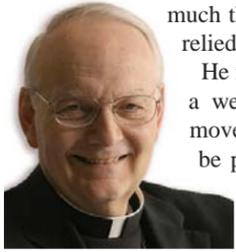


Benedict XVI brings new style

With the election of Pope Benedict XVI, it appears to me that the cardinals have chosen someone who will continue the agenda of John Paul II. In theological matters, I think we will see very much the same approach as in the past. John Paul II relied very heavily on Cardinal Ratzinger.



Bishop Donald W. Trautman

He is an intellectual. Because he is an intellectual, a well-known and respected theologian, he will move very slowly and thoughtfully. But there will be progress. He may surprise people in some of his approaches. I think he will face three distinct challenges.

First, there is the lack of priestly vocations in most parts of the world. There are exceptions, such as parts of Africa. But overall, the church in the West, certainly in Europe and South America, needs more priests to maintain the Eucharist, which is the heart of the Catholic Church. Benedict XVI is going to be faced with an immediate situation of trying to lead and motivate the church to call forth more vocations for the priesthood and religious life.

The second challenge I see is to reclaim all of Europe, which was a Catholic continent. Now, by statistics of Mass participation, it has slipped into secularism. The Catholic nation of Ireland has only one seminary. That is astounding. What we used to see and remember as the great faith of the Irish nation is now in serious jeopardy. France, Germany and all of Europe is the same way. We have to pray for the re-Christianization, the re-evangelization of Europe, which sent missionaries to the United States and gave us our faith.

The third major challenge is the relationship of the Catholic Church to Islam. We see Islam growing at a very fast pace, statistically. The Catholic Church needs to bring the good news to Muslims in a way that is not threatening and avoids confrontation. But we have an obligation to share the good news with all nations. There is common ground that we have to use to build bridges to Islam.

We just finished having 26 years of a charismatic pope where the papacy has been vested pretty much in an individual, in his personality, in his wisdom, in his holiness, in his goodness. His papacy has been identified with the person, but I think we have to now recognize that the papacy may well be identified with the office more than the person. I'm not sure how the world, especially the media, will react to that because they're used to having John Paul II as superstar traveling throughout the world and truly cheering the people. But we might have to be content, not with personality, but with the understanding of the office of the Holy Father. He is the teacher, the sanctifier, the shepherd of the church as a local bishop is. We have to learn how to understand the office more than the personality.

I pray for Pope Benedict XVI and pledge my total support and the cooperation of this diocese. We can rejoice and give thanks to God for the life and ministry of John Paul II and the outpouring of affection and accolades. It's a wonderful thing to be a Roman Catholic having had the great outpouring of the world recognizing John Paul II. But we also have to recognize where we are today and the task that the Lord gives us. I want to call us to an understanding that Jesus is the shepherd of the church and he's promised us the gift of the Holy Spirit in good days and bad days, for all days. So we have reason to rejoice, and I am confident that Pope Benedict XVI will be inspirational and guide us.

Donald W. Trautman

**Most Reverend Donald W. Trautman, STD, SSL
Bishop of Erie**

FaithLife

Bi-weekly news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie May 8, 2005 www.ErieRCD.org

Habemus Papam! Pope Benedict XVI

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

The puffs of white smoke from the Sistine Chapel's chimney on April 19, signifying the election of a new pope, sent a wave of excitement through St. Peter's Square that was felt around the world.

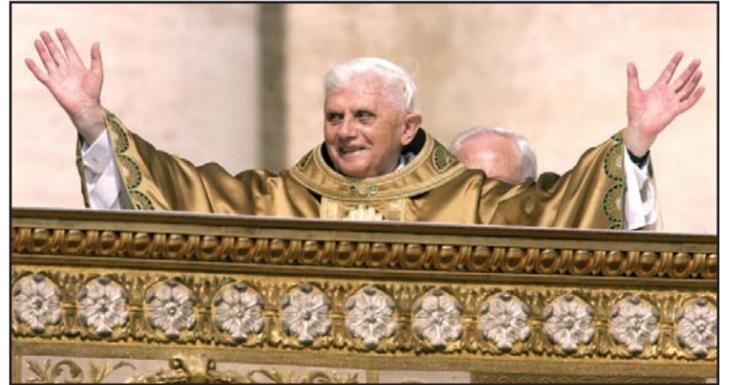
Soon after the white smoke appeared, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger of Germany was announced as the newly elected pope. The election came after a short conclave, taking only four ballots over two days to reach the two-thirds majority needed. Taking the name Benedict XVI, the new Holy Father appeared on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, smiling and greeting the hundreds of thousands in the square below. His first words to the world were humble.

