PA primary is April 26. See Catholic Voter Guide. PAGE 3

REFUGEE RESCUE PAGE 2

FaithLife

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www.ErieRCD.org BI-WEEKLY NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE April 24, 2016

PARISH RESTRUCTURING

Preliminary plan for parishes now entering feedback period

BY MARY SOLBERG | *FAITHLIFE*

Catholics and their parish communities in the Diocese of Erie have until May 20 to respond to Bishop Lawrence Persico's preliminary proposal to significantly restructure parishes in the 13-county diocese.

In a three-part announcement this month, the bishop shared his recommendations on how to ensure the viability and spiritual integrity of the Catholic faith in northwestern Pennsylvania. Parishes here are facing the challenges of declining numbers of priests, fewer registered Catholics, and the cost of maintaining—in some cases—near-empty church buildings.

"Change is never easy, but it's a reality of life," Bishop Persico said after making his preliminary plan known at three meetings in the Northern, Eastern and Western Vicariates of the diocese in mid-April.

Under the proposed plan, numerous parishes throughout the diocese will be closed due to mergers with other parishes. The church buildings of these former parishes, however, will remain available for feast days, and weddings and funerals upon request.

Also under the preliminary plan, 21 churches in the diocese will begin new partnerships with each other, meaning they will continue to exist as distinct parishes with their own parishioners, parish church and finances, but will share one pastor, one parish council, one staff and one office. [See key restructuring terms in box at right.]

The majority of parishes that currently stand alone or are partnered parishes will remain as they are now, with no changes forthcoming.

Bishop Lawrence Persico discusses parish restructuring with people gathered April 14 at Notre Dame Parish, Hermitage.

Photo by Anne-Marie Welsh

The proposed changes mean that many priests will be released as full-time pastors, while others will find themselves leading more parishioners due to mergers or partnerships with other faith communities.

According to Bishop Persico, merging and partnering parishes will ease the challenges of ministering to a 21st-century church that is structured and operating under the vestiges of the 20th century and, in some cases, even the 19th century. The once largely immigrant Catholic Church had enjoyed an abundance of clergy and established many churches throughout the diocese.

Although Bishop Persico did not close any church buildings outright, he knows that in time the newly merged and partnered parishes may find that maintaining multiple buildings makes no sense.

"They may find they don't have

>> RESTRUCTURING, page 2

KEY TERMS for PARISH RESTRUCTURING

PARTNERED PARISH: Two parishes share some of their resources, but they continue to exist as distinct parishes. They function in many ways like sister parishes. While they have their own parishioners, parish church and finances, they share the same pastor, a common pastoral council, one staff and one parish office.

STAND-ALONE PARISH: A traditional parish with its own pastor, parish church, finances and finance council, parish council, staff and office.

SECONDARY CHURCH: Any church belonging to a parish, other than the parish church itself. When two or more parishes are merged together, each of which had its own church, the new parish will find itself the owner of multiple churches. One is designated as the parish church, and the others are called secondary churches.

By law, the Eucharist must be reserved in every parish church, and for that reason, every parish church must be open to the faithful for at least some hours every day. There is no obligation to reserve the Eucharist in secondary churches, and without the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle, there is no obligation that the secondary church be opened every day.

Secondary churches do not have regular Sunday Masses, but will be available for weddings, funerals and feast days.

MISSION CHURCH: In the Diocese of Erie, secondary churches with permission for Sunday and holy day Masses are called mission churches.

Amoris Laetitia

Pope writes 'Joy of Love'

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Church leaders from around the world hailed the tone of mercy in Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia* ("The Joy of Love"), but cautioned against a hurried reading of the document.

"What is new about this exhortation is its tone," Cardinal Wilfrid Napier of Durban, South Africa, told Catholic News Service after the document's release April 8. He said it calls on all ministers "to be warm and caring in the way they deal with people in difficult circumstances."

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin called *Amoris Laetitia* an "encyclopedic document and...much of its most valuable content runs the risk of being bypassed by a preoccupation with one or two of its aspects."

The exhortation reflects on the 2014 and 2015 synods of bishops on the family. It contains no new rules or norms. However, it encourages careful review of everything related to family ministry and much greater attention to the language and attitude used when explaining church teaching and ministering to those who do not fully live that teaching.

Australian Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane, Australia, who attended the 2015 Synod of Bishops on the family, said the document "insists that we have to deal always with the facts, however messy they may be."

"Francis doesn't claim to be the final word settling every controversial question. Nor does he claim to offer a comprehensive pastoral plan to be implemented around the planet. His claims are more modest—and for that reason more compelling," he said.

