

The U.S. Senate's divided mind on Pope John Paul II

By Richard M. Doerflinger

Since the November 2004 election, leading Democrats have been talking about the need to reconnect with "values voters"— Catholics and others who care about the moral climate in our country, including its treatment of the defenseless unborn. Many have asked whether this outreach will mean a real rethinking of the party's position on life issues, or just repackaged rhetoric.

Based on what the U.S. Senate did on April 5, the answer is not promising.

The Senate scheduled two votes, one right after the other. The first was on a resolution honoring the legacy of Pope John Paul II; it cited his efforts on behalf of "human rights and human dignity throughout the world" and his defense of "the weakest and most vulnerable members of the human family." The second vote was on a motion by Senator Barbara Boxer to rescind President Bush's "Mexico City" policy, so that the U.S. will again subsidize groups promoting and performing abortions in the Third World.

The resolution honoring the pope passed unanimously, with the support of every Democrat. Then the motion to use U.S. funds for abortion-promoting groups passed 52 to 46, with the support of every Democrat.

To appreciate how ironic this was, one needs to know where the "Mexico City" policy came from. It was first announced by the U.S. delegation sent by President Reagan to a 1984 United Nations population conference in Mexico City. As the policy was being announced by the U.S., it was also being written into the final U.N. conference document at the request of the Holy See delegation appointed by Pope John Paul II.

The language drafted by the Holy See urged population programs to reject abortion as a method of family planning. It was adopted with overwhelming support from Third World countries, which did not want abortion programs imposed on them by Western nations. The language was also supported by the U.S., which announced it would no longer fund organizations violating this international consensus.

In short, the Mexico City policy was one of Pope John Paul II's signal contributions to international policy and the defense of the most vulnerable. Like the effort to end Communism, it was also a collaborative effort between this pope and President Reagan—an effort less universally known, perhaps, but no doubt of comparable importance in the eyes of a pope who never tired of standing up for human life.

The upshot of the recent Senate votes, then, was that the Democrats, as well as several Republicans, voted to say that the pope has a wonderful legacy, but the influence of that legacy urgently needs to be eliminated from our laws.

Fortunately, the Senate vote is not the final word and the Boxer amendment is not expected to become law. Therefore this important legacy of the Holy Father will survive. But one has to wonder why so many senators went out of their way, just before the funeral of this pope, to praise his legacy and then attack his values. Substance, not empty style, is what Catholics and other pro-life Americans want to see in their elected representatives.

Richard Doerflinger is deputy director of the secretariat for pro-life activities for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

FaithLife

Bi-weekly news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie April 24, 2005 www.ErieRCD.org

Diaconate program serves, flourishes

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

At Albion SCI, inmates look for Ralph DeCecco. But they're really seeking to get right with God.

DeCecco, a deacon assistant at St. Andrew Parish, Erie, serves his chaplaincy at the medium security prison. Ordained a permanent deacon in 1999, he's been involved with prison ministry ever since.

"I spend most of my time in spiritual direction," says DeCecco, whose appointment schedule is a heavy one. "What I find is that there is a real strong desire, even in the prison walls, to serve God. Physically, they are behind barbed-wire fences and steel doors. Even though their bodies are in prison, their souls are free."

Deacon Ralph, who says most of the time inmates have made peace with what they've done, says most inmates with whom he works do want to live as a Christian on the outside.

Deacon Ralph is one of 46 men who have been ordained permanent deacons in the Erie Diocese. According to Msgr. Robert Smith, director of the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program since its inception in the diocese in 1994, Deacon Ralph's ministry is one of the many reasons why Bishop Donald Trautman initiated the program.

"It's enabled the bishop to reach into areas of the diocese where there's been a need for a Catholic presence," Msgr. Smith says. "Through the diaconate,



Five deacon candidates were recently installed into the ministry of the acolyte at St. Mark Catholic Center. Pictured are the candidates and their wives along with Bishop Donald Trautman. From right, are Jeff and Nicole Swanson, St. Peter Cathedral Parish, Erie; Robert and Pat Ball, St. George Parish, Erie; Gerald Beeman, St. Bernard Parish, Bradford; Bishop Trautman; Charles and Kathy Adamczyk, St. James Parish, Erie; Robert and Diana Boal, St. Patrick Parish, Franklin.

that Catholic presence has been brought to places that otherwise would not have it."

Fifteen men are currently enrolled in the five-year program and will eventually be ordained permanent deacons. Five men were installed into the ministry of the acolyte in February and will be ordained next year. The program focuses on academic, spiritual and pastoral formation which prepares men for ordination to the permanent diaconate. Another new group of men will begin studying this September.

