



Easter welcome
Thousands of new or returning Catholics join church in U.S. at Easter, page 2.

FaithLife

Misión de Armistad

Franklin group experiences Mission of Friendship, page 4.



www.ErieRCD.org

BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

April 26, 2009

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



St. Catherine of Siena



St. Joseph the Worker

- April 28 St. Peter Chanel (priest, martyr), St. Louis Mary de Montfort (French priest, author of "True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin")
- April 29 St. Catherine of Siena (Third Order Dominican, reformer, mystic)
- April 30 Pope Pius V (instituted feast of Our Lady of the Rosary)
- May 1 St. Joseph the Worker (patron of the universal church, fathers, carpenters and social justice)
- May 2 St. Athanasius (bishop, Doctor of the Church)

Confirmations

Ss. Cosmas and Damian, Punxsutawney — Sunday, April 26 at 11 a.m. Confirmation classes include Ss. Cosmas and Damian, Punxsutawney; St. Adrian, Delancy; St. Anthony of Padua, Walston; and St. Joseph, Anita.

Immaculate Conception, Clarion — Sunday, April 26 at 3 p.m. Confirmation classes include Immaculate Conception, Clarion; Immaculate Conception, Brookville; and St. Charles, New Bethlehem.

Holy Redeemer, Warren — Monday, April 27 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include Holy Redeemer, Warren; St. Joseph, Warren; St. Anthony, Sheffield; and St. Luke, Youngsville.

St. Jude, Erie — Thursday, April 30 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Jude, Erie, and St. Julia, Erie.

St. Leo Magnus, Ridgway — Friday, May 1 at 5:30 p.m.

St. Patrick, Erie — Monday, May 4 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include St. Patrick, Erie; Holy Rosary, Erie; Holy Trinity, Erie; Our Mother of Sorrows, Erie; St. Hedwig, Erie; St. John the Baptist, Erie; and St. Stanislaus, Erie.

Christ the King, Houtzdale — Friday, May 8 at 7 p.m. Confirmation classes include Christ the King, Houtzdale; Immaculate Conception, Madera; St. Mary of the Assumption, Frenchville; Ss. Peter and Paul, Grassflat; St. Severin, Drifiting; St. Agnes, Morrisdale; Ss. Peter and Paul, Hawk Run; Immaculate Conception, Osceola Mills; St. Basil the Great, Coalport; and Holy Trinity, Ramey.

Ordination of transitional deacons — May 2

Three seminarians for the Erie Diocese are ready to take another step toward priesthood. Bishop Donald Trautman will ordain seminarians Christopher Barnes (St. Venantius, Rouseville), Michael Polinek (St. Joseph/Bread of Life, Erie) and Matias Quimno (All Saints, Waterford) into the order of the diaconate during a 10:30 a.m. Mass on Saturday, May 2 at St. Mark Seminary Chapel, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie.

Religious Scouting Awards — May 3

Individual and group badges, patches, honors and awards will be presented to Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Brownies throughout the Erie Diocese for their achievements in the areas of spiritual growth on Sunday, May 3 at St. Peter Cathedral, Erie, at 2:30 p.m. For more information on scouting in the Erie Diocese, visit www.ErieRCD.org/scout.asp.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations — May 3

On Sunday, May 3, the church will celebrate the 46th annual World Day of Prayer for Vocations. To read Pope Benedict XVI's message, visit www.usccb.org/cc/v/2009_papal_message.pdf.

Caring for our Good Shepherds



Good Shepherd Collection May 2-3 to aid retired priests in Erie Diocese

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

Msgr. Richard Stack likes to watch "Judge Judy" at 4 o'clock. Msgr. John Hagerty prefers a rerun of "M*A*S*H." "But we don't fight over the remote," Msgr. Hagerty

cracks. Of course, relaxing in front of the TV is still a bit of a luxury for these men, who remain quite busy with priestly duties. Both priests reside at Blessed Sacrament Rectory in Erie, which has become an extension of the Bishop Mi-



Msgr. Richard Stack, left, and Msgr. John Hagerty, pictured in the Blessed Sacrament rectory chapel, are two of the diocese's 52 re-

tired priests. Although they are retired, they are still active in a number of ministries.

chael J. Murphy Residence for Retired Priests. They are two of the diocese's 52 retired priests, 47 of whom are retired from active ministry.

