



**WOMEN
CONSIDER
RELIGIOUS
LIFE.**
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FaithLife



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BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

March 19, 2017

Funding benefits Erie neighborhoods

Five corporations have pledged nearly \$1.6 million in funding to the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network, making it possible for the Erie-based non-profit to aggressively improve neighborhoods in the city of Erie.

"In addition to helping us meet the daily needs of individuals, the revitalization goals we can accomplish with these funds will make a lasting, visual impact, creating opportunity for neighbors and neighborhoods right across the heart of Erie," said Heather Caspar, executive director of SSJNN.

Through the Neighborhood Assistance Tax Credit program of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, five corporate partners have pledged investments over the next six years. Those entities are: Highmark Health Insurance Company (\$900,000), Marquette Savings Bank (\$300,000), Northwest Bank (\$300,000), Erie Insurance (\$50,000), and PNC Bank (\$10,000).

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development oversees tax credit programs that allow businesses to invest in projects that improve distressed areas. In exchange, those businesses get a percentage of their financial investment returned in tax credits.

SSJNN, sponsored by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Penn-



Photo by Mary Solberg

The Pedal Mettle earn-a-bike program in Erie will benefit from investment funding.

sylvania, is dedicated to providing leadership, advocacy and collaboration in Erie neighborhoods. Founded in January 2000, its original mission was to serve residents living in the area from West 12th to West 26th streets, between State and Cranberry streets, including Erie's Little Italy neighborhood. In 2015, SSJNN launched the Eastside Neighborhood Association to help revitalize the area between East 16th and East 26th streets, bordered by Parade Street and East Avenue.

Projects in both areas will be funded by the \$1.56 million in donations.

Funds already have been used since the revitalization announcement was made in February. Some of the improvements include neighborhood beautification and safety improvements, the development of an urban farming project for youth, education and empowerment, job training and economic development.

Series of holy hours planned

ERIE—A series of holy hours for vocations will be held Mondays during Lent at St. Peter Cathedral, W. 10th and Sasafaras streets, Erie. Holy hours will be held from 6 to 7 p.m. (following the 5:15 p.m. daily Mass) on the following dates:

- March 20
- March 27
- April 3.

42 YEARS of RICE BOWL



Mexico's office head visits region

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

For more than 40 years, a cardboard box has symbolized the Lenten tradition of the Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl campaign.

Generations of Catholics have inserted pocket change into Rice Bowl boxes, providing enough money worldwide to assist humanitarian programs and services in 40 to 45 countries.

In a recent visit to the northeastern United States, Cecilia Suarez, the office head at Catholic Relief Services in Mexico, saw first-hand the commitment of parishes and schools to the Rice Bowl campaign. The Diocese of Erie has supported Rice Bowl since its inception in the mid-1970s.

"I am very thankful and impressed with what Catholics in the United States are doing for the poor," Suarez told *FaithLife* in a



Photo courtesy of Catholic Relief Services

Cecilia Suarez, center, the office head at Catholic Relief Services in Mexico, stands with two women who are part of the De Cierro Verde project, Cactusito Cooperative in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. The program benefits from Rice Bowl contributions.

telephone interview from Washington, D.C. "Rice Bowl is a way to build bridges of solidarity between the Catholics in the United States and Catholics in other countries."

A native of Mexico, Suarez understands the difficulties faced by 50 percent of Mexicans who live in poverty. About 20 percent, she said, live in extreme poverty, while many others are middle class or even wealthy. Such growing inequality prompted Suarez to work for CRS.

"For me, it's a question of how can we have such an incredible amount of problems right here," Suarez said. "I really want to commit to social work to be able to solve some of these issues."

In her role at CRS in Mexico, Suarez is responsible for helping local partners—such as church and civic organizations—to think of creative ways to deal with violence, drugs, rural poverty and migration.

Current immigration orders issued by President Donald Trump, she said, concern many Mexicans. His proposal to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexican border likely will not solve

the real issue, which is development, she explained.

"By investing more in helping Mexico increase developmental opportunities, businesses would then be able to help people actually face the struggles that are here," she said. "With better tools and more resources, this would provide more opportunities for people to stay home instead of migrate."

Upon returning to Mexico, Suarez expects to share her observations of the many parish communities and schools in the U.S. that assist the poor throughout the world and in their own communities.