"After the great Pope John Paul II, the Lord Cardinals have elected me, a simple and humble worker in the vineyard of the Lord," Pope Benedict XVI said. "I am consoled by the fact that the Lord knows how to act even with inadequate instruments and above all I entrust myself to your prayers."

In a news conference shortly after the election, Erie Bishop Donald Trautman said Pope Benedict's words were not pious rhetoric.

"That's truthful and that's sincere," Bishop Trautman said. "That's how he sees himself. We are blessed in having a truly holy and humble pontiff."

That humbleness was evident in May 1994 when Bishop Trautman and Cardinal William Keeler of Baltimore met with then-Cardinal Ratzinger in his Vatican office. Recalling the meeting, Bishop Trautman noted Cardinal



(CNS photo from Reuters)

Pope Benedict XVI leads his inaugural Mass in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican April 24. To the sound of choirs chanting in Latin and the applause of the crowd, Pope Benedict emerged into a sunlit St. Peter's Square for the inaugural Mass that marks the formal start of his papacy.

Ratzinger was behind his desk. During the course of the meeting, the bishop's briefcase emptied on the floor, spilling liturgical documents and papers. Cardinal Ratzinger got up from behind the desk, walked around and got down on the floor to retrieve the papers.

"I said to myself, 'That's the sign of a humble man,'" Bishop Trautman said. "Here's the prefect of the congregation for doctrine on the floor picking up papers with me. It's an insight that I treasure. It's a keyhole through which to look to see the personality of the person. And if this well-respected head of a congregation is that humble to help a lowly bishop pick up papers off the floor, I think that bodes very well for his papacy. He's a kind, gentle, humble servant of the Lord."

Bishop Trautman says that Pope Benedict XVI's extensive service in the Vatican means he is well-positioned and well-versed with the issues facing the Catholic Church today. He is fluent in sev-

eral languages and has traveled extensively in his role as prefect for the doctrine of the faith. Pope Benedict XVI, 78, has also announced that he will visit his homeland in August to attend this year's World Youth Day celebration in Cologne.

While it appears the cardinals have elected someone who will continue the agenda of Pope John Paul II, Bishop Trautman said the world must be open to a different style of leadership and personality.

"We'll have the same thoughtful theological framework to be sure, but we must concentrate not on the personality but on the office that he holds," Bishop Trautman said. "The Petrine office is an office of teaching, sanctifying and shepherding God's people. I think he will continue reaching out to the people. I think he will touch people in a new perhaps but different way. We have to give this man opportunity to accustom himself to the Petrine office, which is so new to him now."

REFLECTIONS from ROME

VATICAN CORRESPONDENT

Editor's note: Joseph Campbell is a seminarian from the Erie Diocese studying at North American College in Rome. In his *Reflections From Rome* series, he writes about witnessing the events at the Vatican from John Paul II's death through Benedict XVI's election. To read more and to view his photos, go to www.ErieRCD.org.

Part I – The Holy Father's Vigil

In recent history, there have been a number of priests in the Diocese of Erie who have had the opportunity as seminarians to participate in a papal funeral and election. Msgr. James Gannon, the late pastor of St. Andrew parish in Erie, was studying in Rome at the time Pius XI passed away and Pius XII took office. Msgr. Bruce Allison, former headmaster of Cathedral Prep and presently the pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, was present for the funeral of Pius XII and the election of John XXIII, as well as for the death of John XXIII and the election of Paul VI. Msgr. Andrew Karg, pastor of St. Michael Church in Greenville, was also a

student in Rome at the time Blessed John XXIII went to his eternal rest. Last but not least, Fr. David Poulson, pastor of St. Michael, Fryburg, along with Fr. Rick Tomasone, pastor of St. John the Baptist in Erie, studied in Rome during the occurrence of not only one but two papal funerals and elections. They said farewell to both Paul VI and John Paul I, while ushering in the reign of our late Holy Father, John Paul the Great. This past month, I found myself numbered among this group.