Preliminary proposal for parishes

Northern Vicariate
(Erie, Forest and Warren counties)

PARTNERED PARISHES

- Mount Calvary Parish, Erie, and St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Erie
- St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Erie, and St. Andrew Parish, Erie
- St. Paul Parish, Erie, and Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Erie. (Besides sharing a pastor, a permanent deacon will be assigned to assist with the administration of St. Paul Parish.)

STAND-ALONE PARISHES RESULTING FROM MERGERS (with secondary churches with and without mission status):

- Holy Redeemer Parish, Warren
  Parish church: Holy Redeemer
  Secondary mission church: St. Anthony of Padua, Sheffield
- Holy Rosary Parish, Erie
  Parish church: Holy Rosary
  Secondary church: St. John the Baptist, Erie
- Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, Erie
  Parish church: St. Ann
  Secondary churches: Holy Family, St. Casimir, St. Hedwig, all of Erie
- Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Edinboro
  Parish church: Our Lady of the Lake
  Secondary church: St. Philip, Crossingville
- St. Joseph Parish, Warren
  Parish church: St. Joseph
  Secondary mission church: St. Luke, Youngsville
- St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Corry
  Parish church: St. Thomas
  Secondary church: St. Elizabeth, Corry

NO CHANGES PLANNED at these stand-alone parishes with two churches:

- St. John Parish, Tidioute
  Parish church: St. John
  Secondary mission church: St. Anthony Mission, Tionesta
- St. Theresa of Avila, Union City
  Parish church: St. Theresa of Avila
  Secondary mission church: Our Lady of Fatima Mission, Canadhota Lake. (The use of Our Lady of Fatima Mission will be reduced to seasonal weekend Mass.)

NO CHANGES PLANNED at these stand-alone parishes:

- All Saints Parish, Waterford
- Blessed Sacrament Parish, Erie
- Holy Cross Parish, Fairview
- Holy Trinity Parish, Erie
- Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Harborcreek
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Erie
- Our Lady of Peace Parish, Erie
- St. Boniface Parish, Erie
- St. Francis Xavier Parish, McKean
- St. George Parish, Erie
- St. Gregory Parish, North East
- St. James Parish, Erie
- St. John the Evangelist Parish, Girard
- St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community, Erie
- St. Julia Parish, Erie
- St. Lawrence Parish, Albion
- St. Luke Parish, Erie
- St. Patrick Parish, Erie
- St. Peter Cathedral Parish, Erie
- St. Stanislaus Parish, Erie
- St. Stephen of Hungary Parish, Erie

Eastern Vicariate
(Cameron, Clearfield, Elk, Jefferson, McKean and Potter counties)

PARTNERED PARISHES

- St. Bonaventure Parish, Grampian, and St. Timothy Parish, Curwensville
- St. Francis of Assisi, Bradford, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Bradford (Our Mother of Perpetual Help, Lewis Run, will be merged as a secondary church of St. Francis, Bradford)
- St. Catherine of Siena Parish, DuBois, and St. Michael the Archangel Parish, DuBois (St. Joseph, DuBois, will be merged as a secondary parish of St. Catherine of Siena.)

STAND-ALONE PARISHES RESULTING FROM MERGERS (with secondary churches with and without mission status):

- Christ the King Parish, Houtzdale
  Parish church: Christ the King
  Secondary mission church: Immaculate Conception, Osceola Mills (Immaculate Conception is no longer partnered with St. Agnes, Morrisdale.)
- Holy Rosary Parish, Johnsonburg
  Parish church: Holy Rosary
  Secondary church: St. Anne, Wilcox
  Secondary church: Holy Cross, Rasselas
- St. Agnes Parish, Morrisdale
  Parish church: St. Agnes (no longer partnered with Immaculate Conception, Osceola Mills)
  Secondary mission church: Ss. Peter and Paul Mission, Hawk Run
- St. Basil the Great Parish, Coalport
  Parish church: St. Basil
  Secondary mission church: Holy Trinity, Ramey
- St. Boniface Parish, Kersey
  Parish church: St. Boniface
  Secondary church: Holy Cross, Brandy Camp
- St. Elizabeth Parish, Smethport
  Parish church: St. Elizabeth
  Secondary church: St. Joseph, Mount Jewett
- St. Raphael Parish, Eldred
  Parish church: St. Raphael
  Secondary mission church: St. Theresa, Shinglehouse
  Secondary mission church: St. Mary, Sartwell

TRANSFER OF MISSIONS AND PARTNERED PARISHES

- St. Bibiana Parish, Galeton, remains a stand-alone parish with Sacred Heart Church, Genessee, its secondary mission church.
- St. Augustine Church, Austin, formerly a mission of St. Bibiana, Galeton, will no longer be a mission church. St. Augustine Church will become the secondary church of St. Eulalia Parish, Coudersport.
- St. Eulalia Parish remains partnered with St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, Port Allegany.

