrie Ashworth of Texas; and two nephews and many cousins.

Visiting hours were held at the Sisters of St. Joseph Community Living Center in Erie Feb. 6-7. Burial was at Calvary Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Community Support Fund of the Sisters of St. Joseph, 5031 West Bradford Road, Erie, Pa. 16506-1249.



Sister Marie Paul Ashworth, SSI

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## Briefly

### Three families to be honored for commitment to Catholic education

ERIE—Three families will be honored at Erie's Our Lady's Christian School 2014 Legacy Celebration on March 15 from 6 to 11 p.m.

Recognized for their commitment to Catholic education are: the Joseph and Jean Kloecker family of St. Jude the Apostle Parish, the Michael and Debbie Murnock family of St. Julia Parish, and the late Marie Stark and the Norman Stark family of St. Andrew Parish, all of Erie.

This year's Legacy Celebration theme is "Celebrating One Family of Faith," which recognizes how all three parishes provide families with a place to pray, learn and build community. The evening will be held at the school, located at 606 Lowell Ave., Erie, and will include Irish-themed food stations, open wine/beer bar and an Irish dance performance, among many other activities. The cost is \$40 per person; seating is limited. Reservations are requested by Feb. 28 by calling Jennie Hagerty at 814-833-0927, ext. 6.

### Open registration held at Clarion school

CLARION—Immaculate Conception School in Clarion will hold open registration on March 19 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Families interested in registering children for preschool or kindergarten are invited to attend.

Immaculate Conception School welcomes children of all denominations. Tuition assistance is available for qualifying families. For more information, contact Lori Cratty, interim principal, at 814-226-8433, ext. 105, or email [lowrie@clarionchawks.net](mailto:lowrie@clarionchawks.net).

### Sister to speak about faith communities

GREENVILLE—Dominican Sister Donna L. Ciangio will speak about small Christian communities during a visit March 29 to St. Michael Parish in Greenville.

The public is invited to the talk, "Small Communities as a Way to Revitalize and Nourish Your Parish," from 9 a.m. to noon.

Sister Donna is the director of Church Leadership Consultation, an organization through which she promotes parish vitality and pastoral directions, leadership development, faith formation, small Christian communities, and consulting and planning with parishes and dioceses.

For more information, contact the church office at 724-588-7198.

### Chastity program scheduled at St. George

ERIE—Real Life and Real Love, a family centered chastity education program for parents and teenagers, will be held March 28-29 at St. George Parish, 5145 Peach St., Erie.

The event is geared toward seventh- and eighth-graders and their parents. Hours on March 28 will be from 6 to 9 p.m. and on March 29 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registrations may be made online at [www.familyhonor.com](http://www.familyhonor.com) or by contacting Bernadette Carroll at [dettedete2@hotmail.com](mailto:dettedete2@hotmail.com) or 814-864-2222.

### Consider Retrouvaille to strengthen, support difficult marriages

ERIE—Difficult marriages are wounded marriages that need healing. Consider Retrouvaille and learn an effective communication method and other ways to strengthen your marriage and bring it renewed energy. The next marriage-saving weekend is March 14-16 in Erie. Retrouvaille is sponsored by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Erie. For more information, call 1-814-437-9377.

### St. Peter Cathedral Music Ministry presents Irish concert at Prep auditorium

ERIE—The Cathedral Music Ministry will present a concert of Irish music titled, "Patti Sullivan & Friends present 'Echoes from Erin,'" on Sunday, March 16, at 2 p.m. at the Cathedral Preparatory School auditorium in Erie.

The hour-long event features Msgr. Tom McSweeney, Rinca Na Tiarna (Irish Step Dancers), Joe Greulich, Michael Malthaner, St. Peter Cathedral Children's Choir, Sister Lucille DeStefano, SSJ, and Louis Nicolai. A free-will offering will be taken to benefit the St. Peter Cathedral Music Ministry. The concert is open to the public. For more information about the concert, email [wharring@stpetercathedral.com](mailto:wharring@stpetercathedral.com) or call 814-453-6677, ext. 7.