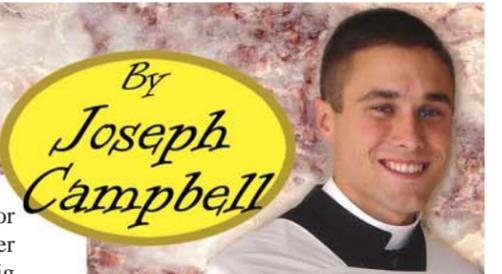
As a young boy growing up on Erie's lower west side, I never imagined myself living in Rome, never mind during the time of such historic events.

The death of John Paul II was felt throughout the world. But for those who found themselves in Rome at the time, it was experienced in a singularly unique way. To say the least, the experiences of the last month were amazing and a blessing that no person present will soon forget.

On the evening of April 2nd, I was in St. Peter Square when I heard the words of Hemingway ring in my mind, "Do not ask for whom the bells toll...they toll for thee." The bells that tolled on the night John Paul

II passed away most certainly did toll for me and for the whole world. Shortly after the first peal rang forth from the big bronze bell, millions worldwide felt the loss of a great moral leader, pivotal world figure and beloved spiritual father. The stark silence of the crowd placed me in the presence of God and made me aware of the significance of what had just occurred. During the days that followed, I was struck with awe as I witnessed 3.5 million pilgrims from around the world who put their lives on hold to march on the antiquated streets of Rome toward St. Peter's Basilica. With rosaries in their hands and holy songs upon their lips, they journeyed to bid farewell to their beloved Holy Father on whom death had laid its claim. One bystander likened the scene to that of the English martyrs at Tyburn as they, too, approached death, praying to the Lord and singing his praises. I likened the scene to a second Pentecost. It seemed like a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit into the hearts and minds of the faithful.

In the evenings prior to the day of the Holy Father's funeral, I would leave the seminary and walk down to the Via della



By Joseph Campbell

Conciliazione, the main street leading to St. Peter Square, simply to witness the crowd of people. I was invigorated by their faith and filled with zeal by their witness to the Gospel. Luke's famous Gospel verse, "they left everything and followed him," (Lk 5:11) was realized in the lives of these people. Before my very eyes, I could see the words of St. Paul come to life, "for when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Cor 12:10) The Holy Father was dead, and millions of people, many of whom were youths, gathered in prayer at his side! The strength of the church was witnessed worldwide and seen as a force to be marveled at.

We are living in extraordinary times, in both the history of the church and the world. It is a great time to be alive and an awesome time to be a member of the Catholic (universal) Church. The new evangelization to which the Holy Father devoted his papacy has begun!

Next: Part II – Papal Funeral

Middle schoolers 'Tune In' at youth rally

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

Nearly 600 students throughout the Erie Diocese "tuned in" to thoughts of prayer and praise through pop music on April 16 at the annual middle school youth rally.

Tuned In, focusing on the role and significance of contemporary pop music in the lives of youth, was the theme of this year's rally held at Clarion University.

Anna Scally, a nationally-renowned speaker from Cornerstone Media and a disc jockey, presented the feature program. Scally asked students to listen to the message underneath their music, focusing on how it can help them spiritually.

She encourages prayer through music. She used the example of taking a contemporary love song and relating it to students' relationships with God. To think biblically, Scally referred to the adulteress woman nearly stoned to death



Photo by Jen Baker

Anna Scally leads a group of students during a program focusing on finding spirituality in contemporary music.

from the Gospel. To help the students relate to the story, she used the song *I'm Not a Perfect Person*. "Middle schoolers listen to a lot of music," says rally coordinator Pam Loreno. "They might not listen to a song because of the lyrics. They listen to it because of the beat and the genre. But they can take away some discernment of the words."