CLARIFICATION:

- Ss. Cosmas and Damian Parish, Punxsutawney. St. Adrian Church in Delancey, St. Anthony of Padua Church in Walston, and St. Joseph Church in Anita will be correctly identified as secondary churches of Ss. Cosmas and Damian, not as missions.

NO CHANGES PLANNED FOR THESE STAND-ALONE PARISHES:

- Queen of the World, St. Marys
- Sacred Heart, St. Marys
- St. Bernard, Falls Creek (Part-time, non-resident pastor also responsible for hospital and Christ the King Manor)
- St. Francis, Clearfield
- St. Joseph, Force
- St. Leo Magnus, Ridgway
- St. Mary's, St. Marys
- St. Tobias, Brockway

NO CHANGES PLANNED FOR THESE STAND-ALONE PARISHES WITH TWO OR MORE CHURCHES:

- Immaculate Conception, Brookville, with its secondary mission church of St. Dominic, Sigel
- St. Callistus, Kane, with its secondary church of Ss. John and Stephen, James City
- St. Mark, Emporium, with its secondary mission church of St. James, Driftwood
- St. Mary of the Assumption, Frenchville, with its secondary mission churches of Ss. Peter and Paul, Grassflat, and St. Severin, Drifting

NO CHANGES PLANNED FOR THESE PARTNERED PARISHES:

- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sykesville, and St. Mary, Reynoldsville

>> PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL, page 2

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Pope Francis rescues refugees

ABOARD THE PAPAL FLIGHT FROM GREECE (CNS)—When an aide suggested Pope Francis offer to fly some Syrian refugees back to Rome with him, the pope said he agreed immediately because it was "an inspiration of the Holy Spirit."

In the end, 12 Syrians—members of three families, including six children—all had the necessary papers from the Greek and Italian governments in time to fly with the pope April 16. Two Christian families originally had been on the Vatican's list, but their papers were not ready in time.

The fact that the 12 are all Muslims did not enter into the equation, the pope said. "I gave priority to children of God," he explained.

The Vatican will assume financial responsibility for the families, who will be assisted by the Rome-based Community of Sant'Egidio.

Since January, more than 150,000 migrants and refugees have arrived in Greece and 366 people have died attempting crossing the Aegean Sea, according to the International Organization for Migration. Hundreds of thousands of people have fled violence and persecution in Syria and Iraq.

CNS photo

Pope Francis greets Syrian refugees he brought home with him April 16 aboard his flight from the Greek island of Lesbos.

Parish restructuring feedback begins

Continued from page 1

the resources to keep it up," Bishop Persico said. "At that point, the parish can request that I consider closing their secondary church building."

He called his actions the "first step" in long-range planning by the diocese.

"I'm sure," he added, "that there will be other changes coming as we move forward, as our demographics constantly shift, and as we have personnel changes with fewer priests. Change isn't over."

Continuing through April 27, pastors and parish leaders throughout the diocese will be attending deanery meetings to discuss the bishop's proposed changes. There will be a feedback period through May 20 in which anyone is welcome to submit their thoughts on the plan at www.ErieRCD.org/planning.asp. Besides individual feedback, all parishes in the diocese are expected to submit official responses.

Over the summer, Bishop Persico, his pastoral planning team and the Priests Council will analyze the feedback and make appropriate adjustments. They will coordinate efforts with the Priest Personnel Board, which handles parish assignments for priests.

The bishop expects to make his final decisions on parish restructuring in mid-September. All parish restructuring will begin in February 2017.

Submit feedback online at
www.ErieRCD.org/planning.asp

Editor's Notes

Mary SOLBERG

Talk about the Year of Mercy!

About 200 members of the Sisters of Mercy will gather in Erie this week for a major assembly of the Sisters of Mercy New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West Community. The assembly is held only once every four years, and includes sisters and associates from Erie, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, Rochester and the Philippines.

At this year's event, scheduled at the Ambassador Conference Center, the community will consider entering into a "Journey of Oneness" process instead of electing sisters to new leadership positions.

This process will be woven into all conversations during the week as six Sisters of Mercy communities seek to become more integrated under one leadership team by January 2019.

"Like our other assemblies, this will be a contemplative and prayerful approach to our work," says **Sister Nancy Hoff, RSM**, co-chair of the assembly.