Of the 52, seven still have a diocesan assignment beyond retirement age: five serve as senior associates and two serve as pastors.

But while these priests are considered "retired," their See GOOD SHEPHERDS, page 3

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati

In confirmation homily, bishop focuses on Italian blessed as role model for young people

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

Saying "yes" to God in today's culture can be hard, particularly for young people.

Bishop Donald Trautman knows this. That's why during his travels this spring and fall for confirmation, he'll introduce the youth of the diocese to a would-be saint who is among their own peer group.

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati lived in Turin, Italy, and was just 24 when he died in 1925 from polio. Besides being an excellent athlete and popular among his friends, he was dedicated to serving the poor.

Born into a wealthy and influential but non-religious family, Blessed Pier Giorgio joined the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in 1918 at age 17, committing his spare time to the sick



and needy. A passionate social activist, he joined student organizations, opposed fascism and established a daily newspaper. His charitable acts included donating the money he received from high school graduation to

and needy. A passionate social activist, he joined student organizations, opposed fascism and established a daily newspaper. His charitable acts included donating the money he received from high school graduation to

See FRASSATI, page 3

Pope declares Year of the Priest to inspire spiritual perfection

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI declared a year of the priest in an effort to encourage "spiritual perfection" in priests.

The pope will open the special year with a vespers service at the Vatican June 19 — the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the day for the sanctification of priests. He will close the celebrations during a World Meeting of Priests in St. Peter's Square June 19, 2010.

The pope made the announcement during a recent audience with members of the Vatican Congregation for Clergy.

During this jubilee year, the pope will also proclaim St. John Vianney to be patron saint of all the world's priests. At present he is considered the patron saint of parish priests.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the death of this 19th-century saint who represents a "true example of a priest at the service of the flock of Christ," the pope said.

St. John Vianney is widely known to Catholics as the Curé (parish priest) of Ars who won over the hearts of his villagers in

France by visiting with them, teaching them about God and reconciling people to the Lord in the confessional.

In his address, Pope Benedict underlined the necessary and "indispensable struggle for moral perfection which must dwell in every authentically priestly heart."

The pope said he was calling for the special year for priests in an effort to foster the priest's yearning "for spiritual perfection, upon which the effectiveness of their ministry principally depends."

Priests must also be "present, identifiable and recognizable — for their judgment of faith, their personal virtues and their attire — in the fields of culture and charity which have always been at the heart of the church's mission," he said.



Pope Benedict to find Holy Land changed since predecessor's visit

By Judith Sudilovsky
Catholic News Service

JERUSALEM — Pope Benedict XVI will encounter a Holy Land that has changed greatly since Pope John Paul II visited in 2000.

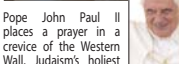
Pope John Paul II arrived in Israel and the Palestinian territories when, despite stumbling blocks in the peace process, the jubilee year celebrations seemed to buoy the Holy Land with a booming tourism industry.

But Pope Benedict will visit amid continued Israeli-Palestinian tensions — months after a controversial Israeli invasion of Gaza and during continuing Palestinian rocket attacks against southern Israeli towns.

On his visit to Bethlehem, West Bank, Pope John Paul was received by a united Palestinian Authority, led by longtime Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat. In May Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who is struggling to unite the Palestinian factions following a 2007 split with the Islamic fundamentalist political party and militia Hamas, will welcome Pope Benedict.

Israel's recent election brought to power a conservative government whose new foreign minister declared in his first public speech that the U.S.-sponsored 2007 Annapolis peace declaration — which calls for two states, Israeli and Palestinian — has "no validity."

The new Israeli government also has an interior minister from the religious Shas party, when a Shas official held that position in previous govern-



Pope John Paul II places a prayer in a crevice of the Western Wall, Judaism's holiest site, March 26, 2000. Speaking to ecumenical leaders on the historic trip that included visits to Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories, the pontiff prayed that the Holy Land would be a homeland to all faiths and peoples. In May, Pope Benedict XVI will encounter a Holy Land that has changed greatly since his predecessor's visit.

ments, he limited the issuance and renewal of entry and residence permits for Christian clergy. Despite numerous protests to rectify the situation, clergy are still struggling with visa and permit issues.

Pope Benedict will face a land torn asunder and scarred by the violence and physical barriers of the second intifada, which broke out just months after the 2000 papal visit. He will stand before people who have lost hope in the future and no longer trust their politicians, and he will see precarious economies still reeling from the effects of the



Pope Benedict XVI's first visit to the Holy Land includes these stops and highlights.