"The deacon's ministry is the Church's call to service sacramentalized," Msgr. Smith says. "Deacons are to be, at one and the same time, servants of the mysteries of Christ and servants to the people of God for whom they are ordained."

After ordination, deacons are

involved in a wide spectrum of ministries including prison and convalescent ministries, Catholic Charities and food banks. They also assist in the teaching of religious education, pre-cana and confirmation programs.

There is a unique situation in the Erie Diocese in that all but two deacons are married. "They bring the perspective of living marriage to couples who are preparing for marriage," Msgr. Smith says.

In cases of parishes with just one priest, deacons have been there to share the workload. But the diaconate program puts an emphasis on charity.

"Charity is gospel diaconal ministry at its best," Msgr. Smith says. "Its origins are charitable service to the most needy."

For diaconate program Q&A and a column by Deacon Dennis Kudlak, please see inside page.

New mural to be dedicated at St. Peter Cathedral May 14

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

On the eve of Pentecost, a new mural honoring 150 years of Eucharistic worship in the Erie Diocese will be dedicated at St. Peter Cathedral.

The artwork will be dedicated at the 5:15 p.m. Mass on May 14 by Bishop Donald Trautman. Artist Fr. Tom Ribits will also be on hand to present his work.

The work was commissioned by Bishop Trautman in 2003 during the diocese's sesquicentennial celebration.

Fr. Ribits, an oblate of St. Francis de Sales, teaches painting and is campus minister at D'Youville College in Buffalo. The Eucharistic mural is his second cathedral project. His Good Shepherd mural can be seen at the Cathedral of St. Joseph in Buffalo.

"The biggest challenge was developing multiple panels that flowed as one theme," says Fr. Ribits.

The three-panel mural will be placed next to the tabernacle on the wall currently decorated in gold

leaf. Sitting atop the two arched panels will be an image of St. Patrick, patron saint of the Erie Diocese. Below, in the twin long panels, are the sun, moon, stars and the Erie shoreline seen throughout the four seasons. From the waters of the lake comes the fishing net from the Gospels.

"I kept thinking 'go be fishers of men, go be Eucharist for others,'" says Fr. Ribits. "You cast your nets into the sea, you're catching the people. It gets on a roll."

Caught throughout the net is the history of the diocese: pioneer priests, bishops and religious sisters, lay people, faces known and unknown and the sacraments.

The work is an acrylic with mixed media, photographs, antique pieces of print and fabric.

"The style is very understandable and rich," says Msgr. William Biebel, rector of the cathedral. "It's almost a Grandma Moses style."

The cathedral is also preparing a booklet that will describe the work and identify those portrayed.



Photo by Jason Koshinski

Artist Fr. Tom Ribits, right, shows his work to Msgr. William Biebel, rector of St. Peter Cathedral, Erie. Commissioned in 2003, the mural honors 150 years of Eucharistic worship in the Erie Diocese.

Msgr. Goodill, 92, killed in Mexico

By Jason Koshinskie
FaithLife editor

Msgr. Robert Goodill, 92, was killed April 1 after being struck by a hit-and-run driver in Mexico.

In Mexico on vacation, Msgr. Goodill was hit while walking on a sidewalk in Acapulco.

The unexpected news was difficult for brother priests and parishioners throughout the diocese. But the news hit especially hard at St. Luke Parish, Erie, where Msgr. Goodill served as pastor for 31 years. He was also the founding pastor when the parish opened in 1954.

"The thing that struck you was his gentleness and his complete devotion to God, to the sacraments, to the Blessed Mother," says Fr. David Prenatt, pastor of St. Gregory Parish, North East, who was assigned to St. Luke Parish from 1995 to 2001. "Every time he celebrated Mass, that was his joy. He brought that joy forth."

Even though he retired in 1985, Msgr. Goodill made weekly visits to St. Luke School. He continued to reside and assist at St. Luke until the time of his death.

"He was always looking for a way to benefit others and bring

joy into people's lives," Fr. Prenatt says. "He'd always say, 'Keep that beautiful smile working.' It's hard to believe he's gone."

An active throughout his life, Msgr. Goodill could usually be seen riding his bicycle.

"He loved to travel," says Msgr. William Biebel, rector of St. Peter Cathedral. "He always had a bag packed and would fly off on a moment's notice."

He never quit learning, says Fr. Prenatt. "He loved to see the shrines down in Mexico," he says. "He would travel to all these conferences. He constantly wanted to learn more about our faith."