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# Sisters of St. Joseph reach out to troubled east Erie neighborhoods

Mary Solberg  
FaithLife

City of Erie Police Chief Randy Bowers is happy to get the help.

So is Sonya Arrington, the Erie woman who founded Mothers Against Teen Violence.

Steve Simmeljaer, coordinator of the East Side Eagles neighborhood watch project, can't wait for the transformation to begin.

They're all looking to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania to help bring stability, peace and hope to east Erie neighborhoods that are facing myriad social ills, including high rates of crime and unemployment.

On Feb. 11, the Sisters of St. Joseph announced that the religious community would be expanding its SSJ Neighborhood Network to include the geographical area that extends from E. 16th to E. 26th streets and Parade Street to Elm Street. The average percentage of families living in poverty in that area is 31.1 percent. The average rate of unemployment stands at about 38 percent.

The SSJ Neighborhood Network has been in place in the Little Italy section of Erie's west side since 2000. The grassroots ministry provides leadership, advocates on various levels for local residents, and works with the broader community to revitalize neighborhoods and individual lives.

The expansion of the program to east Erie was applauded by a packed audience at the Sisters of St. Joseph motherhouse in Erie.

"This is a blessing from God," Sonya Arrington said, rising from her seat. "We need to get some of these kids off the streets."

Arrington's son was fatally shot leaving an Erie convenience store in 2010. She founded Mothers Against Teen Violence and started a mentoring program at the Booker T. Washington Center in Erie.

"Whatever you need," Ar-



Photo by Mary Solberg

The Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network are pulling in broad community resources to make their vision a reality. Pictured, left to right, are: City of Erie Police Chief Randy Bowers; Sister Mary Herrmann, SSJ, president of the Sisters of St. Joseph; Sister Phyllis McCracken, SSJ, co-chair of the SSJ Neighborhood Network East Committee; Bishop Lawrence Persico; and Sister Mary Ann White, SSJ, secretary of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

ington told the sisters, "I'm there."

Police Chief Bowers, Erie Mayor Joe Sinnott and State Sen. Sean Wiley, 49th Dist., also were on-hand for the morning announcement Feb. 11. Both Bowers and Wiley were taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph—Bowers at the former St. John School on Erie's eastside and Wiley at Our Lady's Christian School on W. 6th Street.

All of them already have seen improvements—thanks to the SSJ Neighborhood Network West—in the distressed neighborhoods that were once the backbone of the immigrant Italian community in Erie.

"We know from their past track record with the success in Little Italy that their increased presence on the eastside will be a big ben-

efit to the city," Bowers told *FaithLife*.

Both Wiley and Sinnott pledged their support, saying any and all help is required to address neighborhoods plagued with poverty, drugs, crime, blight and vacant buildings. They know that collaboration among all entities—

churches, emergency shelters, religious communities, community outreach programs—is the only answer.

Sinnott credited the sisters for what they have accomplished already, which has included door-to-door outreach, community gardens, a tutoring program and creating models of affordable housing.

"They've accomplished so much in Little Italy that the neighborhoods there have gone through a holistic transformation," Mayor

Sinnott said.

Bishop Lawrence Persico spoke to the gathering, offering his support and his admiration for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

"Pope Francis keeps telling us we must reach out to the poor," the bishop said in brief remarks before leading a prayer. "With this expanded Neighborhood Network effort, the Catholic Church, through the vision and commitment and dedication of women religious, is putting faith into action."

Rosmari Graham, executive director of the SSJ Neighborhood Network, explained that volunteers will conduct door-to-door outreach on the eastside, as they did in Little Italy. They'll create a community advisory committee and seek to establish partnerships with many others who share the same vision of renewal.

"It will take us all [to make a difference]," Graham said.

# Catholic parishes shelter Erie's homeless

HOMELESS, from page 1

local churches for help with the overflow crowds of homeless during the winter.

For several months, she and others from the parish talked to Community Shelter representatives and visited many churches that had already become a part of the overflow system.