AMMAN: Meeting at Royal Palace; Mount Nebo; King Hussein Mosque; Stadium Mass; Bethany Beyond the Jordan

JERUSALEM: Yad Vashem Hall of Remembrance; Dome of the Rock; Western Wall; Visit with Chief Rabbis; Mass in Jozafat Valley; Ecumenical Meeting; Church of the Holy Sepulcher

WEST BANK: Mass in Manger Square; Church of the Nativity Grotto; Aida Refugee Camp

NAZARETH: Mass at Mount Precipice; Meeting with Israeli Prime Minister; Basilica of the Annunciation

civil uprising and feeling the sting of the current international economic downturn — still waiting for the additional influx of pilgrims and tourists they dreamed of following the earlier papal visit.

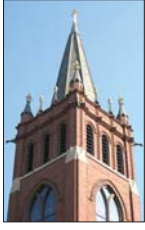
Yvonne Friedman, a history pro-

fessor at Israel's Bar-Ilan University, said that perhaps since people have experienced one papal visit and did not get the expected results, they might have lowered their expectations, and that could actually make for a better visit for Pope Benedict.



IN THE U.S.

■ **Parishioners from 31 groups in eight U.S. dioceses have joined forces** to ask the Vatican to suspend parish closings and to instruct bishops to negotiate the closures with local Catholics. In an 18-page letter delivered April 7 to several Vatican offices, the parish representatives said the decision to close hundreds of parishes across the country has left the U.S. Catholic Church at a "tipping point" of permanent damage and irreversible decline. Peter Borre, chairman of the Boston-based Council of Parishes, formed in 2004 to oppose parish closings, said the effort is meant to offer a "third way" for the Catholic Church to respond to changing demographics, financial concerns and the declining number of priests nationwide. In addition to parishioners in the Boston Archdiocese, other worshippers involved in the request are from the New York and New Orleans archdioceses and the dioceses of Allentown, Buffalo, Cleveland, Scranton and Springfield, Mass.



■ **Vermont legislators voted to override the governor's veto of same-sex marriage legislation** April 7, making the state the fourth to allow same-sex marriage and the first to do so without a court order. The same day, the District of Columbia Council voted to recognize same-sex unions formalized in other states. Both votes came less than a week after the Iowa Supreme Court's unanimous decision to legalize gay marriage by striking down a state law defining marriage as a union of one man and one woman. The Vermont law will allow same-sex marriages in the state beginning in September.

Vermont becomes the fourth state in the nation to recognize marriages for gay and lesbian couples, after Massachusetts, Connecticut and Iowa. During a March hearing about the same-sex marriage legislation, called the Freedom to Marry Act, Bishop Salvatore Matano of Burlington defended the church's opposition to same-sex marriages, saying it has been the Catholic Church's "consistent teaching... that marriage is the union of man and woman."



■ **As the White House signaled that President Barack Obama is getting ready** to leap into the fray over immigration law and policy, activists geared up for the May 1 launch of a push to get comprehensive legislation through Congress this year. *The New York Times* April 9 quoted Cecilia Munoz, White House director of intergovernmental affairs, saying Obama would speak about immigration in May, kicking off an effort to fulfill a campaign promise to deal with the issue in his first year in office. The same day White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said the president doesn't expect immigration reform to be completed this year, but "it's something the president is committed to addressing." That word was welcomed by Cardinal Roger Mahony of Los Angeles and organizations that have been pushing for years for a comprehensive approach to a wide range of problems related to immigration. If a "moral imperative that is long overdue, since a broken system continues to undermine the human dignity of our brothers and sisters," Cardinal Mahony said in an April 9 statement.

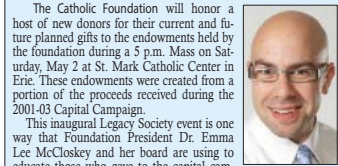
AROUND THE WORLD

■ **Some 1,800 Franciscan friars from all over the world** were expected to converge on the Umbrian hill town of Assisi, Italy, to celebrate the 800th anniversary of papal approval of the Franciscan rule. For the first time, representatives from the four main Franciscan branches were to meet in Assisi — the birthplace of their founder, St. Francis — to take part in an International Chapter of Mats April 15-18. A Chapter of Mats gets its name from the time in 1221 St. Francis called more than 3,000 friars to the Portiuncula chapel in Assisi for a general meeting or chapter. Because the small town could not accommodate the large number of visitors, the friars lived in huts made out of reeds and slept on mats. The four Franciscan groups participating are the Capuchins, the Conventual Franciscans, the Order of Friars Minor and the Third Order Regular Franciscans.



