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Congratulations
to
Connie Palmer
of St. John the
Evangelist Parish
in Girard



Connie was among 28 people who found the correct, hidden answer to the question, "What did Moses part?" The hidden answer was a big red "C" on page 3. (See more in editorial on page 2.)

Answer: **C**ity of Er Randy B to get the So is So! the Erie woman Mothers Against T

National Catholic Sisters Week recognizes service

People don't "see" religious women at work in our society the way they did a generation ago, says Sister Nancy Fischer, SSI, director of the Office for Religious in the Diocese of Erie.

Due to declining numbers and an aging population, vowed women religious no longer fill the Catholic school system or run many hospitals anymore. But they're out there, Sister Nancy says, "just doing it," referring to the famous Nike ad.

"Many people are not aware of the work of religious sisters today, but they're active in every area of social ministry that you can imagine: after-school programs, neighborhood networks, food banks, rural ministries, homeless shelters," Sister Nancy says.

To recognize these contributions, the bishops of the



United States are encouraging their dioceses to participate in the first National Catholic Sisters Week, March 8-14. On March 10 at 11 a.m., Bishop Lawrence Persico and members of the three religious communities of women based in Erie will hold a news conference at St. Mark Catholic Center in Erie, announcing the special week.

Erie Mayor Joseph Sinnott will be on-hand, along with other invited dignitaries. Members of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Benedictine Sisters of Erie also will be present.

Bringing attention to themselves is foreign to most sisters, Sister Nancy says, but the National Catholic Sisters Week is all about raising awareness and inspiring others to consider a life of service.

The National Catholic Sisters Week was made possible through a three-year grant from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation to St. Catherine University in Minnesota. By bringing together college-age women and women religious from a variety of congregations, St. Catherine is hoping to engage women in conversations about religious life and promote vocations through social media.

FaithLife

POPE QUOTE

INSPIRING WORDS FROM POPE FRANCIS

"When Jesus is the center, light shines even amid the darkest times of our lives; he gives us hope."

BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

March 9, 2014

Partnership planned between two Catholic elementary schools
Mount Carmel, St. Boniface in Erie faced declining enrollments

Mary Solberg
FaithLife

Two Catholic elementary schools are avoiding closure by forming a partnership designed to strengthen Catholic school education in the southeast corner of Erie County.

Despite declining enrollments in recent years, both St. Boniface School and Our Lady of Mount Carmel School—located fewer than 5 miles from each other—will remain open. Their new partnership means they will share a single principal, some faculty, the same discipline and academic codes and one advisory board. Under terms of the partnership, St. Boniface's fifth through eighth grades will move to Our Lady of Mount Carmel School.

Sharing staff and resources is expected to save an estimated \$100,000 annually, said Father Nicholas Rouch, vicar for Education. The schools are unable to retain all current teaching positions, but the partnership is expected to strengthen academic options and ensure up-to-date technology.

"Both of the schools' enrollments were starting to go down and the finances started to get more challenging," Father Rouch said. "It means a lot to both parish families to keep both schools open, so it's very good that we don't have to close either."

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School currently has 119 students. St. Boniface has 67. In a news conference at St. Mark Catholic Center on Feb. 21, Bishop Lawrence Persico challenged the parents of both schools to be open to the changes that will go into effect in the coming academic year.

"This new model will require adjustment and commitment on the part of students, parents and the schools in order for the partnership to thrive," Bishop Persico said. "But I am quite hopeful it will be a success."

The bishop called the planned collaboration a way of "thinking outside the box to keep Catholic school education viable." For several years, the diocese has studied the situation at both schools and knew something had to change in order to maintain a presence on the Route 8 corridor.

Added Father Rouch, "As with public education, Catholic education is in a changing environment, so we're trying to be flexible



Photo by Mary Solberg

Father Nicholas Rouch, vicar for Education in the Diocese of Erie, speaks to the media Feb. 21 about the new partnership planned between St. Boniface and Our Lady of Mount Carmel schools in Erie.

and adapt where we need to and find new models that will work."