Born into a middle-class family in Mexico, Suarez believes Mexicans need to do more to create better neighborhoods and empower individuals.

Meanwhile, contributions to Rice Bowl continue to be essential, she said, adding, "The American Catholic community is really providing for the world."

To obtain a Rice Bowl box or to participate in inspirational Lenten activities, go to www.crsricebowl.org/families.

183 journey to the Catholic faith

FAITHLIFE staff report

On March 5, 183 people in the Diocese of Erie took the next step toward being fully welcomed into the Catholic Church during Rite of Election ceremonies in Erie and DuBois.

Many of those making the journey to the Catholic faith are young, according to Sister Nancy Fischer, SSJ, coordinator of the Office of Christian Initiation for the Diocese of Erie. Seven, she said, are students at Gannon University, and several are high school students from St. Jude the Apostle Church, Erie.

"The Rite of Election is an occasion of great joy in the church of Erie," Sister Nancy said. "Bringing together all those who are choosing membership in our community is inspiring and uplifting to all of us. It gives great hope for the future."

The Rite of Election is part of the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), a process that was restored to the Catholic Church after Vatican II. Catechumens and candidates will be welcomed into the Catholic faith at Easter Vigil services this April 15.

Rite of Election ceremonies were held at St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, and at St. Catherine of Siena Church in DuBois.



Photo by Sister Nancy Fischer, SSJ

Bishop Lawrence Persico is pictured March 5 at St. Peter Cathedral with Nicole Kleckner, left, a candidate, and her sponsor, Betsy MacKrell, both of Sacred Heart Parish, Erie.

Of the 183 participating in this year's Rite of Election, 50 are catechumens (people who have never been baptized in any faith); 80 are candidates who were previously baptized in a faith outside the Catholic Church; and 53 are candidates who are completing their rites of initiation, including first Communion and confirmation.

Lenten Books for Children and Families

Spend time reading and sharing the impact of Scripture with your family.

- **Lenten Adventure Activity Book 1 and Book 2** by Holy Heroes
- **Bringing Lent Home with Mother Teresa: Prayers, Reflections, and Activities for Families** by Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle
- **The Easter Garden: A Lenten Experience for Children** by Marcia Stoner and Daphna Flegal
- **Countdown to Easter - Daily Lenten Devotions For Children** by Ruth Geisler

For more resources visit:
Holy Heroes at www.holyheroes.com
The Catholic Company at www.catholiccompany.com

Source: Parish Social Ministry/Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Erie

LENTEN RETREAT

ROME—Pope Francis is shown in prayer during his first day of a Lenten retreat at the Pauline Fathers' retreat center in Ariccio, 20 miles southeast of Rome.

The pope and top members of the Roman curia were on retreat March 5-10.



CNS photo

Newsmakers



Snippets of Catholic headlines and stories from around the world

from Catholic News Service

■ Indian Catholics continue to pray for release of Salesian priest

COCHIN, India (CNS)—A year after an Indian priest was abducted by suspected Islamic militants in Yemen, Catholics in his home state of Kerala are still praying for his release, report-ec.uncwnews.com.

Salesian Father Tom Uzunnailil was taken by a group of armed men who stormed a home for the elderly run by Missionaries of Charity nuns in Aden, March 4, 2016. During the incident the gunmen murdered 16 people, including four nuns.

■ Women heard at Vatican forum

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Women and men from around the globe gathered for an event inside Vatican City that celebrated and encouraged the need for women's voices to be heard in the church and in the world.

The annual Voices of Faith conference was held March 8, coinciding with the celebration of International Women's Day.

According to its website, Voices of Faith "advances the role of women in the Catholic Church and supports them in their infinite potential to create meaningful change for the common good, contributing fully to the life of the Catholic Church and to wider society."

The event featured several guest speakers, including Dr. Mireille Twagiyira, a survivor of the



Marguerite Barankitse of Burundi speaks during the Voices of Faith gathering March 8 at the Vatican.

CNS photo

Rwandan genocide, and twin sisters Nagham and Shadan, whose last name was not given; the two are refugees from Homs, Syria, who work with Jesuit Refugee Services helping others forced to flee violence in their homeland.

Jesuit Father Arturo Sosa Abascal, superior general of the Society of Jesus, said in the opening address for the conference that women and men of faith need to stand together.