♦ ♦ ♦

Bishop Lawrence Persico, in between confirmations and meetings on his proposed parish restructuring plan, took time to review Pope Francis' latest apostolic exhortation, *Amoris Laetitia* ("The Joy of Love").

"The Holy Father reminds us to approach even complex and challenging situations with eyes and hearts of mercy," the bishop says. "He demonstrates once again his ability to apply theology to everyday aspects of our lives."

At 278 pages, the exhortation will take a lot of time to read. The pope's goal is to have everyone in the church contemplate mercy in our dealings with family life.

♦ ♦ ♦

On April 3, Divine Mercy Sunday, eight Catholic Youth Organization basketball teams from throughout Pennsylvania gathered for Mass at St. Peter Cathedral before the CYO state championship competition at the Prep-Villa Events Center.

At the morning Mass celebrated by Bishop Persico, several teams donned their school colors, adding some extra flair to the occasion. Several members of the seventh- and eighth-grade basketball team from St. Leo School, Diocese of Harrisburg, posed in photos with the bishop after the Mass.

Player **Henry Zimmerman** of Lancaster, Pa., was baptized at St. Peter's and was happy to be there. "This church is really nice," he said.

♦ ♦ ♦

Deepest sympathies to **Greensburg Bishop Emeritus Lawrence Brandt**, former chancellor of the Diocese of Erie, whose mother, **Priscilla Brandt**, died April 4 at age 107.

Bishop Brandt took care of his mother for many years. Throughout her life, she volunteered at facilities for the aged in Girard and Erie. From 1963 until her retirement in 1975, she was the secretary to the principal at Mercyhurst Preparatory School in Erie.

Memorial Masses may be offered for Mrs. Brandt at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, 300 N. Main St., Greensburg, PA 15601.

♦ ♦ ♦

Best wishes to **Father Michael Allison**, president of the Shenango Valley Catholic School System, who will be returning to full-time ministry as pastor of Beloved Disciple Parish in Grove City.

Father Allison, who marks his 25th jubilee as a priest this year, will continue serving as president until the end of this academic year.

Mary Solberg is the editor of FaithLife.
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Crossingville parishioner contemplates merger

BY MARY SOLBERG | *FAITHLIFE*

Greg Petrus has been a member of St. Philip Parish in Crossingville since he was baptized 67 years ago. The church also was home to his parents and grandparents; even his own granddaughter was baptized there recently.

Established in 1840, the rural Crawford County parish learned this month that it will merge with nearby Our Lady of the Lake Parish, Edinboro, as part of a proposed restructuring plan of parishes in the Diocese of Erie.

As a secondary church to Our Lady of the Lake, St. Philip would no longer function as a parish. Its church building, however, would not close. It would not have a regular Sunday Mass, but its feast day would be celebrated there, as well as weddings and funerals.

"You kind of know what's going to happen because our membership is declining. We only have about 60 families. There are no young people and next year there won't even be a religious education program," Petrus said. "It's so sad. I knew something was bound to happen."

Petrus was hoping that the restructuring plan would allow St. Philip to be partnered with nearby St. Lawrence Parish, Albion, whose pastor has served as St. Philip's administrator.

Greg Petrus

"Only about a quarter of our parishioners will go to Edinboro. The rest will go to Fairview, Albion and elsewhere," Petrus said.

But Father Daniel Hoffman, pastor of Our Lady of the Lake, extended open arms to the people of St. Philip, saying he understood the grieving its parishioners will undoubtedly experience as the plan unfolds.

"It's their home, their spiritual home," Father Hoffman said. "That's where they've received the sacraments. That's where they've encountered Christ in prayer, but I want to encourage them that the Jesus at Our Lady of the Lake is the same Jesus at St. Philip's in Crossingville."

Preliminary proposal for parishes

Continued from page 1

Western Vicariate

(Clarion, Crawford, Mercer, Venango counties, and a portion of Forest County)

PARTNERED PARISHES

- St. Michael, Fryburg, and St. Joseph, Lucinda
- St. Peter, Conneautville, and St. Philip, Linesville
- St. Agatha, St. Brigid, and St. Mary of Grace, all of Meadville
- St. Joseph and St. Stephen, both of Oil City (Our Lady Help of Christians and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, both of Oil City, will be merged into St. Joseph Parish. St. Venantius, Rouseville, will be merged into St. Stephen.)