The new model may be a challenge to those accustomed to the way things always have been. St. Boniface is 157 years old; Mount Carmel is 52.

"Right now, it's an emotional time," said Father Jay Schultz, pastor of St. Boniface, which stands to see the most changes in the loss of its fifth through eighth grades. "But if we didn't have the current plan, St. Boniface School would cease to exist."

Father Ray Hahn, pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, said he and Father Schultz met with their respective pastoral and finance councils to explain the partnership. Both priests notified parish families by mail.

"People ask what the benefit is and I say that the doors are open and we have an expanded middle

school," Father Hahn said.

Chris and Cheryl Borges of Wattsburg know what it's like to have a child change elementary schools. When their daughter, Katelyn Borges, was in sixth grade, they moved her from St. Boniface to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Katelyn is now an eighth-grader.

"There was a higher enrollment at Mount Carmel and having more kids in her class was better for her," Chris Borges said. "When we made the move to Mount Carmel, we were really welcomed there. It has been nice."

The Borges family is friends with parents from both schools. According to Chris Borges, many St. Boniface families are struggling with the change.

"They need to go into it with a big open mind," Chris Borges advised. In the past, Catholic schools in

the Diocese of Erie have merged or been closed due to declining enrollments. Efforts to consolidate schools in one building have helped some but not all.

Other schools in the diocese—including DuBois Central Catholic, Elk County Catholic and Kennedy Catholic—have had success in recent years forming regional school systems of pre-school through grade 12. These systems feature independent buildings or sections of buildings that house elementary, middle and high schools.

The Erie Catholic Preparatory School in Erie is comprised of Cathedral Prep and Villa under one headmaster.

According to Father Rouch, these successful initiatives suggest that the partnership underway at Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Boniface can work.

Art of Irish crosses dates to time of St. Patrick
Mercyhurst University has installed these crosses in classrooms

Tricia DeMarco
Special to FaithLife

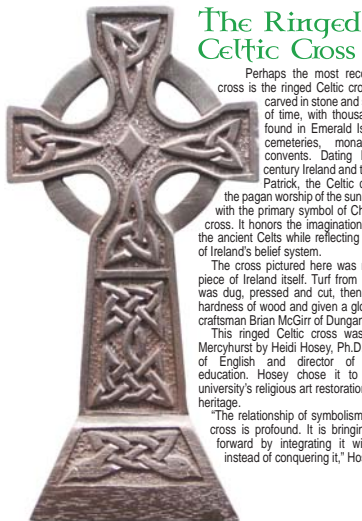
Irish crosses use ancient, often intricate, art to tell stories rich in symbolism, culture and history. It is fitting that Mercyhurst University in Erie has installed three such crosses in classrooms near the original entrance of

its historic, Gothic-style Old Main.

Founded by the Dublin-based Sisters of Mercy in 1926, Mercyhurst lives out its Irish heritage on a daily basis. The Mercyhurst in Ireland study abroad program is perhaps its most recognizable direct connection to the "Old Sod." Every year, students and faculty travel and study in Dungarvan, Ireland.

The university is undertaking a return of religious art to classrooms across campus. Last fall, six crosses reflecting the history and evolution of the university and the mission of the Sisters of Mercy were hung in separate classrooms at Old Main.

In commemoration of this month's Feast of St. Patrick, let's look at the three Irish crosses:



The Ringed Celtic Cross

Perhaps the most recognized Irish cross is the ringed Celtic cross. Most are carved in stone and stand the test of time, with thousands of them found in Emerald Isle churches, cemeteries, monasteries and convents. Dating back to 5th century Ireland and the time of St. Patrick, the Celtic cross reflects

the pagan worship of the sun as it is united with the primary symbol of Christianity, the cross. It honors the imagination and skills of the ancient Celts while reflecting the evolution of Ireland's belief system.