"I never did anything with homeless people before," said volunteer Deanna Baker, a parishioner the past three years at St. Joseph/Bread of Life. "I see that these people are God's children, just like I am."

Father Larry Richards, pastor, supported the outreach from day one. He said many of the overnight guests attended morning Mass.

"It really opened my eyes to what a problem we have with homelessness in Erie," Father Richards said. "Volunteers learned that every person who came to St. Joseph's shelter for refuge had a story."



Andy Overton, a U.S. Army veteran, shows his plastic canvas stitching to Nancy Murray, pastoral minister at St. Joseph/Bread of Life Church. Overton is homeless and found shelter at the parish during its two-week rotation as an overflow provider with the Community Shelter Services.

Parishioner Domenica Huston sat one evening with guest Steven DeBolt, 49. DeBolt talked about his failed marriage and how his dream of being a pro-

baseball player never materialized.

"I pray every day," DeBolt said.

Andy Overton, a 59-year-old Vietnam veteran, has lived on the streets for almost a year.

Unemployed, he tries to make some money by selling plastic canvas stitching designs. During the day, he stays warm at fast-food restaurants, churches or day shelters.

"If it wasn't for all the churches, I don't know what any of us would do," Overton said.

Murray found Overton's work inspiring and encouraged visitors to look at it.

Men like him, she said, are typical of the homeless: no work, no money and no support system. And many are veterans.

"Many of us who have homes feel that it's us and them, but every last one of us could be in their same position if we lost a job, had a health problem or if we made one bad decision," Murray said.

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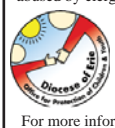
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click on *For the Protection of Children*

## Something's fishy in DuBois

DuBOIS—DuBois Central Catholic eighth-graders look forward every year to the school's Trout in the Classroom Program, made possible through a partnership between the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission and the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited.

DuBois middle school students Lauren Usaitis, Matt Ishman, Jarred Black, Cecelia Tornatore, Abbie Zeitler, Julie Marchioni, Meghan Graeca and Alexandra Angheloiu take turns separating live fish eggs from dead ones. They use a turkey baster in preparation for their next step into the



large classroom fish tank. far left, watches the activity unfold. DCC teacher Renee Gressler,

## Making friends at Down Syndrome Buddy Walk



ERIE—More than 30 students from St. George School in Erie joined theology teacher Marielle Lafaro, at last fall's annual Down Syndrome Buddy Walk at Penn

State Behrend. Pictured at the Behrend Junker Center, from left to right, are: eighth-grader Ryan Kociolek, St. George altar server and usher

Matthew Krauz, eighth-graders Abby Kaluzny, Heather Rich and Summer Totleben, and Lafaro.

## Students erect teepees as part of history lesson



DuBOIS—Middle school students at DuBois Central Catholic pose with author Robin Moore, back row, left, and his replica Native American Indian teepee. Moore visited DCC and shared his stories of Early American history with both middle school and elementary students during his day-long workshop in the school's gym.

Pictured sitting in the front row, left to right, are: Sabrina Spencer, Carolyn Sette, Alexandra Angheloiu, Meghan Graeca, Lauren

Usaitis and Julie Marchioni. Kneeling, left to right, are: Raquel Salada, Madison Nasuti, Jessica Tomasko, Caitlin Drahushak, Rebecca Liddle, Cecelia Tornatore, Jarred Black and Matthew Ishman.

Standing, left to right, are: Brooke Gornati, Cameron Stom, Alex Adamski, Brenna Engle, Abbi Zeitler, Madison Barnett, Garrett White and Thomas Grecco.

In the back row, left to right, are: Moore, Anthony DePello,

Brayden Ross and DCC middle school teacher Michael Micknis.

## Nine women accepted as first Agrégée candidates

ERIE—Nine women have been accepted as the first Agrégée candidates with the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania in Erie. Agrégée (pronounced au-greh-ZHEY) is a two-year formation process that includes study, prayer and discernment.