STAND-ALONE PARISHES RESULTING FROM MERGERS

(with secondary churches; no mission churches):

- Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Farrell (previously known as Our Lady of Fatima-St. Ann Parish)
  Parish church: Our Lady of Fatima
  Secondary churches: St. Adalbert, Farrell, and St. Anthony of Padua, Sharon
- St. Joseph Parish, Sharon
  Parish church: St. Joseph
  Secondary churches: St. Stanislaus Kostka, and Sacred Heart, both in Sharon
- St. Titus Parish, Titusville
  Parish church: St. Titus
  Secondary churches: St. Walburga, Titusville, and Immaculate Conception, Mageetown (no longer a mission church)

NO CHANGES PLANNED FOR THESE STAND-ALONE PARISHES:

- Beloved Disciple Parish, Grove City
- Good Shepherd Parish, West Middlesex
- Immaculate Conception Parish, Clarion
- Notre Dame Parish, Hermitage
- Our Lady, Queen of the Americas Parish, Conneaut Lake
- St. Bartholomew Parish, Sharpsville
- St. Columbkille Parish, Stoneboro
- St. Michael Parish, Emlenton
- St. Patrick Parish, Franklin

NO CHANGES PLANNED FOR THESE STAND-ALONE PARISHES WITH TWO OR MORE CHURCHES:

- Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mercer
  Parish church: Immaculate Heart of Mary
  Secondary church: St. Hermenegild, Pardoe
- St. Hippolyte, Frenchtown
  Parish church: St. Hippolyte
  Secondary mission church: Our Lady of Lourdes, Cochranton
- St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Cambridge Springs
  Parish church: St. Anthony of Padua
  Secondary mission church: St. Bernadette, Saegertown
- St. Charles Parish, New Bethlehem
  Parish church: St. Charles
  Secondary mission church: St. Nicholas of Tolentino, Crates
- St. Eusebius Parish, East Brady
  Parish church: St. Eusebius
  Secondary mission church: St. Richard, Rimersburg
- St. Mary Parish, Crown
  Parish church: St. Mary
  Secondary mission church: St. Ann, Marienville
- St. Michael Parish, Greenville
  Parish church: St. Michael
  Secondary mission church: St. Margaret, Jamestown

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CASINO NIGHT
April 30, 2016
Rainbow Gardens
7:00PM-Midnight
Doors open at 6:00PM
Our Lady of Peace
Cash back drawings throughout the night
12 prizes from $200 to $2,500
Top cash drawing of $10,000!
Video Horse Racing ~ 50/50 ~ Instant Bingo
Free food and beverages
$20.00–admission for two and eligibility for cash back drawing
$10.00–per person for admission only
Tickets may be purchased at the door, or in advance at:
Our Lady of Peace Church ~ 2401 West 38th Street ~ 833-7701

EVENTS

Monastery to host *Dead Man Walking* author

HARBORCREEK—The Benedictines for Peace in Erie are sponsoring a presentation May 25 at 7 p.m. by Sister Helen Prejean, CSJ, author of *Dead Man Walking*.

Her presentation, titled "Dead Man Walking – The Journey Continues," will be held at Mount St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 E. Lake Road, Harborcreek. Sister Helen will answer questions and sign copies of her books after the presentation.

She has been outspoken in the national dialogue on the death penalty and has helped shape the Catholic Church's opposition to state executions. A free will donation will be taken. For more information, contact Sister Marlene Bertke, OSB, at benedictine@igc.org or at 814-899-0614.

Trash to Treasures returns to Holy Rosary

ERIE—Trash to Treasures, a spring rummage sale, will be held in Hastings Hall at Holy Rosary Parish, E. 28th Street and East Avenue, Erie, on April 30 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Only items in good condition are offered. Among the items for sale are dishes, pots and pans, coats and furniture.

Knights at the Races gearing up for April 30

ERIE—The second annual Knights at the Races will be held April 30 at Our Lady's Christian School gymnasium, 606 Lowell Ave., Erie. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.; the first race begins at 8 p.m. There will be free food and drinks and games of chance. BYOB. Admission is $20 per person. The event is sponsored by St. Jude Knights of Columbus.

Speaker to address New Evangelization

SHARPSVILLE—St. Bartholomew Church in Sharpsville will host a "Gathering" on May 11 from 6:45 to 9 p.m. Guest speaker will be Dr. Ralph Martin, president of Renewal Ministry and a consultor to the Pontifical Council for New Evangelization. Martin will give two, 45-minute talks. Registration and a social will take place from 6 to 6:30 p.m. The evening will include exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, prayer, worship, song and witnessing.

Pentecost retreat scheduled in Eldred

ELDRED—The Benedictine Sisters of Catholic Rural Ministry are sponsoring a retreat to celebrate Pentecost on May 15 from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. at the Coleman Center of St. Raphael Parish, 16 First St., Eldred. Benedictine Sister Anne McCarthy is the presenter.