The cross pictured here was made from a piece of Ireland itself. Turf from Irish bogland was dug, pressed and cut, then aged to the hardness of wood and given a glossy finish by craftsman Brian McGirr of Dungannon, Ireland. This ringed Celtic cross was donated to Mercyhurst by Heidi Hoesey, Ph.D., a professor of English and director of international education. Hoesey chose it to support the university's religious art restoration and its Irish heritage.

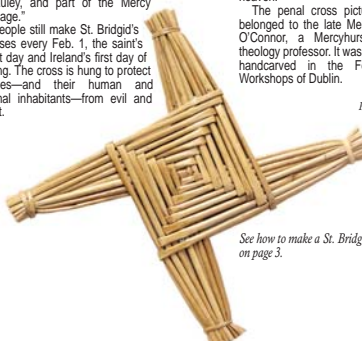
"The relationship of symbolism in the Celtic cross is profound. It is bringing a tradition forward by integrating it with a culture instead of conquering it," Hoesey says.

St. Bridgid's Cross

This humble, rush-woven St. Bridgid's cross (spellings may vary) is a product of Irish Handcraft in Longford, Ireland. It was donated to Mercyhurst by Mercy Sister Patricia Whalen, a Mercyhurst alumna and the university's vice president for Mission Integration.

Giving the cross to Mercyhurst, she says, was appropriate in that "it symbolizes protection of the poor, the sick, the ignorant. That is the mission of Sister of Mercy founder, Catherine McAuley, and part of the Mercy heritage."

People still make St. Bridgid's crosses every Feb. 1, the saint's feast day and Ireland's first day of spring. The cross is hung to protect homes—and their human and animal inhabitants—from evil and want.



See how to make a St. Bridgid's Cross on page 3.

The Penal Cross

Practicing the Roman Catholic faith in Ireland became illegal in the 16th century. Everything connected to the religion was banned from display or use. During this time of penal law, monasteries were instrumental in keeping the Catholic faith alive. Sacred items and art went underground.

The penal cross was born of peasant efforts, imbued with symbols of the Passion of Christ: a hammer for the nails of the cross, the spear used at Calvary, a rooster from Peter's denial of Christ, a cooking pot symbolizing the Last Supper, cords for the binding of Jesus, and a ladder used at the crucifixion and by followers to ascend into heaven.

The penal cross pictured here once belonged to the late Mercy Sister Maria O'Connor, a Mercyhurst alumna and theology professor. It was made in Ireland, handcarved in the Fergus O'Farrell Workshops of Dublin.

Photos by Rich Pappalardo





Married man ordained priest for U.S. Maronite Catholic Church

ST. LOUIS (CNS)—Father Wissam Akiki is the first married man to be ordained a priest for the U.S. Maronite Catholic Church.

On Feb. 27, with special permission granted by Pope Francis, Bishop A. Elias Zaidan of the U.S. Maronite Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon ordained the married deacon at St. Raymond Maronite Cathedral in St. Louis.

The Maronite Church is among 25 Eastern Catholic churches that are in union with Rome. Eastern churches have an ancient tradition of allowing married men to become priests, although since the 1920s the practice generally has not been permitted in the United States.



CNS photo/Lisa Johnson

Father Wissam Akiki speaks to the congregation after being ordained to the priesthood at St. Raymond Maronite Cathedral in St. Louis.

Cardinal Kasper introduces discussion on marriage

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Catholic Church needs to find a way to offer healing, strength and salvation to Catholics whose marriages have failed, who are committed to making a new union work and who long to do so within the church and with the grace of communion, Cardinal Walter Kasper told the world's cardinals at a Feb. 20-21 meeting.

Jesus' teaching on the indissolubility of sacramental marriage is clear, the retired German cardinal said. It would harm individuals and the church to pretend otherwise.