Born Oct. 23, 1912 in Erie, he was a 1930 graduate of Cathedral Preparatory School, a 1935 graduate of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. with an M.A. in philosophy and a 1939 graduate from the North American College, Rome. He was ordained a priest on Dec. 8, 1938 at Our Lady of Humility Church, Rome, by

Bishop Ralph Hayes. His home parish was St. Patrick Parish, Erie. Msgr. Goodill was assigned as a parochial vicar at St. Brigid Parish, Meadville, from 1939 to 1943. He served as parochial vicar at St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, and St. Joseph Parish, Oil City, before entering military service in 1943. He served as a chaplain in the U.S. Navy from 1943 to 1946 during World War II and again from 1952 to 1954 during the Korean Conflict; he was named Naval Chaplain of the Year in 1953.

From 1946 to 1949 he served as vice chancellor of the Erie Diocese. He was assigned as parochial vicar at Sacred Heart Parish, Erie, from 1949 to 1952 and at St. Catherine Parish, DuBois, from March to June 1954. On June 3, 1954, Msgr. Goodill was appointed as the founding pastor of St. Luke Church, Erie, a position he held until his retirement in 1985.

Until 1948, Pope John Paul II named him a Prelate of Honor with the title of Monsignor. Additionally he oversaw the construction of St. Luke Church and School, was a member of the Diocesan Priests Senate and various other religious and civic organizations.



Msgr. Robert Goodill

By the Way...



Jason Koshinskie

The Erie Diocese has been well represented both nationally and internationally during the media coverage of the death of John Paul II and the conclave to elect the next pope.

Msgr. Tom McSweeney, the diocese's director of evangelization for communications and public relations and parochial administrator at Holy Trinity Parish, Erie, has been a steady presence on MSNBC since April 1. He is a commentator for the network on religion and the Catholic Church.

"Just the turnout in Rome has been astounding. Some are saying this may be the first miracle attributed to the Holy Father," Msgr. McSweeney reports from his desk, a few steps away from the station's TV studio in New York.

A lot of his duty has been in the wee hours, especially with the vigil, but most of his other work has been on the day side, taping segments on topics including Opus Dei and the possibility of a Third World pontiff.

"It's been absolutely a thrill to be an active onlooker as history is being made," Msgr. McSweeney says. Of the people he's working with, such as Chris Matthews of *Hardball*, he says "they are the ultimate professionals and the most down to earth people you will ever meet. Very warm and friendly."

After a short break, Monsignor returned to New York on April 15 to offer commentary about the conclave. "The conclave opens up a whole list of questions," he says.

Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB, was in Rome for the funeral of Pope John Paul II and will remain to cover the conclave and announcement of a new pope. In addition to her daily commentaries from Rome for *The National Catholic Reporter*, available at www.NCRonline.org, she was interviewed by various news agencies.

Sr. Joan appeared on MSNBC, *CNN's American Morning*, and with Anderson Cooper. Canadian TV station APTN interviewed her in St. Peter's Square following the funeral liturgy. She also served as a commentator for the BBC for the pope's funeral and will continue in that role for the conclave, election and inaugural Mass of the new pope.

Sr. Christine Vladimiroff, prioress of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, was also in Rome as part of a delegation of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) when the pope died. As president of the LCWR, she met with various Vatican congregations. She has authored daily reflections on what she has seen, heard and felt throughout St. Peter's Square April 2-8. They can be read at www.ErieBenedictines.org.

Jason Koshinskie is editor of FaithLife. Contact him at JKoshinskie@erieRCD.org or 814.824.1171.

Clergy Appointment

Official from the Office of the Bishop: The Most Rev. Donald W. Trautman, STD, SSL, Bishop of Erie, has announced the following clergy appointment:

Fr. Regis J. Meenihan, temporary parochial administrator, St. Joseph Parish, Lucinda. Effective April 12.

Briefly

Watch for the men in black!

Four priests of the Erie Diocese are featured in the cover story of the May/June 2005 issue of *Faith* magazine. Fr. John Jacquel, Fr. Mike DeMartini, Fr. Chris Singer and Msgr. John Hagerty share their thoughts in a four-way discussion on topics ranging from what it's like to move from one parish to another to the role prayer plays in their lives.

The issue also includes a story on the good work going on at St. Elizabeth's Center in Oil City and how the perpetual adoration chapel at St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community in Erie is changing lives. All Catholics registered in the diocese should receive a copy in the mail by May 10. For circulation questions, please contact the Office of Communications for Evangelization at 814.824.1160.



Coming to mailboxes at the beginning of May.