PEOPLE OF FAITH

■ **Following a recommendation by the Vatican Congregation for Clergy**, 33 women from the Diocese of Tulsa were consecrated as spiritual mothers of priests during a special Mass at Holy Family Cathedral. They are the first spiritual mothers to be consecrated in the United States, said Father Mark Kirby, a Tulsa priest who directs a cenacle for priests in the diocese. "Mary is the model for those whom God has called to serve the church by living as spiritual mothers of priests," Bishop Edward Slattery of Tulsa told the women during the March 24 Mass. Each of the women was presented with a medal and a certificate signifying their dedication to a particular priest, who was described to them but not named. The priests who expressed interest in having a spiritual mother do not know her identity, either. The women were asked to spend time daily in adoration and intercessory prayer directed toward their adopted priest.



Jason Koshinski

The Catholic Foundation will honor a host of new donors for their current and future planned gifts to the endowments held by the foundation during a 5 p.m. Mass on Saturday, May 2 at St. Mark Catholic Center in Erie. These endowments were created from a portion of the proceeds received during the 2001-03 Capital Campaign.

This inaugural Legacy Society event is one way that Foundation President Dr. Emma Lee McCloskey and her board are using to educate those who gave to the capital campaign about how the endowments are helping people of the diocese. For more information, visit The Catholic Foundation Web site at www.TCFRCDO.org or call 814.824.1236.

Attention all Cursillistas! The Erie Cursillo Movement is updating its records and needs your help. Anyone who has made a Cursillo is asked to complete a Cursillo Census Form, available at www.cursillo.org or in the last two issues of the Cursillo newsletter. Future correspondence will be sent via e-mail. Those who have not completed the census will be unable to receive its newsletter.

In 45 years, 17,000 people in the diocese have "made" a Cursillo (pronounced kur-SEE-yo), which means "short course" was a Cursillito. *Faith* magazine lists upcoming weekends on its calendar. On Sunday, May 3, Engagement Encounter will host a special celebration, acknowledging the 100th EE weekend in the Erie Diocese. It will combine, for the first time, a group of engaged couples who will be experiencing an EE weekend (Friday till Sunday) and alumni of EE (married couples) who will attend a one-day enrichment event, with a liturgy and luncheon to follow (and wedding cake for dessert).

This event will be held at McKeever Environmental Learning Center in Sandy Lake, one of two host sites for EE. For information about this one-day event or to place your reservation, contact the Family Life Office at 814.824.1261 or by e-mail at familylife@eriecd.org.

The quote of the week comes from New York, where Archbishop Timothy Dolan did an interview with the Catholic Channel on Sirius XM Radio the day after he was installed as 10th archbishop of New York.

"My first pastoral letter's gonna be a condemnation of light beer and instant mashed potatoes," said Archbishop Dolan, who has headed the Archdiocese of Milwaukee for the past seven years. "I hate those two things."

And finally, while *The New York Times* has "All the News That's Fit to Print" on a daily basis, our diocesan news is brought to you on the pages of *FaithLife* every other week. To help tell more stories about the people and places around the diocese, yours truly has started a blog. View from the Choir Loft (<http://viewfromthechoirloft.blogspot.com>) is an extension of this column and local church chat. Bookmark VFTCL as one of your favorites!

Jason Koshinski is editor of *FaithLife*. Contact him at JKoshinski@eriecd.org or 814.824.1171.

Thousands of new or returning Catholics join church in U.S. at Easter

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — As many as 150,000 new or returning Catholics are expected to join the Catholic Church in 2009 in the United States. Many of them did so during the Easter Vigil April 11 in parishes across the country.

Only partial figures from a sample of U.S. dioceses were available so far for 2009, according to a March 31 news release from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The numbers do not include infant baptisms, which are recorded separately.

In some cases the numbers of new or returning Catholics show growth in the church in places where it has traditionally been a minority, like Georgia.

The Archdiocese of Atlanta estimated that 513 catechumens and 2,195 candidates will join the ranks of the archdiocese in 2009. About 1,800 of them did so at Easter.