Cardinal Kasper said it would be up to members of the extraordinary Synod of Bishops on the family in October and the world Synod of Bishops in 2015 to discuss concrete proposals for helping divorced and civilly remarried Catholics participate more fully in the life of the church.

Pope: Anointing sick, elderly doesn't bring bad luck

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Never hesitate to call a priest to bless and anoint sick or elderly family members, Pope Francis said during his weekly general audience at St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Feb. 26.

Some people worry receiving the sacrament of the anointing of the sick "brings bad luck" and "the hearse will come next," the pope said. "This is not true!"

The pope thanked the estimated 50,000 people who attended the outdoor audience despite weather forecasts of rain. "You came anyway, you're courageous. Way to go!" he said, as the wind blew big gray storm clouds overhead.

The pope's remarks were part of a continuing series of audience talks on the sacraments.



CNS photo

A baby dressed as the pontiff meets Pope Francis at St. Peter's Square on Feb. 26.

Study shows high rate of Bible illiteracy among general population

WASHINGTON (CNS)—In a recent class at Wheaton College, English professor Leland Ryken asked his students what John Milton was referring to when he mentioned "the broad way" in one of his sonnets.

Not one student in the class of 35 at the Rev. Billy Graham's alma mater acknowledged it as a reference to the broad path of destruction in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. "There's no reason for anyone to be surprised at the extent of biblical illiteracy in the general population," Ryken said in an email to Catholic News Service.

Last year, the American Bible Society showed 57 percent of U.S. adults ages 18 to 28 read their Bible fewer than three times per year or never.



Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

Another FaithLife contest has come and gone...and what a challenge it turned out to be! If people knew their Moses trivia and were ready to have some fun, they had a good chance of winning the six-disc Blu-Ray, DVD combo set of Cecil B. DeMille's classic, "The Ten Commandments."

In the Feb. 23 edition, we asked readers to find the hidden answer to the question, "What did Moses part?" Of course, all 46 people who submitted their guesses answered the Red Sea. Finding the play on words was a little more challenging, however. Our contest team hid the answer in a big red "C" on page 3. More than half of those responding (28) found the correct answer. Their names went into a hat and the winner was Connie Palmer, a parishioner at St. John the Evangelist Parish in Girard.

Kudos to 18 others from all over the diocese who came up with other interesting connections to the parting of the Red Sea. Some thought the reference to the Red Sea had to do with the photograph titled, "Something's fishy in Dubois." Others thought the story on the homeless overflow had a connection to water. Clever!

Joe Hess, executive director of Catholic Charities Counseling and Adoption Agency's Refugee Resettlement Program, was thrilled with the response of the Erie community after six Somali families in Erie were displaced by fire on Feb. 3.

The agency collected about \$1,000 and helped to move donated furniture in the outreach effort.

"The people who complain about refugee resettlement are in the minority and the people who do help represent the silent majority," Hess told me. "It shows the generosity

of the people."

According to Joanna Cherpak, executive director of the Multicultural Community Resource Center in Erie, more than \$30,000 was raised from various agencies in Erie—including Catholic Charities—to help the Somali families.

"We feel that not only are the families receiving financial and material assistance, but also a great deal of the thoughts, feelings and emotions of what makes Erie a caring community," Cherpak said.

Congratulations to the newest principal in our Catholic school system, Joanna Santilli, who was recently named principal at DuBois Catholic Elementary School.

The Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl Collection has been around for a long time, but there's a new way for the technologically savvy to participate.

This year's CRS Rice Bowl features a digital photo challenge titled, "How Do You Rice Bowl?" The contest asks individuals and communities to document the various ways they have brought Lent to life.

Photos that show how CRS Rice Bowl is shaping your Lenten experience can be submitted the following ways: online through Instagram or Twitter using #VivaLent, through the CRS Rice Bowl Facebook page or www.crsricebowl.org/photo. One grand-prize winner will receive a CRS fair-trade Easter basket.