Aside from the rally's theme, Loreno says a lot of what the kids take with them is social.

"To interact with that many kids that have the same Catholic values is great in itself," she says.

Each student attended two of the 14 different workshops offered in the afternoon, many of which were organized and run by youth leaders and 40 senior high students.

By the Way...



Jason Koshinski

In his first general audience April 27, the new **Holy Father** explained why he chose the name **Benedict**.

"I chose to call myself Benedict XVI ideally as a link to the venerated Pontiff, **Benedict XV**, who guided the Church through the turbulent times of the First World War," the new pope explained. "He was a true and courageous prophet of peace who struggled strenuously and bravely, first to avoid the drama of war and then to limit its terrible consequences."

He said the name **Benedict** also refers to **St. Benedict of Norcia**, "patron of western monasticism" and co-patron of Europe with Cyril and Methodius. "The progressive expansion of the Benedictine Order which he founded exercised an enormous influence on the spread of Christianity throughout the European continent," Pope Benedict XVI said. "For this reason, St. Benedict is much venerated in Germany, and especially in Bavaria, my own land of origin; he constitutes a fundamental point of reference for the unity of Europe and a powerful call to the irrefutable Christian roots of European culture and civilization."

Asked when the cardinals first sensed that then-**Cardinal Ratzinger** was the best candidate, **Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick** of Washington said: "Well, when we read the newspapers. It was the newspapers that were telling us how Ratzinger was a favorite, so we knew ... The Holy Spirit may even speak through newspapers."

Bishop Trautman led a brief prayer service on April 15 as he dedicated a new room at St. Mark Catholic Center named in honor of **Msgr. Homer DeWalt**, who served as superintendent of schools for the diocese from 1962 to 1982. Msgr. DeWalt was in attendance.

Bishop Trautman called Msgr. DeWalt a great priest and educator of the diocese, and thanked him for all he had done to build up the school system while serving as superintendent of schools. The event was organized by **Fr. Jay Schultz**, vicar for education.

Scott Hahn spoke to an audience of more than 1,000 at Grove City College on April 20. The internationally known lecturer and author talked about his book *The Lamb's Supper*, which focuses on understanding Revelation in the light of Mass. The event raised \$5,200 for the **Beloved Disciple Parish** building fund. Hahn is an alumnus of Grove City College. The event was sponsored by the college's Newman Club.

Msgr. Richard Sullivan blessed about 80 animals, mostly dogs, on May 1 at the **Humane Society's new animal shelter** on Zimmerman Road, Erie. The blessing was held to help celebrate Be Kind to Animals Week.

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

Deacons ordained

Two seminarians recently took another step toward priesthood for the Erie Diocese. James Campbell and Marc Solomon were ordained into the order of the diaconate by Bishop Donald Trautman on April

23 during a Mass at the St. Mark Seminary chapel. The transitional deacons will be ordained diocesan priests, along with James' brother Joseph, who is currently studying in Rome, in 2006.



James Campbell, left, and Marc Solomon receive applause from family and friends gathered at St. Mark Seminary chapel.

Clergy Appointment

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

Fr. Vincent P. Cieslewicz, pastor, St. Elizabeth Parish, Smethport, and St. Joseph Parish, Mount Jewett, for a term of six years ending June 30, 2011. Effective April 26.

Calendar

Mass and dedication of new Eucharistic mural: May 14, 5:15 p.m., St. Peter Cathedral, Erie. Bishop Donald Trautman presiding. Artist Fr. Tom Ribbits will also be on hand to present his work.

50th anniversary Mass: Church of the Good Shepherd, West Middlesex, May 15, noon. Bishop Donald Trautman presiding.

Blessing of new shrine: Prince of Peace Center, Farrell, May 19, 4:30 p.m.

Memorial Day Mass: Gate of Heaven Cemetery, May 30, 11 a.m.

Ordination to the priesthood: For Shane Mathew and Joseph Dougherty, June 3, 7:30 p.m., St. Peter Cathedral, Erie.