Death Notices for Clergy/Religious

Sr. Regina (Mary) Przeszelski, RSM,

died April 3, 2005, at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse. She was born Sept. 24, 1919, in DeLancey. On February 15, 1939, she entered the Sisters of Mercy at Titusville from St. Adrian Parish, DeLancey. She professed perpetual vows on August 16, 1944. Sr. Regina taught at St. Michael School, Greenville. Then she became an instructor and chair of the Department of Business at Mercyhurst College from 1946-61. In 1963, she was appointed administrator of DuBois Hospital where she served until 1981. She completed her active ministry as religious education director at St. George Parish, Erie, from 1982-2001.

Deacon reflects on call to service, discipleship

By Deacon Dennis Kudlak

Almost thirty-eight years have passed since Pope Paul VI set in motion the restoration of the permanent diaconate within the church. The Diocese of Erie began its own program in January of 1994.

In announcing it, Bishop Donald Trautman reminded people that the diaconal ministry is meant to support and not replace the call to service given all people by reason of their baptism.

There are "transitional" deacons, who are ordained deacons as an interim step toward priesthood; and there are "permanent" deacons, the deacons we often see ministering in parishes. The permanent deacon, rooted both in the everyday world and in the life of the church, shares the ministry of both laity and ordained in the church. The permanent deacon serves as a bond between the church and the world, between clergy and laity, and thus manifests the love of God for both the church and the world.

Since this is a commitment to a vocation in the church as an ordained minister for the rest of your natural life, we recognize that discerning whether the Lord is calling a man to this ministry is very important. It is for that reason that all candidates complete a self-evaluation each year. Spouses also complete an evaluation form which asks them to indicate their consent to have their husbands continue in the program. The Permanent Diaconate Continuum

Diaconate program Q&A

Common questions and answers on becoming a deacon

Q. How old do you have to be to become a deacon?
A. An applicant to the permanent diaconate must be at least 35 years old at the time of ordination and no older than 62 at the time of application. He must also be recommended by the pastor of his parish.

Q. Do you have to quit your job?
A. No. Most deacons have families and day jobs.

Q. Do deacons take vows of celibacy?
A. If their wife precedes them in death, deacons are not permitted to remarry. Also, single men who are ordained deacons are not permitted to marry once they become ordained.

Q. What kind of academic training do you have to go through?
A. Classes are one week-end each month with much of the academic study done on your own. Courses include theology of the church, Hebrew Scriptures and an introduction to pastoral counseling, among others. In pastoral formation, candidates commit 4-6 hours weekly in an assigned ministry.

For more information on becoming a deacon, contact Msgr. Robert Smith, director of the diocese's Permanent Diaconate Formation Program at 814.824.1130 or email RSmith@erieRCD.org. Deacon Ralph DeCecco can be reached at 814.864.0504 or email at DeaconDeCecco@aol.com.

Formation (PDCF) team provides a candidate's ministry before ordination. The PDCF begins in

St. Leo Parish receives \$50,000 grant

St. Leo Parish, Ridgway, recently received a \$50,000 grant from the A.J. and Sigismunda Palumbo Charitable Trust for the initial stage of a building project that is being proposed for the parish.

Plans call for handicap accessibility to the main church, a gathering space, new restrooms, a kitchen and a multi-purpose space for use by the parish and school youth and young adults, as well as for church functions.

The estimated cost of the undertaking is \$2.5 million. The parish is planning a special fundraising campaign. The project is expected to begin when the financing is in place, Fr. Marconi says.



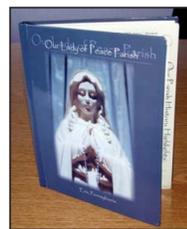
Trustees John Kowach, left, and Don Fleming, right, present a check for \$50,000 to Fr. Ted Marconi, pastor of St. Leo Parish, and Mary Detwiler, principal of St. Leo School.

OLP celebrates 50th anniversary with book

Our Lady of Peace Parish, Erie, celebrated its 50th anniversary April 10.

Bishop Donald Trautman celebrated the 9:30 a.m. anniversary Mass, which was followed by a parish breakfast. The breakfast also served as the release party for the parish's new book commemorating the 50th anniversary.

The book contains parish history highlights including the first Masses celebrated at McDowell High School



in 1955 before the church was built. A plethora of photos show church and school events throughout its history.

The anniversary book serves as a directory for church and school offices and ministries. It also includes studio portraits of parishioners.

The books are available at the parish office for \$10.