■ Philippines reviews death penalty



CNS photo

Philippine Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle of Manila speaks to the crowd during a Feb. 18 protest.

MANILA (CNS)—The Philippines stands poised to reinstate the death penalty after it was put on hold 11 years ago. The church in the Philippines, which has grown more vocal in recent months, continues to oppose the measure that passed the Philippine House on the third and final reading March 7 and is widely expected to move quickly through the Senate. This latest version specifically targets drug crimes.

Archbishop Socrates Villegas of Lingayen-Dagupan, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, lamented that the lower House "has given its consent for the state to kill."



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

*Let nothing disturb thee;
Let nothing dismay thee;
All things pass;
God never changes.
Patience obtains all that it strives for;
He who has God wants nothing.
God alone suffices.*

— St. Teresa of Avila

This prayer by St. Teresa of Avila is embedded in my brain. It was really quite easy to memorize. I read one line each week during Lent 2016. I repeated that line each day for seven days and reflected on its message in my life.

Let nothing disturb thee; let nothing dismay thee.—My mission for week one was to let go of worries.

All things pass. Difficulties—even joys—come and go; be content with the flow of life.

God never changes. It doesn't matter how much things change in your life; God is always there.

Patience obtains all that it strives for. Don't rush to get answers; they'll come.

He who has God wants nothing. I have everything I need.

God alone suffices. By week six, God was enough.

By the time Easter arrived, I had committed the entire prayer to memory and, fortunately, added it to my daily prayers throughout the year.

I recommend this prayer activity, even though we're about halfway through Lent 2017. Use this prayer or any prayer that you like. You'll be surprised with the results.

A number of students at Mercyhurst University in Erie did mission work in Mexico and stateside during their spring break this month.

Dr. Alice Edwards, a professor of world languages and cultures, accompanied five students,

all Spanish majors and minors, to the diocesan-sponsored Mission of Friendship in Mérida, Yucatán.

Dr. Scott Michel, assistant professor and program director for athletic training, and Colin Hurley, director of community engagement, coordinated a trip to Valladolid, located about 100 miles from Mérida. About a dozen athletic training majors, public health majors, and a nursing student joined a Chosen International Medical Assistance mission that involved about 20 health professionals from the Erie area.

In Detroit, four students worked with Neighbors Building Brightmoor, a community organization whose mission is to reduce urban blight via urban farming and land reclamation.

In Raleigh, N.C., nine students worked on a Habitat home and a warehouse.

Sister Rose Kuzma, OSF, hears lots of fun things from her first-grade religious education students at St. Boniface Parish in Erie.

During one recent class on sacraments, she asked them, "What sacrament did your parents receive?"

"A little one burst out with 'maccaroni!'" Sister Rose recalls. "He realized what he said and cracked up."

Congratulations to students in Gannon University's School of Communication and the Arts program who were recognized for excellence in college radio nationwide. Allie Leng won two national championships for audio production at 90.5 WERG.

Leng and four others also finished among the top five national finalists in eight other categories at the Intercollegiate Broadcasting Systems' 77th annual media conference. Other students recognized for their achievements in college radio were Tom Barton, Lauren Sovisky, Molly Cooke and Nick Tabar.

Mary Solberg is the editor of FaithLife. Email: msolberg@ErieRCD.org Call 814-824-1171 Twitter: @ERIERCDsolberg

Bend and stretch this Lent



Guest
Commentary
Amy Mosbacher

I'll be the first to admit that I can be stubborn. It runs in the family. When my Protestant grandfather married my Catholic grandmother, their families didn't make the effort to get to know each other. During that time, they had a baby boy but were so poor they had to give him up for adoption. No one knew about the child for 59 years until he found us, and with him came healing.

Their story has a happy ending. What kind of ending do we want for our story, and what can we do to make that happen?

One way I'm stubborn is that I like certain ways of doing things (don't we all?). Even if I can see that it's no longer beneficial or that there's a more efficient way of doing it, I hold on to the tradition because it's what I'm used to.

It's comfortable, and I like where I'm at.

In this case, I must ask, "Is this my will or God's will that I'm doing now?" This is where prayer comes in. If I am so insistent that my way is the right or only way of doing something, I'm probably missing out on a chance to grow spiritually, emotionally or mentally.