Catechumens, or people not yet baptized, receive the sacraments of initiation — baptism, confirmation and first Communion. Candidates, who are already baptized Christians, enter full communion with the church by receiving confirmation and first Communion.

On the opposite side of the country the Archdiocese of Seattle welcomed 736 catechumens and 506 candidates for a total of 1,242 new members;

and the Diocese of San Diego baptized 305 new members and welcome 920 other baptized Christians, adding a total of 1,225 to its ranks.

In the mostly rural Diocese of Birmingham, Ala., the Cathedral of St. Paul could not handle all who are joining, 445 people in total, and their families for the Rite of Election. The rites were held in three different ceremonies, two at the cathedral on the first Sunday of Lent, and another one in Hunts-

ville, Ala., the prior Saturday. Some people came from as far as 80 miles away to participate.

The Rite of Election, usually celebrated at the beginning of Lent, marks the official countdown to initiation or admission into the church.

Around the country parishes in dioceses big and small, urban and rural, were preparing for the special Easter liturgies filled with symbolism that will lead the "neophytes," or the newly bap-

tized, those received into full communion, their new faith community and the entire church "from darkness into light."

In 2008, according to the Official Catholic Di-



St. Michael Parish in Greenville welcomed 11 new members into the sacraments at its April 11 Easter Vigil Mass. Above, Father James

Campbell anoints the forehead of William Emmett as his wife, Amy, looks on.

rectory, 49,415 adults were baptized and 87,363 people came into full communion with the church. In 2007, those numbers were 62,464 and 92,975, respectively.

New Catholics in the Erie Diocese

	Catechumens	Candidates	Total new members
2009	81	147	228
2008	60	150	210
2007	72	174	246
2006	98	190	288
2005	77	175	252

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Travel to Italy-Switzerland; Ireland; Greece
(June 6-18) / June 27-July 5 / (June 27-July 9)
July 18-26 / (Sept. 5-17) / Sept. 12-20
Sept. 19-27 / (Oct. 3-15) / Oct. 5-15 / Oct. 19-29
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Briefly

Catholic Services Appeal parish projects

The 2009 Catholic Services Appeal, "Of One Heart and Mind," supports the Erie Diocese in helping to provide health and social services, education, diocesan administration and pastoral services throughout the 13 counties of northwestern Pennsylvania.

While a portion of the financial goal for the appeal benefits the ministries of the diocese, parishes also benefit from the appeal. Each parish is assessed a financial goal. Once a parish reaches its assessment, every dollar pledged over that amount stays within the parish for local projects. Here's a look at what some parishes are doing with their CSA coverage funds:



Sharon Deanery

- Beloved Disciple, Grove City – Debt reduction on new pastoral center
- Good Shepherd, West Middlesex – New HVAC system for church, new rectory roof
- Holy Trinity, Farrell – No project listed
- Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mercer – Repairs and maintenance
- Notre Dame, Hermitage – Balance the budget, complete payments on new pews and carpeting
- Our Lady of Fatima-St. Ann, Farrell – Carpeting for church
- Sacred Heart, Sharon – Painting and decorating of church sanctuary
- St. Adalbert, Farrell – No project listed
- St. Anthony, Sharon – No project listed
- St. Bartholomew, Sharpsville – Handicap accessibility fund
- St. Columbkille, Stoneboro – New church roof, new siding for rectory
- St. Joseph, Sharon – Heating and air-conditioning for church, rectory and office
- St. Michael, Greenville – Church sidewalk repair; update heating, paint outside doors and new linoleum for school; new truck and pave road for cemetery
- St. Stanislaus, Sharon – Boiler repair

Sisters of St. Joseph accepting nominations for SSSJ Spirit of Courage Awards

The Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania are accepting nominations for the 13th annual SSSJ Spirit of Courage Awards. The awards will be presented at the SSSJ Spirit of Courage dinner Oct. 6 at the Ambassador Banquet and Conference Center in Erie.

The sisters are seeking nominees who exemplify extraordinary courage while dealing with personal struggles or in helping others cope with illness, injury, chemical dependency and/or economic adversity. Nominees must reside within the boundaries of the thirteen counties of the Erie Diocese.

To nominate someone, download and print a nomination form at www.ssjerie.org/courage.htm. Complete the form and return it to the address indicated on the form or submit your nominations online. For questions or assistance, contact Kristina Huber at 814.836.4202 or e-mail kristina.huber@ssjerie.org.