Also, a CRS Rice Bowl app is available free from the App Store, the Google Play Store or www.crsricebowl.org/app. With the app, people can schedule delivery of daily reflections to their mobile devices, set and track their progress toward a personal Lenten goal, view meal recipes to prepare on Fridays during Lent and read stories about people's spiritual journeys.

Mary Solberg is the editor of FaithLife.
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'Son of God' offers solid catechesis

John Mulderig
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS)—As the first wide-release film in nearly 50 years to focus on the life of Jesus as a whole, "Son of God" (Fox) represents an epochal event for believing moviegoers.

Though not the most powerful mass media treatment of its subject—that accolade continues to belong to Franco Zeffirelli's 1977 television miniseries "Jesus of Nazareth"—director Christopher Spencer's reverent but uneven screen version of the Gospel story ranks as a worthy revival of the Hollywood biblical epic.

The screenwriters find an efficient entree into their narrative by entrusting it to an aged St. John the Evangelist (Sebastian Knapp) during his exile on the island of Patmos. This is theologically helpful because the opening lines of the Beloved Disciple's Gospel, as recited here, describe the Incarnation, a mystery without which all that follows could easily be misconstrued.

Early scenes leading up to and including the Nativity will remind at least some viewers that "Son of God" is an outgrowth of last year's highly successful miniseries on the History cable channel series, "The Bible." The new footage that follows is at its best in its portrayal of the events that culminated in the crucifixion of Jesus (Diogo Morgado).

Catholic viewers will appreciate the unqualified acknowledgement of St. Peter (Darwin Shaw) as the leader of the Apostles as well as scenes highlighting Mary's (Roma



CNS photo/Fox

Producer Mark Burnett and actors Darwin Shaw and Diogo Morgado are seen on the set of the movie "Son of God."

Downey) closeness to her son. And, though the portrayal of the Last Supper seems somewhat noncommittal as to the meaning of the Eucharist, a rough-and-ready celebration of the sacrament is shown to be the chosen moment for the Lord's first post-Resurrection appearance to the Twelve.

As for the ministry and preaching that precede the Passion—during which Jesus draws the disapproving attention of Simon the Pharisee (Paul Marc Davis)—there are moments that range from moving to awkward.

Despite its shortcomings, Spencer's picture offers some solid catechesis and an easy introduction to the Lord's earthly biography.

In that context, and despite its unflinching treatment of the Redeemer's sufferings, "Son of God" is probably acceptable for older teens.

The film contains strong gore violence. Catholic News Service classification is A-III, adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13, parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

Q & A

Faith Catholic interviews St. Peter actor

Darwin Shaw, who plays St. Peter in the new "Son of God" movie, was interviewed Feb. 28 by Elizabeth Solsberg, editorial director of Faith Catholic, Lansing, Mich.

Faith Catholic: You've played this role in "The Bible" (miniseries) and now the film, "Son of God." How did you prepare?

Darwin Shaw: My preparation was three-fold: Most importantly, of course, I read the Bible and the specific historical texts. I also spent time with Orthodox monks outside London for three days of silent meditation, prayer and reflection. And I went to the Vatican so I could get a feel for ancient Rome. I studied some of the art works depicting this time, and I visited St. Peter's.

Faith Catholic: This is always a difficult story to present. What were the challenges in making this film?

Darwin Shaw: Peter is a crucial figure in the church. The subtleties in the text have important theological implications. So we worked to find the story in the pure sense, and tried not to cause too much controversy.

For me, a major challenge was physical—we were shooting in the Sahara desert for four months—which meant four months of blazing heat for 14 hours per day. And the scene where Peter is walking on water, which we shot in a mountain reservoir—I had to focus on acting while also keeping warm and staying alive.

Faith Catholic: What was one memorable moment that occurred during filming?