ON THE COVER: Deacon Ralph DeCecco poses outside Albion SCI.
(Photo by Jason Koshinskie)

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FOCUS ON EUCHARIST
Create a Eucharistic book club
Some recent books on Eucharist were reviewed by Patrick McCormack in the April edition of U.S. Catholic. Several focus on food and justice aspects. For the full article, see U.S. Catholic April 2005 pages 42-44.
One book that will be familiar to the priests of the diocese thanks to a gift from Bishop Murphy is "The Sacrament of Unity: The Eucharist and the Church" by Cardinal Walter Kasper (Crossroad). McCormack calls it a "slender volume of thoughtful meditations on the Eucharist, the church and ecumenism."
"Liturgy and Justice: To Worship God in Spirit and Truth" (Liturgical Press) is a "collection of essays by Catholic theologians and liturgists concerned with the link between worship and justice."
Another anthology called "Food and Faith: Justice, Joy and Daily Bread" (Living the Good News) would serve parish groups as "a handbook for a short course on Eucharistic spirituality and justice," says McCormack.
So form a book club for the Year of the Eucharist and pick a book.
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DIOCESAN CALENDAR

Spirit of the Seasons retreat: "Air as transformation," April 29-May 1, Mt. St. Benedict Monastery, 6101 East Lake Road, Erie. The experience of God by way of compassion and social justice. Lisa Wagner from the Still Point Theatre Collective of Chicago will present a play about the life of Dorothy Day, founder of the Catholic Worker Movement. For reservations, due one week prior to retreat, call Sr. Carolyn Gorny-Kopkowski at 899.0614 ext. 402.

Presque Isle Chorale, under the direction of Brenda Dolwick, will present a concert May 1, 7 p.m., St. Patrick Parish, Erie. The 50-member chorale will present a selection of sacred, secular and contemporary music. A free will offering will be collected to benefit the Sisters of St. Joseph Neighborhood Network.

The Shield of Roses, a pro-life prayer group, will pray at St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie, on April 25 at 7:30

p.m. The scriptural rosary and litany are prayed. For more information, call Fran at 833.7912. The group also meets every Saturday at 10 a.m. outside American Women's Services abortion clinic, 1611 State St., Erie.

Ignatian retreat in daily life: April 11-May 5, Dwelling Place House of Prayer, adjacent to St. Anthony Parish, Sharon. Over four weeks, group will meet twice a week at an appointed time. Opening session is 7:30-9 p.m. April 11. For more information or to register, call Barb at 724.342.3790 or Irene at 724.347.1808.

Parenting classes: Tuesday evenings, 6-7:30 p.m., for six weeks April 5, 12, 19, 26 and May 3 & 10, Mercy Center for Women, 1039 E. 27th St., Erie. Cost is \$20. Call 455.4577.

CYA Bible study: every Tuesday, 7-9 p.m., St. Mark Catholic Center, Erie. Join Catholic Young Adults who minister to those in their 20s and 30s. Call 814.824.1299 ext. 329 or

e-mail cya@erieRCD.org. Visit our Web site at www.erieRCD.org/cya.asp.

PALS support group – People After Loss from Suicide: every third Tuesday, 7-9 p.m., St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie.

Prayer & Sharing cancer support group: second and fourth Tuesday of every month, 7-8:30 p.m., also second and fourth Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.-noon, St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie. Christian, non-denominational support group for anyone with a diagnosis of cancer, caregivers and support persons. Call 864.9107 or 824.1257.

Healing Mass: May 4, 7:30 p.m., Our Lady of Peace Parish, Erie. Call Jeanne at 838.7873.

Perpetual Eucharistic adoration: 24-hour adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, St. Joseph Parish/Bread of Life Community, Erie. Call 898.2026 or 452.2982.

Prayer service for peace: 7 p.m. every Wednesday, Chapel of the Pieta, St. Patrick Parish, Erie.

Vietnamese Mass: 12:10 p.m., first Sunday of the month, St. Casimir, Erie.

Interpreted Masses for the deaf & hard of hearing: 11 a.m., first & third Sundays, St. Patrick Parish, Erie; 11:30 a.m., every fourth Sunday, St. Joseph Parish, Sharon.

Engagement Encounter weekend – Marriage preparation: April 29-May 1, McKeever Learning Center, Sandy Lake. Call 814.768.7597 or 814.342.1333 or the family ministries office at 824.1265 or 1.800.374.3723 ext. 265.

Natural Family Planning classes: Morrisdale, St. Agnes, 7-9 p.m. on Fridays 5/6, 5/20, 6/17, 7/15. RSVP Amy at 814.339.6656.

E-mail calendar items for consideration to: FaithLife@erieRCD.org

Bi-weekly news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie

FaithLife

April 24, 2005

DIACONAL MINISTRY AT ITS BEST

Deacons help bring gospel, charity to those in need



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