Day of reflection: "Why we need the church," May 14, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Avila Retreat Center, 61 E. High St., Union City. Presented by Msgr. James Peterson and Sr. Maria O'Connor. Includes coffee, conference, liturgy, lunch, personal time and group discussion. Usual offering is \$10. Call 814.438.7020 for reservations. Mass for friends of Avila, May 13 at 7 p.m. All are invited.

Sounds of Praise, a contemporary Christian group of vocalists and instrumentalists, will present two free-will offering concerts. Under the direction of Brandon Vogt, these concerts entitled "When in Our Music God is Glorified" will be performed May 14, Cathedral of St. Paul Episcopal, Erie, at 3 p.m. and May 15, St. Francis Xavier Parish, McKean, at 3 p.m.

Inter-faith retreat for people with cancer: A time of prayer, praise and fellowship will be held Sat., May 21 at St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie, 10:45 a.m.-2 p.m. Donation of \$5 (scholarships available) includes lunch. Call 864.9107 or 824.1257 to register. Sponsored by the Prayer & Sharing Cancer Support Group.

Shield of Roses, a pro-life prayer group, will pray at the Mercy motherhouse chapel, 444 E. Grandview Blvd., Erie, on May 23 at 7 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.

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

Awards honor scouts' faith

Bishop Donald Trautman presented 200 individual and group badges, patches and honors on April 24 at the annual Scout Religious Awards.

Awards were given to Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts and Brownies throughout the 13-county diocese for their achievements in areas of spiritual

growth. The various badges and patches honor such areas as developing a personal relationship with Jesus, exploring God in our daily lives, living the faith, study of the sacraments and others.

For more information on scouting in the Erie Diocese, visit www.ErieRCD.org.



Above, Cub Scouts take in the awards ceremony. At right, Jennifer Ergen, St. Michael Parish, Greenville, accepts the diocesan Holy Family award from Bishop Trautman.



YEAR OF THE EUCHARIST

FOCUS ON EUCHARIST

Have a film fest on Eucharist

See a film that explores aspects of Eucharist such as those reviewed in April's *U.S. Catholic* and meet over a meal to discuss them. The two films listed below probe the meal and justice aspects of Eucharist.

Contemporary Catholics sometimes argue that Eucharist is primarily sacrifice rather than communal meal. The history of Eucharist and the many facets of Eucharist expressed in the catechism indicate that it is both — and more.

The rich tapestry of the mystery of Eucharist cannot be confined. After all, it is mystery! In exploring its many facets we may expand our appreciation and understanding of this marvelous

mystery.

Babette's Feast, 1987, is a classic of Eucharistic hospitality. A French Catholic refugee moves into a Danish home full of grim, unhappy people. As servant and cook her life is mundane. But when she wins the lottery this former chef creates a banquet that warms the hearts of the household and transforms their relationships with one another.

Reviewer Patrick McCormick says of *Hotel Rwanda*, 2004: "The Hutu manager of a four-star hotel in Kigali opens his doors and heart when his nation descends into genocidal chaos while the world looks away." How does our weekly Eucharist train us to respond to such challenges?

From the Office of Worship

www.erieRCD.org
The website of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie

Visit our Web site for a PDF slideshow presentation of two seminarians from the Erie Diocese taking the next step toward priesthood. View pictures from the ordination ceremony of James Campbell and Marc Solomon as they become deacons.

Miss an issue of *FaithLife*? Log on to our homepage to access archived stories from past issues.

LEARN ROSARY MAKING
Call for catalog & introductory offer or visit www.rosaryparts.com
LEWIS & COMPANY
P.O. Box 268-K, Troy, NY 12181 • 800-342-2400

STUMP REMOVAL
Back yards and tight spots are our specialty. Small trees and shrubs removed. Insured.
Call for a free estimate.
Ken - (814) 474-2195

CLOCK REPAIR

Burdie's Clock Shop
238 South Main St.
Cambridge Springs, PA 16403
(814) 398-8263
"We Make House Calls"

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

PA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

Experienced education professional needed to represent the interests of Catholic schools, students and parents. Should have strong knowledge of state government and Catholic education. Send cover letter and resume to: PA Catholic Conference, P.O. Box 2835, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

Captain Rick's Boat Excursions

31 State Street • Erie, Pennsylvania

PERCH FISHING

Aboard the 65-ft., all-steel Great Lakes Motor Vessel

Victory

The Victory may also be chartered (with crew) for almost any occasion with a group of 30 passengers or more. Private parties, picnics, school trips, church outings, reunions, business meetings, sight seeing tours, etc.