Reservations are due by May 12 by contacting Margaret French at 814-945-6245 or Sister Phyllis Schleicher, OSB, at 814-544-8017 or sisterphy@gmail.com.

St. Peter Cathedral School plans celebration

ERIE—St. Peter Cathedral School in Erie will host an event May 28 to celebrate the 120-year legacy of the school. All students and their parents, as well as members of the parish, are invited. Share memories with classmates, teachers and former principals, and walk through the hallways and visit classrooms.

Festivities will begin with a 4 p.m. Mass, followed by tours. A party will begin at 5 p.m. at the school, located at W. 11th and Sassafras streets. Food and drink will be provided; IDs will be required. Remember to wear Duke memorabilia or school colors: blue, white and red.

There will be an auction of memorabilia from the school, including stained glass from the church and items from local merchants. All proceeds will go to the St. Peter Cathedral Scholarship Fund.

For details, visit www.stpetercathedral.com. Alumni can update the school's mailing list or serve on a committee by emailing their name, address and email address to advancement@stpetercathedral.com.

Women's Day of Recollection to be held in June

ERIE—The Word of Life Center of Erie is sponsoring a Women's Day of Recollection June 11 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the St. Joseph Community Center, 147 W. 24th St., Erie. Stacy Malesiewski, vice president of Gray Matter Media and Knight of Truth Media, will be the retreat director.

For reservations, call 814-824-1286 or 814-833-9717. The cost is $20 per person (teens and older). Some scholarships are available. Bring your own lunch; drinks and snacks provided. The day includes Mass, prayer, talks, music and small group discussion.

Come join the "GATHERING"
WEDNESDAY – MAY 11th 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.
AT
ST. BARTHOLOMEW CHURCH
311 West Ridge Avenue, Sharpsville, PA
Guest speaker
Dr. Ralph Martin
Consultor to the Pontifical Council "New Evangelization"
- President of Renewal Ministries that reaches into 84 countries
- Visiting Professor at the Franciscan University
- Professor at Detroit Theological Seminary, Detroit, MI
- Host of the Catholic program "The Choices We Face" – Televised around the world

Theme for the evening
Living as a Catholic in Challenging Times
Two 40 minute talks
1) The Truth About Mercy

2) What! Me Be a Saint!!

ENJOY
- Begins with fellowship and refreshments in St. Bart's Hall from 6:30 to 6:50 p.m. The first talk will begin at 6:50 p.m.
- Praise and Worship Music offered by the Shalom for Jesus group
- Concludes with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Sponsored by the New Evangelization Council of Mercer County

PA primary is April 26

Only 21 percent of state candidates in diocese respond to primary questionnaire

A Catholic Voter Guide
www.ErieRCD.org/vote2016.htm

FAITHLIFE staff report

Only 5 of 23 candidates for state office in the Diocese of Erie responded to a questionnaire distributed this past month by the Office of Parish Social Ministry and Respect Life of the Diocese of Erie.

The response rate was only about 21 percent, but Erin Landini-Grogan, director of the office, believes it may help guide Catholic voters as they prepare for the April 26 primary election in Pennsylvania.

"Candidate questionnaires and their responses provide an insightful look into the position of a candidate on a variety of issues important to the faithful," Landini-Grogan says. "It is an important component of the political process and learning about the vital issues both in Pennsylvania and in our country."

The candidates for the Pennsylvania House in the Diocese of Erie who responded to the survey were:

- Patrick J. Fuller, 2nd Legislative District
- Gregory S. Lucas, 3rd Legislative District
- Lester L. Lenhart, 6th Legislative District
- Parke H. Wentling, 17th Legislative District.

The sole candidate for Pennsylvania Senate races in the diocese who responded was Dwight A. Winck Jr., of the 35th District.

The survey covered a wide range of issues, many of which are of importance to Catholics.

Also available on the site are the responses to a survey conducted by the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference on the races in Pennsylvania for attorney general, auditor general, state treasurer and U.S. senator. Only six of 13 candidates (two Democrats and four Republicans) responded.

OBITUARIES

Msgr. Salvatore P. Mitchell

Monsignor remained active until age 99

HERMITAGE—Msgr. Salvatore P. Mitchell, 99, of Hermitage, died April 14 at UPMC Horizon Hospital, Farrell. He was in his 74th year of ordained priesthood.

Born Dec. 12, 1916, in Sharon, he attended Sacred Heart Parochial Grade School in Sharon, and was a 1934 graduate of Cathedral Preparatory School in Erie.

He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from St. Bonaventure College, Olean, N.Y., in 1938, before entering Christ the King Seminary in Buffalo, N.Y.