Why Catholic? faith formation workshops

Why Catholic?, a four-year program that focuses on Scripture related to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, offers workshops related to the topic for the year. This year's book focuses on morality and will be the theme of the workshops to be held in May. All members of *Why Catholic?* parishes are invited to attend these very helpful and worthwhile events. No registration necessary.

- Dates and places are as follows:
- May 26 – St. Leo's Knights of Columbus Building, Ridgway, 7-9 p.m.
 - May 27 – St. Mary of Grace, Meadville, 7-9 p.m.
 - May 28 – St. Michael's Lateran Hall, Greenville, 7-9 p.m.
 - May 30 – St. Mark Catholic Center, Erie, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- Any questions, contact Sister Nancy Fischer, SSJ at 814.824.1217.

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Good Shepherd Collection May 2-3

GOOD SHEPHERD, from page 1

ministry continues. They celebrate Mass, minister to the sick, visit hospitals and provide spiritual counseling.

The Good Shepherd Collection, which will be taken up in the Erie Diocese the weekend of May 2-3, is an opportunity to say thanks to our retired priests for their many years of faithful service, said Msgr. Dan Magraw, pastor of Blessed Sacrament, director of the Good Shepherd Collection.

"This assists our retired priests, especially in the area of health care," Msgr. Magraw said. "With the high cost for the expenses they face, particularly the ones that go into nursing care, their funds can be quickly absorbed. This collection is to see that they get proper care."

Plans call for the collection to be taken on the fourth Sunday of Easter in future years, as well. This collection is separate from the Collection for Retired Religious taken in December; all funds for the Good Shepherd Collection help priests within the diocese.

Senior priests in the Erie Diocese carry their own weight, financially, until such a time that they can't do it anymore. Retired priests live independently and pay for room and board at their residences, as well as any insurance and taxes. The Good Shepherd Collection helps subsidize the diocese's Priest Retirement Fund, which helps cover escalating health care costs and long-term care expenses.

When the Bishop Murphy retirement residence began filling up, Msgr. Magraw renovated his rectory, a former convent, to include private rooms for retired priests.

Msgr. Stack, 78, worked in the Chancery Office for 25 years before serving as pastor of St. Mark the Evangelist, St. Luke and St. Paul parishes, all of Erie. Msgr. Hagerty, 79, served



The Good Shepherd statue in the Blessed Sacrament rectory chapel.

in education for many years and as pastor of St. Joseph in Sharon, Blessed Sacrament in Erie, St. Thomas in Corry and Notre Dame in Hermitage. Both accepted the invitation of Msgr. Magraw to live at the rectory upon retiring. The rectory has room for three retired priests. The current vacancy will soon be occupied by Msgr. Richard Mayer, who recently retired as pastor of St. George in Erie.

Both Msgr. Stack and Msgr. Hagerty say their retirement so far has been a blessing. Both priests are free to offer their ministry without the administrative burden of being a pastor. There are no bills to pay other than their own. There are no lights to turn off or

doors to lock. And when a roof leaks, their phone doesn't ring.

"I've been happy ever since," Msgr. Stack said. "I celebrate the sacraments. I celebrate Mass every day. And if I'm needed elsewhere, they'll give me a call and I'll go there, too. It's an active retirement, for which I'm grateful."

He hears confessions at the local high schools, as well as at the chapel in the Mill Creek Mall. He's involved with the seasonal penance services at Blessed Sacrament, St. Jude and Our Lady of Peace. He's a substitute chaplain at Hamot Medical Center and celebrates 7 a.m. Mass each weekday in the rectory chapel for Blessed Sacrament parishioners.

"There's always something," he said. "The one thing I do appreciate is that I have more time to myself. I can do a lot more reading than I ever had a chance to before. It's a more relaxed lifestyle."

Msgr. Hagerty teaches Latin to 7th and 8th graders at Blessed Sacrament School and he's involved with the weekend liturgies at the parish.

"I'm given the opportunity to take part in parish ministry as much as I want to," he said.

The priests are together each evening for a meal. But they also enjoy visiting with their own friends and spending quiet time alone.

"This is a fairly new arrangement," Msgr. Hagerty said. "Before, there was no retirement. You died in your rectory."