Darwin Shaw: There were so many, it is hard to say. But one was while we were working on the scene after the Last Supper where Jesus and Peter embrace after Peter said he wouldn't betray Jesus. I could feel the great love and brotherly affection between these two friends. It was inspirational to be part of something that was very organic and pure and very moving. We shot a number of scenes that really involved examining the text and making something as deep and powerful as we could.

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News Briefs

Two Venango Catholic students honored

Oil City—Two Venango Catholic High School students have been recognized recently for their academic achievements.

Senior Nicholas Barletta has been named a National Merit Scholarship finalist, ranking in the top 15,000 out of 1.2 million student entrants. He is competing for \$35 million in National Merit Scholarship awards.

Christopher Fink, a junior, was one of eight students from across the country chosen for the 2014 National 4-H Congress Design Team. The team is responsible for planning and organizing the national 4-H event.



Nicholas Barletta Christopher Fink

Lenten speaker series scheduled in DuBois

DuBois—An evening prayer service designed especially for Lent will be held at St. Catherine of Siena Church, 116 S. State St., DuBois, on the first five Sundays of Lent from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Evening prayer speakers are:

- March 9—Sister Ardath Blake, HM, spiritual director with the Villa Maria Education and Spirituality Center in Villa Maria, Pa.
- March 16—Bishop Lawrence Persico
- March 23—Father Ross Miceli, a native of St. Catherine Church and educator at Elk County Catholic Schools
- March 30—Father Harold "Jake" Jacobson, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in Clarion, assistant to the bishop of northwestern Pennsylvania and director of evangelical mission for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America in northwestern Pennsylvania.
- April 6—Deacon William J. Hisker, a professor at Saint Vincent College.

For more information, call the church office at 814-371-8556.

Sister to speak about Eucharistic adoration

Warren—Sister Josephine Vuodi, FSO, will speak about Eucharistic adoration on March 10 at St. Joseph Church in Warren. Her talk is titled, "Prayer and Adoration: The Oxygen of Life." Evening prayer and benediction will begin at 6:30 p.m. in the church, followed by Sister Josephine's talk in Meyer Hall.

On March 11, Sister Josephine will meet with several groups of children from St. Joseph School to discuss vocations and to give an introduction to Eucharistic adoration. The parish has Eucharistic adoration every Thursday from 12:30 to 8:15 p.m. Night prayer and benediction begin at 8:15 p.m.

St. Andrew Parish offers Lenten Series

ERIE—All are welcome to attend the St. Andrew Parish Lenten Series at the parish center, 1117 W. 7th St., Erie. For information, call 814-454-2486. The series schedule is as follows:

- March 12—Soup supper at 5:30 p.m.; talk at 6:30 p.m. by John Raclawski, who as a 14-year-old was sent to Siberia because his father had been an officer in World War I. He'll recount what it was like on a train with hundreds of Jews (even though he was Catholic).
- March 19—Lecture by Jennifer Wilson on the Holocaust at 7 p.m.
- March 26—Mass in the Annunciation Chapel at 6:15 p.m., followed by Father Bill O'Brien's lecture.
- April 2—Lecture at 7 p.m. by Ed and Barb Burkett on their experience spreading the message of Natural Family Planning in Papua New Guinea.
- April 9—Deacon Ralph DeCocco will lecture at 7 p.m.

Prep, Villa host Legacy Gala in April

ERIE—Cathedral Prep and Villa Maria Academy will host their Legacy Gala April 5 from 5:30 to 11 p.m. at the Bayfront Convention Center in Erie.

Those to be honored from Prep are: Matt Minnaugh, Class of 1983, and Jack Berges, Class of 1968. Those to be honored from Villa are: Sister Mary Drexler, SSJ, Class of 1963 and current principal, and the late Adrianna Hagerty, who is being honored posthumously.

Tickets are \$125 per person and reservations are required. The cost includes food stations, dessert table and open bar. Silent and live auctions will be held. Music will be provided by the Cathedral Prep Jazz Band.