The focus of the first year is prayer and a member's individual spiritual journey. The second year concentrates on topics specifically about the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Agrégée is a French word meaning "attached to." The Agrégées make a permanent commitment, but they do not profess vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They do, however, profess a vow of fidelity. The new candidates pictured



in the front row, left to right, are: Cindy Polesnak, Arlene Chaney and Charlene Kellerman. In the back row, left to right, are: Cindy

Brown, Betsy Wiest, Michelle Tortorelli, Tammy Van Buren, Deb Seng and Jeanne Marie Ryan.

## Helping the homeless



ERIE—Students at Our Lady's Christian School in Erie collected money, warm clothing and other items for the Our Neighbors' Place Overflow Shelter. Seated, left to right, are: eighth-grade student council representatives

Simon Peter Mizner and Mary Liszka. Standing, left to right, are: Overflow Shelter Associate Director Bob Schell, Executive Director Kitty Caniglia, and Our Lady's Christian Principal Stephen Nemenz.

**Sacred Heart Altar Society's 61st Spaghetti Dinner**

Auditorium, W. 25th and Liberty Streets, Erie  
**Sunday, March 9**  
**Serving noon-6pm**

Dinner includes savory spaghetti and meatballs with original, authentic Italian sauce (since 1953), salad, bread and butter, dessert and beverage.  
**Adult: \$7.50, Child (6-12): \$4.00**  
**5 and under FREE**  
 Carryout orders from 11:30 a.m. (Please bring your own containers.)  
**Italian theme basket; Two cash awards; Bake sale**  
 Chief chefs: Lisa Lopez and Linn Lopez Rater