Msgr. Mitchell was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Erie on May 14, 1942, at St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, by Bishop John Mark Gannon. He began his priestly ministry as parochial vicar of Holy Redeemer Parish, Warren.

From 1942-44, he served as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy during World War II with the Fleet Marine Force, and was stationed for a time with the 12th Service Battalion on the island of Okinawa in Japan. Following his honorable discharge in 1946, he served as parochial vicar at St. Boniface Parish in Erie, during which time he served as a faculty member and football coach at Cathedral Prep. In 1951, he became parochial vicar at St. Joseph Parish, Erie, and served as chaplain of the Veteran's Administration Hospital, Erie.

Msgr. Salvatore P. Mitchell

In 1955, Msgr. Mitchell was appointed founding pastor of Good Shepherd Parish in West Middlesex. He established the parish religious education program and oversaw construction of a social hall, a rectory, the present church and the former religious education building. In 1982, he celebrated Mass with Pope John Paul II. Two years later, he was honored with the title of Prelate of Honor (Monsignor).

Msgr. Mitchell served as a member of the Priest Senate for two terms, was dean of the Mercer Area Deanery, and was a member of the Diocesan Board of Consultors. He was the first vicar of the Western Vicariate. Also, he served on the Pastor's Board at Kennedy Catholic High School, Hermitage, from the inception of the school until the time of his retirement. In 2015, he was presented the school's prestigious Kennedy Medal of Honor Award.

Although Msgr. Mitchell retired in 1991 after 36 years as pastor of Church of the Good Shepherd in West Middlesex, he continued to celebrate Mass at many local churches and at St. John XXIII Home in Hermitage. He celebrated his last public Mass on April 3, 2016.

During his years of active ministry, he served as chaplain for the Catholic Daughters of America, Sharon Court #507, and the Knights of Columbus, Council #684, Sharon. He also directed the construction of St. John XXIII Home in Hermitage, where he served on the board of directors and lived after his retirement.

Survivors include nieces and nephews; great-nieces and great-nephews; and cousins.

A funeral Mass was celebrated at Church of the Good Shepherd on April 18, with Bishop Lawrence Persico as main celebrant. Military honors were rendered by the West Middlesex VFW, Wheatland American Legion, and Farrell VFW Honor Guard immediately following the Mass. Burial was at St. Rose Cemetery, Hermitage.

Memorials may be made to the Priests Fund at St. John XXIII Home, 2250 Shenango Valley Freeway, Hermitage, PA 16148.

Mother Emmanuel of the Mother of God, OCD

Carmelite was founding member of monastery

Mother Emmanuel of the Mother of God, OCD, (Margaret M. Smith), 94, died April 9. She was among the founding members of the Carmelite Monastery of the Holy Family, Erie.

Born Dec. 4, 1921, in Newcastle, County Down, Ireland, she was a daughter of the late Philip and Catherine J. (Kelly) Smith.

On June 16, 1950, Mother Emmanuel entered Carmel in Wheeling, W.Va. She made her first profession on June 21, 1952, followed by her profession of solemn vows on June 30, 1955. She came to Erie on Feb. 7, 1957, when the Carmelite Monastery of the Holy Family was founded on East Gore Road.

The cloistered sisters traveled by car from Wheeling, at the invitation of Archbishop John Mark Gannon. The young Sister Emmanuel joined the others in uncarting bales of straw for use as bedding on their first evening.

Mother Emmanuel was elected prioress of the Carmel of the Holy Family on Jan. 7, 1983. She held that position for 30 years.

She was well known to those who visited the monastery in Erie.

"Her Irish wit and love of God helped to raise many a troubled heart and put a lilt of trust back into the step of those who had spoken to her," said Mother Maria of the Heart of Jesus of the Carmelite Monastery in Erie.

Mother Emmanuel maintained her positive spirit in the correspondence she kept up for the monastery and in her dealings with those she met at the Sisters of Mercy motherhouse infirmary in the past year. According to Mother Maria, Mother Emmanuel often said in her last weeks, "Turn to God for help."

The sisters of the Carmelite Monastery of the Holy Family extend their gratitude to Sister Joan McCabe, RSM, and all the sisters and staff of the infirmary at the Mercy motherhouse.

"Their loving and excellent care kept her (Mother Emmanuel's) Irish eyes smiling until the very end," Mother Maria said.

Besides members of her cloister, survivors include a sister, Anne Minervini of Florida; and nieces, nephews and cousins, all from the United States and Ireland.

Viewing hours were held in the chapel at the Carmelite Monastery on April 12. A funeral Mass was celebrated there on April 13, with Bishop Lawrence Persico officiating.