Cell: 814-490-5415 Phone: 814-833-9898
<http://www.captainricksboatexcursions.com>

College Fair

Tuesday, May 10, 2005
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
Mercyhurst Prep School 538 East Grandview Blvd.
Sponsored by the Guidance Departments of Mercyhurst Prep School, Cathedral Prep, Villa Maria Academy
Check out over 80 colleges and universities

Laurel Oaks Cabins

Cook Forest, PA

Large & Small Cabins, Full kitchens & baths, open year-round. 2-night minimum stay. No pets. (814) 752-2685 or 800-304-1122
www.laureloakscabins.com

RAS AUTO BODY

2516 Pittsburgh Ave. • Erie, PA
Same Location Since 1947

Remember...
You choose the repair shop, not the insurance company.

814-453-6185

Now - Wash & Wax \$45 +tax
Free Pick-up & Delivery

Dave Ras, owner

\$5 per person

St. Joseph Church

Bread of Life Community Female Facts & Fun Woman's Fair

Sunday, May 15, 2005 • Noon - 4 p.m.
Community Center • 147 West 24th St., Erie

FEATURING:

Diane Mcshane Salon Brasserie Dearie Electrolysis Street Smart Self Defense Tastefully Simple St. Vincent Health Center (blood pressure screening, bone density scan, BMI body scan, maternal child health info) Weekender active wear Massage Therapy Express Yourself J.L. Nick & Associates	Citizens Bank Massage Therapy Gerlachs Florist Creative Memories Home and Garden Total Tan Beauty Control Mater Dei Imports Pontillo's Pastries Dr. David Ladulica (posture screening) Jewelry, Crafts, Candles Fantastic Chinese Auction Bake Sale & More!
---	---

Something for women of all ages!

We sponsor **BUS TOURS** to Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Buffalo to hear *The Mighty Wurlitzers*
\$40 for members, \$45 for non-members

Price includes show ticket, round trip bus and dinner.

Erie Area Theatre Organ Society
Call Joe Luckey at 871-7276
Leave your number for a return call.

When Interest Income Counts, It's Time To Call Gen-See

7.1% Annually

Earn More Worry Less
Go with experience you can trust...

Since 1975, Gen-See investors have done better for 5 great reasons:

- Regular monthly checks • No fees or commissions
- Low minimum initial investment...\$5,000 • Term 3, 4 or 5 years
- Rate of interest guaranteed for term of certificate

Make a fresh start...RIGHT NOW **7.1% Annually** **1-800-507-4393**

Gen-See Capital Corporation
1-800-507-4393

MARONITE CENSUS

All Catholics of Maronite heritage are cordially invited to participate in the Maronite Census.

The Maronite Church is one of the world's oldest Christian communities, and to this day continues to use some Aramaic, the language of Jesus and the Apostles in its liturgy.

Cardinal Sfeir, the Maronite Patriarch has asked us to compile a census to trace more than 100 years of emigration of so many Christians from Lebanon and the Middle East to other lands. The one-page census, which will take five minutes to complete, will enable us to be aware of Maronites in areas where we have no presence and to better communicate with Maronites living in places where there are Maronite parishes.