Aside from the Bishop Murphy retirement residence and Blessed Sacrament's rectory, the diocese operates John XXIII Home in Hermitage and Christ the King Manor in DuBois. Retired priests can also choose to live at Saint Mary's Home in Erie run by the Sisters of St. Joseph.

In confirmation homily, bishop focuses on Italian blessed as role model for young people

FRASSATI, from page 1

an elderly woman evicted from her apartment and supporting a sick widow's three children.

The charismatic Blessed Pier Giorgio is revered for his social activism, sports-loving way, sense of humor and generous spirit. He loved skiing, horse riding, mountain climbing and practical jokes.

So why does Bishop Trautman suggest Pier Giorgio to young people?

"He was a normal, healthy young person engaged in school, sports and social life," Bishop Trautman said. "He had pressures on him, pressures of conforming and meeting expectations, pressures of school work and family problems, pressures of living in a hostile Christian environment. Our young people have these same pressures. But here was a young person who always put Christ first and found peace and happiness in living his faith. He is a role model who demonstrates that you can be young and athletic and fun-loving and popular and holy at the same time."

Pier Giorgio's favorite Gospel was St. Matthew because of the Sermon on the Mount and its emphasis on the poor, the hungry and persecuted. Because he lived out this Gospel, he became known as "The Man of the Beatitudes." At 17 he joined the St. Vincent de Paul Society, a lay organization, and cared for the poor, sick and wounded soldiers returning from World War I.

He came from a rich, influential family. His parents were not religious and discouraged his involvement with the church. He credited his

grandparents, teachers and parish priests for leading him to Christ.

His life was filled with friends, fun times, sports, school and family. But it was also filled with regular visits to the poor and the sick, buying them medicine and giving away his clothes and whatever money he had.

"He was a daily communicant, an apostle in the student world, a witness for Christ to

his peers," Bishop Trautman said. "His private life was one of sacrifice and deep faith, deep devotion to Christ in the Eucharist, especially Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. He led a life filled with charity and compassion."

In 1925 the young man was afflicted with an acute attack of polio, which doctors speculated he caught from caring for the sick. He died within five days at the age of 24.

In a homily celebrating the International Jubilee for Athletes in 1984, Pope John Paul II said Blessed Pier Giorgio's dedication to helping the poor and suffering was an example of how to sow peace among people, "making us brothers and sisters." He called on his audience to look closely at how this young man lived and to use him as an example, "a program" to follow so that they, too, could "be messengers of the true peace of Christ."

He was beatified in May 1990 by Pope John Paul II. Many young adult Catholics throughout the world have formed societies to emulate his life and work. FrassatiUSA,



(CNS file photo)

Italian Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati was a struggling student who excelled in mountain climbing. He had complete faith in God and persevered through college, dedicating himself to helping the poor and supporting church social teaching. He died at age 24 and was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1990. He is pictured in an undated photo.

based in Nashville, Tenn., is a national organization committed with Associazione Pier Giorgio Frassati in Rome. It serves as a clearinghouse for information, materials, prayer cards and other religious items. Visit FrassatiUSA on the Web at www.FrassatiUSA.org.

Blessed Pier Giorgio's remains are buried in a chapel in Turin's St. John the Baptist Cathedral, next to the chapel housing the Shroud of Turin.

His body left Italy for a short time last year when it was moved to St. Benedict Parish and then St. Mary's Cathedral in Sydney, Australia, where it became a focal point of the World Youth Day pilgrimage.

Catholic News Service contributed to this report.

St. Martin Center presents 'Spooks: The Haunting of the Skowronski Sisters', the longest-running play at the Roadhouse Theatre. This hilarious play follows a family of Polish sisters who call upon the new parish priest to bless their home when they realize it's being haunted. All shows will take place at St. Peter Cathedral Center, 160 W. 11th St. in Erie. Tickets are \$25 each and include a wine, cheese and dessert intermission.

Showtimes: Friday, May 1 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, May 2 at 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, May 3 at 2 p.m.

For more information or to order tickets, contact St. Martin Center East 7th and Parade 814-852-6118 or www.stmartincenter.org

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All parishes, missions, schools and groups are encouraged to choose a correspondent who can regularly e-mail news items to "Around the Erie Diocese" at FaithLife@ErieRCD.org

Visit ErieRCD.org/faithlife.asp to download quick and easy photo tips on a wallet-size card.