Contact Kathy Grisier at kathygrisier@prep-villa.com for more information. Read more about the event and reservations at the school website at www.prep-villa.com.

Diocese distributes prayer cards

St. Patrick 'perfect example' of answering call to vocations

Mary Solberg
FaithLife

Bishop Lawrence Persico has issued a challenge to the young people of the Diocese of Erie: consider a vocation to the priesthood, diaconate or religious life.

He points to St. Patrick, the patron of the Diocese of Erie, as a "perfect example" of how a young person can be open to the call of living a consecrated life.

"St. Patrick listened. He responded. And look what he did," Bishop Persico said.

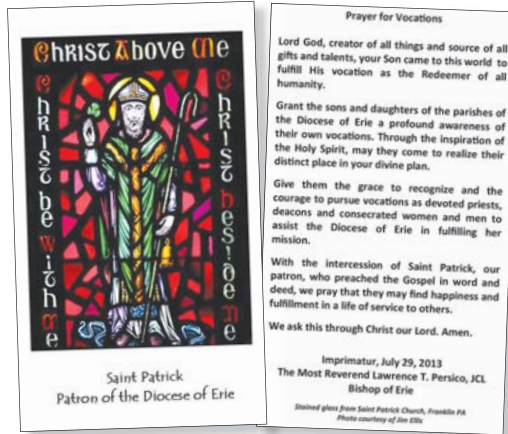
At age 16, St. Patrick was captured from his home in Great Britain and enslaved in Ireland for six years. Despite the hardships he faced, he envisioned himself spreading the Christian Gospel to the Pagan Druids of the Emerald Isle.

In the year 431, Pope Celestine I consecrated Patrick the bishop of the Irish, sending him forth to spread Christianity. Through preaching, writing and baptisms, Patrick convinced the Druids that they were worshipping idols.

To help young people become more aware of their own personal call to religious life, Bishop Persico has prepared a St. Patrick prayer card for vocations. With the assistance of the Office of Worship, about 50,000 cards have been printed.

Photographer Jim Ellis took the colorful photograph of St. Patrick for the front of the card. It depicts the stained-glass window from St. Patrick Church in Franklin.

About half of the cards already have been shared with the youth



The front of the vocation prayer card depicts a stained-glass image of St. Patrick from St. Patrick Church, Franklin. A prayer for vocations is printed on the back of the card. The photo of the window was taken by Jim Ellis.

of the diocese through the Vocations Office, elementary and high schools, campus ministries and religious education programs.

"This card reminds us of St. Patrick, who listened to God's call. He was instrumental in bringing the faith to Ireland," Bishop Persico said. "What better example for the young people of the Diocese of Erie?"

Matt Clark, administrator of the Office of Worship, said a

prayer card for vocations may be just the thing to "get the wheels turning" in a young person's mind.

"We're asking people to be mindful of where God is in their lives and where they are being called," Clark said.

Vocations to the priesthood and religious life have been in serious decline for many years, making the assignment of priests an especially difficult task, the

bishop added. The average age of priests is climbing.

"These are challenging times to be a priest, so certainly if young people like challenges this is a great opportunity," the bishop said.

To obtain the St. Patrick prayer card for vocations, contact Christine, administrative assistant in the Office of Worship, at 814-824-1271 or email the diocesan office at chess@eriecatholic.org.

How to make a St. Bridgid's Cross

Because spring and warmer temperatures are so desperately needed in the Diocese of Erie this year, here is a fun way to make a St. Bridgid's cross and bring some warmth into your home:

You will need:

15 pipe cleaners to make one, full-sized cross. Colors of your choice, unless you want to be strictly Irish and choose green.

How to make a St. Bridgid's Cross

- Before starting, make sure all pipe cleaners are the same length. One should be straight and the rest should be bent in half.
- Begin with the straight pipe cleaner, holding it vertically.
- Place a folded pipe cleaner over it in the center and rotate the entire unit to the left.
- Add another folded pipe cleaner over the one pointing up, and then rotate it to the left.
- Put a pipe cleaner over both pipe cleaners that are pointing up. Rotate again to the left.