What if God has something wonderful in store for me, but I miss it because I won't try a new or different thing? "For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare, not for woe!" (Jeremiah 29:11).

Our Father always knows what's best for me, but am I willing to bend enough to find out what it is? Do I have the courage to change something I've always done, or to change the way I pray or the way I behave? "The Lord, our God, said to us at Horeb: 'You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Leave here'" (Deuteronomy 1:6-7).

Perhaps the mountain to leave is my own way, and I need to discover God's way. It won't be easy because we're supposed to die in the process. "Unless a

grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit" (John 12:24).

Dying to self takes so many different forms for each one of us. Maybe for one it's not complaining or refusing to be angry or annoyed and enduring in silence like Jesus did, or maybe it's taking correction humbly. Perhaps it's letting go of our traditions (time to sacrifice our favorite sacrifices?) and letting God stretch us.

Think and pray for the best way that Lent can prepare us for Easter this year. Perhaps the Father will lead us down new or unexpected roads.

Will we be open and flexible to what he has in store for us, or will we persist in our own stubborn ways because we're sure this is the right way? May the God of all wisdom guide us this Lent.

Amy Mosbacher is the director of adult evangelization and faith formation for the Catholic Community of Meadville. For copies of her book, *Through the Seasons with Jesus and Mary*, email amy.mosbacher@windstream.net.

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EVENTS

Lenten Day of Reflection planned at Glinodo

ERIE—International speaker and retreat presenter Edwina Gateley will explore the role of women in Scripture at a Lenten Day of Reflection, "Soul Sisters," on March 25 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Glinodo Center, 6270 East Lake Road, Erie.

The non-refundable registration fee is \$25; the total cost is \$40, which includes a snack and lunch. Register by contacting Kathleen Kutz at 814-520-9617.

Parish mission scheduled at Our Lady of Mercy

HARBORCREEK—Our Lady of Mercy Parish, 837 Bartlett Road, Harborcreek is sponsoring its parish mission March 26-28 from 7 to 8 p.m. with Father Tom Hartle presenting.

St. Boniface to hold communion breakfast

ERIE—The Knights of Columbus of St. Boniface Parish, 9367 Watsburg Road, Erie, are sponsoring a family communion breakfast March 26 following the 7:30 a.m. Mass. The breakfast will be served in the St. Boniface cafeteria. Father Michael Polinek, vocations director for the Diocese of Erie, will be the guest speaker. The menu will include ham, hash-brown potatoes, eggs, fruit cup, sweet roll and beverage. The cost is \$8 for adults, \$4 for children, and \$25 per family. The program is expected to begin about 8:15 a.m. and conclude at 10:15 a.m.

DuBois Central Catholic hosts EITC program

DuBOIS—James O'Donnell, director of the Tax Credit Office of the Department of Community & Economic Development, will present a workshop March 29 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. on how individuals and businesses can support Catholic education by participating in the Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC).

The event will be held in the secondary school library at DuBois Central Catholic in DuBois. O'Donnell will give an overview of EITC, tax credit opportunities for qualified businesses, the application process, and will answer any questions. A light lunch will be provided. Register by calling Sharon Varsichetti, advancement director, at 814-372-3882 or emailing svarsichetti@duboiscatholic.com. The deadline for registration is March 24.

Prep, Villa to perform 'School of Rock'

ERIE—Cathedral Preparatory School and Villa Maria Academy will perform "School of Rock, The Musical" March 30 to April 1 at 7 p.m., and April 2 at 2 p.m. at the H. David Boves Auditorium at Cathedral Prep.

This new musical, based on the 2003 movie "School of Rock," starring Jack Black, is currently running on Broadway. Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors. Email mike.demarinis@prep-villa.com or call 814-453-7737, ext. 2275, or 814-838-2061, ext. 3275, for details.

Mercyhurst Prep to present 'Mary Poppins'

ERIE—The Mercyhurst Preparatory School Performing Arts Department will present "Mary Poppins," the Broadway musical, next month at the MPS Performing Arts Center, 538 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie.

Performance dates are April 6, 7 and 8 at 7 p.m., and April 9 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$5 for students, \$10 for adults, and \$7 for seniors. Tickets are available at the door.