## 2014 Lenten Dinners

<p><b>ALL SAINTS PARISH</b>                  11264 Route 97 N., Waterford  <b>March 7, 14, 21, 28 / April 4, 11</b>                  4:30-7:00 pm</p> <p><b>BAKED OR FRIED WHITE FISH</b>                  Adult \$9; Child 12 and under \$4  <b>Toddlers FREE</b>                  Includes choice of baked potato or French fries, coleslaw, applesauce, homemade desserts and drink.                  *Takeout available beginning at 4:30 pm; at the door or call ahead: (814) 796-3023</p> <p><b>BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH</b>                  School Cafeteria                  1626 W. 26th St., Erie  <b>March 7, 21 / April 4</b>                  4:30-7:00 pm</p> <p><b>BAKED SCROD, MACARONI AND CHEESE OR CHEESE RAVIOLI</b>                  All dinners include green beans, coleslaw, roll and butter, sherbet and beverage; fish dinners also include French fries or mac and cheese.</p> <p><b>FISH OR CHEESE RAVIOLI</b> Adult \$9  <b>MACARONI AND CHEESE</b> Adult \$5                  Child (12 and under):  <b>FISH OR CHEESE RAVIOLI \$5</b>  <b>MACARONI AND CHEESE \$3</b>                  *Takeout available; bake sale!                  (814) 454-0171</p> <p><b>KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS</b>                  St. Paul Center                  Route 6 (Saybrook), Sheffield  <b>March 7 and every Friday until April 18</b>                  5:00-7:00 pm</p> <p><b>ICELANDIC HADDOCK</b>                  Large \$8; Small \$5                  Includes French fries, homemade coleslaw and desserts, rolls and beverages.                  St. Anthony Parish (814) 968-5915</p> <p><b>OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL</b>                  Scheffner Hall                  1553 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie  <b>March 14, 28 / April 11; 4:00-7:00 pm</b></p> <p><b>FRIED FISH AND/OR CHEESE PIEROGI</b>                  Adult \$9.50; Child \$4.50                  Includes choice of French fries, potato salad or macaroni and cheese, coleslaw or green beans and ice cream dessert.                  (814) 825-7313</p>	<p><b>OUR LADY OF THE LAKE</b>                  Social Hall, 128 Sunset Drive, Edinboro  <b>March 7, 21, 28, / April 4, 11</b>                  (Not on March 14 due to St. Patrick's Day Party); 5:00-7:00 pm</p> <p><b>BAKED OR FRIED FISH</b>                  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) 734-3113 or jchfarm1@hotmail.com</p> <p><b>ST. BONIFACE SCHOOL</b>                  School Cafeteria, 359 Main St., Kersey  <b>Ash Wed., March 5 and every Friday during Lent; 4:00-7:00 pm</b></p> <p><b>FRIED OR BAKED FISH</b> Adult \$9.50                  Includes baked potato or French fries, macaroni salad or coleslaw and homemade desserts.</p> <p><b>CHICKEN FINGERS</b> Child \$6.00                  (814) 885-8611</p> <p><b>ST. BRIGID PARISH</b>                  St. Brigid Social Hall, 383 Arch St., Meadville  <b>March 7 and every Friday until April 11</b>                  4:30-6:30 pm</p> <p><b>FISH</b> Adult \$8; <b>MAC AND CHEESE OR GRILLED CHEESE</b> Child \$4  <b>ICE CREAM BAR</b> \$1.50</p> <p><b>ST. JOSEPH PARISH</b>                  17735 Bennetts Valley Highway, Force  <b>March 5 and every Friday during Lent</b>                  Noon-6:30 pm</p> <p><b>BAKED OR FRIED HADDOCK</b>                  Adult \$10; Child 12 and under \$5                  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); (814) 787-4819                  *We deliver in Bennetts Valley!</p> <p><b>ST. LUKE PARISH</b>                  Knights of Columbus                  Msgr. Robert Goodill Council 11229                  School Cafeteria; 421 E. 38th St., Erie  <b>March 7, 14, 21, 28; 5:00-7:00 pm</b></p> <p><b>BAKED ICELANDIC COD</b>                  Adult \$9; Child (6-12) \$5.50                  5 and under FREE                  (continued on next column)</p>	<p>Includes choice of pierogies or macaroni and cheese, French fries, coffee, tea, milk and soft drinks.                  *Chef specials offered each week!                  Info: Brian Zimmer, Grand Knight                  (814) 434-4167</p> <p><b>ST. STANISLAUS PARISH</b>                  516 E. 13th St., Erie  <b>March 7, 21 / April 4; 4:00-7:00 pm</b></p> <p><b>FISH OR PIEROGI</b>                  Adult \$10; Child (6-12) \$5                  5 and under FREE                  *Takeout: \$10.25; (814) 452-6606</p> <p><b>ST. TERESA PARISH</b>                  Parish Center, 9 Third Ave., Union City  <b>March 7, 14, 21, 28 / April 4, 11</b>                  4:30-7:00 pm</p> <p><b>BAKED OR FRIED HADDOCK</b>                  Adult \$9; Child \$4                  Includes choice of baked potato or French fries, mac and cheese, homemade coleslaw or applesauce, dinner roll, homemade dessert and beverage.                  *Takeout available (814) 438-2783                  Info: (814) 438-2000</p> <p><b>ST. THOMAS SCHOOL</b>                  St. Elizabeth Parish Center                  33 W. Pleasant St., Cory  <b>All Fridays of Lent (not Good Friday)</b>                  4:30-7:00 pm</p> <p><b>BAKED OR FRIED FISH</b>                  Adult \$10; Child (6-12) \$5; Under 5 FREE                  Includes pierogi, sides and dessert.                  *Takeout available                  Parish Office (Mon-Thurs): (814) 663-3041                  Parish Center: (814) 664-9187</p> <p><b>VENANGO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL</b>                  1505 W. First St., Oil City  <b>March 7, 14, 21, 28 / April 4, 11</b>                  5:00-7:00 pm</p> <p><b>ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT BAKED OR FRIED FISH</b>                  Adult \$9; Senior \$8.50                  Child under 12 \$6.50; Preschooler \$4                  Includes baked potato or French fries, coleslaw, rolls, dessert and beverage.  <b>PIZZA</b> \$2.50/slice                  *Takeout available (call ahead or at the door)                  (814) 676-9429</p>
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If a parish is not listed, please contact the church directly for its Lenten dinner information.