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PHOTOS from AROUND the DIOCESE

Email news items to: FaithLife@ErieRCD.org

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

Bishop Emeritus Trautman speaks at Day of Recollection

SHARON—**Bishop Emeritus Donald Trautman**, left, was the guest speaker at the recent Day of Recollection sponsored by the Mercer County Catholic Women's Retreat League at St. Joseph Church in Sharon. He was joined by **Msgr. Edward Zeitler**, who is a retired priest at Notre Dame Parish, Hermitage, and serves as the league's spiritual adviser. More than 110 women attended the event. Besides Bishop Trautman's presentation, the day included Mass, time for confessions, rosary and the chaplet of the Divine Mercy.

Happy Earth Day 2016!

OIL CITY—Students from St. Stephen School in Oil City love the earth, especially as they learn about Pope Francis' environment encyclical, "*Laudato Si*: On Care for Our Common Home." **Benedictine Sister Marian Wehler** and **Mercy Sister Tina Geiger** of Catholic Rural Ministry recently presented information about the encyclical and engaged students in activities that demonstrate how to be good stewards.

Pictured with Sister Marian, upper left, and teacher Jodi Zacherl, are second-graders **Matthew Giancola, Konner Beichner, Alexus Fry, Lily Szekeres, Elliot Hulsizer, Payton Liederbach, Rihanna Carlson, Taylor Gibson** and **Autumn Wysocki.**

First reconciliations in the diocese

SMETHPORT—Five students received their first reconciliation at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish in Smethport this spring. Afterward, a pizza party was enjoyed by the students and their friends and families. Pictured in the front row, from left, are: **Kyla Hull, Deacon Hendrickson** and **Hannah Taylor.** In the back row, from left, are: **Keion Hull; Father Vince Cieslewicz**, pastor; and **Nicholas Learn.**

FRANKLIN—Members of this year's first reconciliation class from St. Patrick School, Franklin, and its religious education program posed for this photo in the church.

Pictured are: **Cody Walkowski, Ben Krellner, Cole Findlay, Katie Engles, Jillian Ewing, Connor Zerbe, Ian Kleck, Madolyn Williams, Martina Baughman, JaLynne Konetsky, Zack Shingledecker** and **Henry White.**

Court Sharon #507 marks 95th anniversary

SHARPSVILLE—Members of Court Sharon #507 celebrated the Court's 95th anniversary with a Mass at St. Bartholomew Church in Sharpsville in February. Father Matthew Strickenberger, court chaplain, was the main celebrant.

Pictured with Father Strickenberger, top center, and members of the Knights of Columbus Council from Sharon and Farrell are several state and local officers, including: **Peggy Guckin, Peg Rafferty, Shirley Hall, Margaret Giordano, Lisa McCann, Laraine McGinnes, Phyllis Vrobel, Audrey Albaugh, Sue Kelly, Jeanette Kitch, Mary E. May, Mary Jane Weed, Linda Snyder, Antoinette DeAngelis, Pauline Radasevich, Mary Ellen McGonigle, Mary (Kate) Tonty, Mary Ellen Ebert, Mary Ellen Dunn** and **Mary Sulesky**. Mary May, Court Erie #515 regent, was named "Woman of the Year."

Water conservation becomes a campaign at St. George

ERIE—**Linda Austin** of Erie delivered a talk to third- through eighth-graders at St. George School in Erie, discussing her mission trips drilling water wells in Kenya.

The school's student council has been inspired to continue last year's "What Would Jesus Waste?" campaign.

Using the hashtag #shortshowerscampaign, the students are drawing attention to the need to conserve and appreciate water as a limited resource.

Religious education class volunteers at food pantry

FAIRVIEW—The sixth-grade religious education class at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Fairview volunteered at the Fairview Presbyterian Church Food Pantry on March 5. They are pictured doing their community service, along with their teacher, Connie Kliem. Standing, from left, are: **Jacob Mehler, Dean Woods, Evan Michaels, Andrew Smith, Connie Kliem, Robbie Mailliard, Julia Johnson, Bailey Wheeler, Mary Imler** and **Mattie Kliem.**

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The 39th Annual
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Join us in the outdoor Rosary and Eucharist Procession
"Pray the Rosary everyday in order to obtain peace for the world."
(O.L. of Fatima 1917)
There will be Religious Articles, Books, Literature and Food.
In case of inclement weather, the procession will be moved into the Expo I Building.
For more Information, CALL Bill Moore at 814-765-0171
National Pilgrim Virgin Statue of the USA will make its first visit at the Rosary March this year. It was blessed by Pope Paul VI in 1967 in Fatima, Portugal.

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