(Tip: Every time you add a pipe cleaner, you should put it over all of the pieces that are sticking up.) When the cross reaches the size you like, cut some small snippets of pipe cleaner and twist the ends together.

See the story on Irish crosses on page 1.

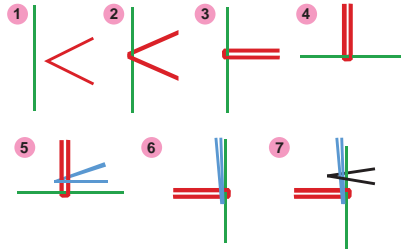


Image by Irish Peatland Conservation Council

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Babies galore!



These seven babies are only a handful of those baptized in the past year at St. Patrick Parish in Erie. They managed to sit calmly for a quick photo taken on the church altar.

FaithLife/Photo by Paul Lore



FaithLife/Photo by Paul Lore

St. Pat's in Erie sees baby boom

Calling it "the sweetest sound" he could hear in his parish, Msgr. Henry Kriegel proudly listens every Sunday to the gurgles, laughter and even screams of the many babies who come to Mass with their families.

"We're bursting at the seams with babies," says Msgr. Kriegel, pastor. The east Erie parish has seen a huge jump in baptisms, with 23 in 2013 and five already this year. That's almost double the average number of baptisms per parish per year in the Diocese of Erie.

One of the baptized is eight-year-old Ethan Baker, of Erie, who

recently joined all of the babies and their families for a group shot on the church altar.

Craig and Stephanie Stevens of Erie had their 16-month-old son, Sawyer, baptized by Msgr. Kriegel last April.

Says Craig, "The sound of babies and music is tough to beat."

More and more people have been drawn to the parish since it completed its massive \$1.3 million restoration project in 2012.

Search Diocese of Erie on Facebook for more pictures of baby mayhem on photo day.

Photo at left: Many of the babies who were baptized in 2013 and so far this year gathered on Feb. 23 for a photograph on the altar of St. Patrick Church in Erie. Msgr. Henry Kriegel stands at far right with eight-year-old Ethan Baker. Also pictured are: Matt and Abby Lechner holding twins Katherine and Meredith, Ryan and Sarah Palm with Madison, David and Erin Poulliott with Matthew, Matt and Mary Marnella with Eva, Courtney and Chris Elliott with Molly, Christina Magno with Oyay, Jeannine and Robert Prindle with Miles, Nick and Rachel Cacchione with Eli, Hillary Lyte with Penelope, Brian and Jackie DiLuzio with Carter, and Matt and Ann Spitznogle with Luca.

Ice Man lab tests critical-thinking skills



DuBOIS—Inquisitive DuBois Central Catholic High School students Trisha Gupta and Rebecca Pifer use the team approach to unravel a series of questions

posed in their biology lab. DCC's archaeology lab presented several challenges for students as they tried to determine the last meal of Ice Man.

Ross Zamerowski earns rank of Eagle Scout



RIDGWAY—Ross W. Zamerowski, son of Bill and Nancy Zamerowski of St. Leo Parish, Ridgway, has earned the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest rank available in the Boy Scouts of America. At age 15, Ross is the 72nd Eagle Scout to come from Ridgway Boy Scout Troop 93, which is sponsored by the Ridgway American Legion.

Pictured at a presentation ceremony, left to right, are: Nancy Zamerowski, Ross Zamerowski, Bill Zamerowski and Pennsylvania State Rep. Matthew Gabler representing the 75th legislative district.

Smethport students recycle for charity



SMETHPORT—The elementary religious education students at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Smethport collected more than 400 used cards for St. Jude Children's Ranch. They are currently cutting the fronts off of every card. The Children's Ranch turns used cards into new ones to sell.

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