Franklin group experiences Mission of Friendship

FRANKLIN – A group from St. Patrick Parish in Franklin recently returned from an eight-day trip to the Mission of Friendship in Merida, Mexico, which is shared by the Erie Diocese and the Archdiocese of Yucatan, Mexico. The group included Dean and Cindy Collins, Dan and Debbie Drayer, Sister Marian Hudert, OSD, and Sister Claire Hudert, OSD.

The group had the opportunity to participate in some of the programs that are a part of the mission including a morning at Little Friends, a day care facility for preschool children; and an evening at Nuevo Vida, a girls shelter. The group also spent time with families involved in the sponsorship program.

Father Santos Angel Villegas Gil, pastor of Assumption Parish in the village of Temozon, which is the sister parish of St. Boniface Parish in Erie, took the group on a tour of several villages where they visited with the people and learned about their culture.



From left to right, Father Santos Angel Villegas Gil, Sister Marian Hudert, Dan Drayer, Sister Claire Hudert, Cindy Collins, Dean Collins and Debbie Drayer.

"We learned that there are many lives touched by the programs provided by the mission," said Cindy Collins. "The Mission of Friendship is a mission of love. Our group witnessed the love of our brothers and sisters in Merida, and we would like to share our experience with our brothers

and sisters in the parishes of the Erie Diocese."

Parish groups, clubs or organizations that would be interested in learning more about the Franklin group's experience with the Mission of Friendship can contact Cindy Collins at 814.437.5901 or Debbie Drayer at 814.432.7867.

Mercyhurst students use spring break to serve others

ERIE – A number of Mercyhurst College students, including 25 young people who visited Goldsboro, N.C., with the campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity, opted to spend spring break in service to others. They worked on the early stages of constructing a home, including framing, roofing and siding. Campus Minister Amanda Zechman accompanied the group.

Laura Stevens, a junior psychology major from Butler, is president of Mercyhurst's Habitat chapter and just completed her third alternative spring break trip with the group. She said she enjoys the trips because of the friendships she forms and the memories she creates.

"You often get to meet a family, learn about their background and work side-by-side with them on their house," she said. "It's very rewarding."

In addition to the Habitat trip, Mercyhurst coordinated two other alternative spring breaks which took place in late February and early March.

Sister Michele Schroeck, RSM, director of service learning and seven students completed the Navajo Alternative Break in Fort Defiance, Ariz. There they worked at St. Michael's



The Mercyhurst group that worked on a Habitat for Humanity project in Goldsboro, N.C., during spring break included: (top row, from left) Zach Pekar, Michelle Clemons, Maria Rambuski, Julie Hranica, Emily Warren, Renee Shaw, Sister Michele Schroeck, RSM, (bottom row, from left) Ashley Marin, Caitlin Nicka and Monica Parodi.

Association for Special Education, a center for individuals with disabilities. Students assisted in the classrooms and worked with occupational therapy, physical therapy and art initiatives.

Four students, with AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer Amelia Diaz,

took up The Urban Challenge, a poverty and justice awareness program in the Philadelphia/Camden, N.J. area through the Romero Center. Each day they volunteered at soup kitchens, shelters, schools and AIDS clinics.

Seminarman installed to ministry of reader

LATROBE – Brandon Kleckner, a seminarman from the Erie Diocese studying at St. Vincent Seminary in Latrobe, was installed to the ministry of reader March 16 by Bishop Joseph Adamec of Altoona-Johnstown in the St. Vincent Basilica. Kleckner is a 2004 graduate of Villa Maria Academy in Erie and earned a bachelor of arts in philosophy from Gannon University in 2008.

Taking part in the installation were, from left, Father David Brozka, seminary vice rector; Father Edward Lohse, vocation director; Bishop Adamec, install-



ing prelate: Kleckner; Father Nicholas Rouch, vice rector, St. Mark Seminary; Father Stephen

Schreiber, associate vocation director; and Father Justin Matro, OSB, St. Vincent seminary rector.

Venango Catholic students Bowl for Kids' Sake



OIL CITY – Students at Venango Catholic High School in Oil City participated in the Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl for Kids' Sake April 2 at Seneca Lanes, an annual event at the school. VCHS students raised more than \$2,600 for the event. Pictured is senior Kevin Kumer.

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Fr. Michael Carmola is well known in the Syracuse Diocese, having served in various parishes. For the past fourteen years, he has been Director of Christ the King Retreat House, and continues to be in demand as a speaker. He will be Celebrant at Liturgies throughout the week.

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