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April 7, 14

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Women contemplate vowed religious life

28 attend Miriam Dinner

BY MARY SOLBERG | FAITHLIFE

At age 19, Claire West is like any college student trying to find her calling in life. What sets her apart is that she's passionate about doing something that isn't lucrative monetarily, nor is it popular in today's fast-paced culture. A Gannon University freshman, she's considering the vowed religious life.

"It's kind of a different path in this time that we live in, but my parents are supportive. It came as a little bit of a surprise to them, but right now it's a discerning process," she says.

A graduate of Erie's Blessed Sacrament School and Villa Maria Academy, West enrolled at Gannon for its academic and spiritual environment. Even as a kid, she was curious about the religious life; her aunt is a sister in Iowa.

In February, West joined 28 other young women who attended the first-ever Miriam Dinner

offered in the Diocese of Erie.

Organized by the Vocation Office, under the direction of Father Michael Polinek, the dinner offered women the opportunity to explore their interest in religious communities and to hear the personal vocation stories of priests and sisters.

Bishop Lawrence Persico joined six women religious from five different orders in sharing their reflections.

"It felt good to see so many young women show up," West says. "It helps to realize that we're not alone in wanting to pursue what God has planned for us."

Religious communities of men and women throughout the country have struggled in recent years to increase their membership.

According to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), more than two out of three religious institutes that responded to a survey had no one entering in 2015.



"Young people are looking to be a good influence and to make the world better."

— Claire West
Gannon University
freshman

Despite this statistic, West believes there is a resurgence in young people searching to make a difference in a world beset by violence and a variety of other social ills.

"More people my age are looking for something more wholesome to do with our lives, to do something more true than what the world gives us," West says. "Young people are looking to be a good influence and to make the world better."

At Gannon, West is a member of a weekly faith-sharing group and is active in campus ministry. Next year, she hopes to participate in a university-sponsored mission trip.

Father Polinek intends to offer more Miriam Dinners in the future. More vocations may arise from sharing personal stories of following Jesus.

"There's a humanness that comes out when sisters and priests share their stories. There's an energy about it," Father Polinek says.

OBITUARY

Sister Roberta Lavin, OSB

Sister devoted life to education, dance

Sister Roberta Lavin, OSB, 90, died Feb. 24 at Mount Saint Benedict Monastery in Erie.

A native of Sharon, Sister Roberta was the daughter of the late John and Agnes (Dean) Lavin. She entered the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in 1946, pronounced her first vows in 1947, and her perpetual monastic vows in 1950. She would have celebrated her 70th jubilee this summer. Sister Roberta held a bachelor's degree in Latin and Spanish from Villa Maria College, Erie, a master's in educational administration from Notre Dame University, and counselor certification from Youngstown State University. For 34 years, she was an elementary and secondary teacher, a secondary principal, a piano teacher and a guidance counselor at various schools in the Diocese of Erie. Those schools included St. Mary, St. Benedict Academy, and Cathedral Preparatory School, all in Erie; St. Michael, Fryburg; Immaculate Conception, Clarion; St. Bartholomew, Sharpville; St. Joseph High School, Oil City; and Kennedy Catholic High School, Hermitage.

Outside of the diocese, Sister Roberta was a teacher and a secretary at Bishop Guertin High School in New Hampshire, and a counselor at All Saints School in Wickliffe, Ohio. Sister Roberta ministered at St. Benedict Education Center (SBEC), Erie, for 18 years, having served as director of educational programs, teacher and counselor. During that time, she also served as liturgical dance instructor and consultant for children and youth in various places in Erie, Buffalo and Ohio.



Sister Roberta Lavin, OSB

Through the years, Sister Roberta was engaged in internal community ministry. For a period of time, she was the community's formation and vocation director. During and after her work at SBEC, she was a Spanish and Latin language instructor for community members, preparing several sisters for service in Spanish-

speaking areas and others for graduate studies requiring knowledge of Latin. Sister Roberta embraced the Rule of Benedict and especially loved these lines in Chapter 19: "We must always remember, therefore, what the prophet says: 'Serve the Holy One with reverence (Psalms 2:11)' and again, 'Sing praise wisely (Psalms 46:8).'" At the time of her death, Sister Roberta was engaged in the ministry of prayer and presence.

Besides her parents, Sister Roberta was preceded in death by her brothers Oswald, William, John and James. Survivors include members of her Benedictine community; her sister, Sister Jean Lavin, OSB; a sister-in-law, Ruth Lavin; many nieces and nephews; and a faithful friend, Kathleen Kutz.

Services and visitation were held Feb. 28 and March 1 at Mount Saint Benedict Monastery. A Mass of Christian Burial was held there March 2. Interment was March 3 in Trinity Cemetery. Memorials may be made to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie, PA 16511.

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All proceeds will go to the Woman's Club roof restoration fund.
MORE INFO Patty at 814-823-9005 or parayd02@aol.com

PHOTOS from AROUND the DIOCESE

Email news items to: FaithLife@ErieRCD.org

Check out more photos at
www.ErieRCD.org/atd.htm

Joseph of Arimathea Society offers pallbearer services

ERIE—Members of Mercyhurst Preparatory School's Joseph of Arimathea Society serve as pallbearers at funeral services in which a family is unable to provide their own.

In January and February, the Joseph of Arimathea Society assisted at three funerals, including that of 98-year-old Father Eldon Somers, a lifelong educator and mentor to young people. The Arimathea Society is now in its third year at Mercyhurst Prep.

Some members of the Mercyhurst Prep Arimathea Society, in the front, from left, are: Gary Froelich, guidance counselor, and students David Rathburn, Gabe Gallagher, Noah Cur-



tin, Jimmy Zimmerman, Matt Baldwin, Mitch Razanauskas, and Jacob Barilla. In the back, from left, are: students Joe Ra-

pela, Jon Reddinger, Gianluca Ianiro, Anthony Roth, and Matt Ahrens.



DuBois students take lessons on new piano

DuBOIS—Piano students of Joseph Lesnick, music teacher at DuBois Central Catholic Elementary School, enjoy the new Yamaha P22 studio piano in the school's music room.

Seated are Noah Post and his sister, Lola Post, with fellow piano students Jack Roy, Mitchell Klark and Hope Jacob.

According to Lesnick, a grant from the Glenn and Ruth Mingle Foundation made it possible to acquire the piano and five music stands.

CART WHEELS



DuBOIS—Baltimore Life, through its charitable grant program, has provided DuBois Central Catholic Elementary School with two moveable carts that feature learning materials based on math principles. The carts can be taken from classroom to classroom as part of the school's expanded math curriculum. Chris Felix, enrichment and resource teacher, and Gretchen Carruso, principal, watch as students Tommy Bender, Elizabeth Green, Micah Bruno and Korine Fustine check out the wide selection of math materials.

St. George students raise funds for mission work

ERIE—Students at St. George School in Erie raised \$930 in their annual student council-sponsored Candygram fundraiser. The funds were donated to Mary Mission, Inc., a charity that supports a Catholic school in Uganda: St. Philomena Primary and Nursery School.

St. Philomena is in the village of Lwabikere in the Masaka district, where poverty is widespread. St. Philomena students have promised to pray for their benefactors at St. George School, and St. George students will pray for St. Philomena students. Students are pictured with Dave Wayman, a mission partner of Mary Mission, Inc.



Kennedy eighth-graders qualify for state competition

HERMITAGE—Ami Gervais, a science teacher at Kennedy Catholic Middle School in Hermitage, accompanied 21 eighth-graders to Slippery Rock University, where they recently competed in the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science competition.

Twelve students qualified for the state competition: Gabby Aszalos, Ava Coates, Angela Frank, Lilli Glover, Colin Gramley, Julian Hudson, Sean Kirkland, Maria Matesich, Cody May, Asia Morgenstern, Rachael Russ and Andrew Volkay. Eight other students took second-place awards.



Punxy mayor helps celebrate Catholic Schools Week

PUNXSUTAWNEY—Punxsutawney Mayor Richard Alexander recently presented St. Comas and Damian School in Punxsutawney with a proclamation recognizing Catholic Schools Week. Pictured in the front row, from left, are: students Zoe Yingling, Johanna Crago, Emma Young, Gage Young, Max Presloid and Luke Hollenbaugh. In the second row, from left, are: students Maria Crago and Bailee Stello. In the third row, from left, are: Jessica Dinger, principal; Mayor Richard Alexander; Msgr. Joseph Riccardo, pastor; and students Mick Wisnosky and Sawyer Hall.



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