Thank you for your participation and may the prayer of Our Lady of Lebanon, Saints Maron and Sharbel and all the saints be with you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Gregory John Mansour
Bishop of the Eparchy of St. Maron of Brooklyn

- Register with the Maronite Census online by logging on to www.maronitecensus.net
- Receive a census by mail or obtain more information by contacting:

Randa Hakim
12300 East 91st Street South
Broken Arrow, OK 74012
Phone: 918-688-2161

FaithLife
The official news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie
Volume 1, Issue 6

BISHOP DONALD W. TRAUTMAN - Publisher
MSGR. TOM MCSWEENEY - Director of Evangelization for Communications and Public Relations
ANNE-MARIE WELSH - Executive Director
JASON KOSHINSKIE - Editor

General Information: (814) 824-1160 Fax: (814) 824-1170
E-Mail: FaithLife@erieRCD.org
Editorial - (814) 824-1171

Advertising Manager
KEVIN EAGAN
(814) 824-1168

Circulation Manager
BRENDA WILLIAMS
(814) 824-1161

Production Manager
RICH PAPALIA

Administrative Assistant
CINDY DECOURSEY

Visit us online at www.erieRCD.org
Member of the Catholic Press Association.
Published bi-weekly. Owned and operated by the Bishop of Erie.
Subscription \$10/year. For more information, call (814) 824-1160.
The Office of Communications has been serving Catholics in the Diocese of Erie since 1874. Offices are located at St. Mark Catholic Center, 429 East Grandview Blvd., Erie, Pa. Periodical postage paid at Erie, Pa.
Postmaster: Send address changes to *FaithLife* at St. Mark Catholic Center.

Calendar deadline: Send information at least one month before an event to have it published in at least one issue.
Editorial deadline: For Briefly and most other news items, Monday, noon, two weeks before the date of publication. For feature stories and photo opportunities, inform us at least one month before the event.
Advertising deadline: Monday, noon, two weeks before the date of publication.

Expert speaks on modern slavery, human trafficking

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

Of the estimated 600,000 to 800,000 human beings trafficked across international borders every year, approximately 20,000 end up as slaves in the United States, according to a June 2004 U.S. State Department report.

Estimates from the CIA say most slaves in the U.S. have been in their situations for three to five years.

"Human trafficking is defined by its outcome, what happens when they get to their destination," says Dr. Kevin Bales, a professor of sociology at the University of Surrey in London and a consultant to the United Nations.

Bales, considered the world's leading expert on contemporary slavery, gave several talks in Erie and Crawford Counties April 19-21 during a human trafficking conference.

Slavery enters our homes through the products we buy, Bales says, citing slaves harvesting cocoa in the Ivory Coast, making charcoal used to produce steel in Brazil and weaving carpets in India.

Unlike other crimes, Bales states that human trafficking and enslavement is not an event; it's a process. "It's a crime that doesn't stop," he says. "It involves torture, rape, sexual abuse and psychological abuse. Survivors need medical and psychological help." It also likely involves kidnapping, document theft, tax evasion and smuggling.

"Human traffickers are very clever criminals," Bales said. "People that have been in drug or arms trafficking are getting involved with human trafficking. These criminals are pretty sharp, and they surprise us."

Both U.S. law enforcement and the general public lack training and education when

it comes to combating human trafficking, he said. One-third of slavery survivors come out of slavery due to the actions of private citizens.

"It's up to people to say, 'I'm going to take action. I'm going to make a phone call. I don't know who to call, but I'm going to do something,'" Bales said. "The thing that's heartbreaking is that we don't know how many people could have made that call. They'll say, 'Well, it's none of my business.'"

Bales told the story of a young man, now 18, who was trafficked into the U.S. from Zambia at the age of 11. A man brought him to Texas as a member of a boys



Dr. Kevin Bales

choir for tours of area churches. The man organizing the choir collected for church missionaries overseas.

"It was all a lie," Bales said. "Who would've thought? I never would've dreamed."

The young man became an orphan and was later adopted by an American family. But the boys enslaved to this man realized what was going on and helped resolve their own situation.

The drop in barriers at borders and the fall of the Iron Curtain have been conducive to trafficking, Bales says. "People flow from poorer countries to richer countries, and when you're the richest country on earth, you can expect people from everywhere," he said. But more than likely the pattern is a short distance, such as from the Ivory Coast to Ghana and from Nigeria to Italy.

The majority of slaves come from China and Central America, particularly Mexico. According to the *Hidden Slaves* report, half of all people trafficked end up in the sex industry, restaurant and hospital work or part of a debt/bondage arrangement.

What helps the U.S. is protection due to what Bales calls "some of the best trafficking laws in the world," including the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

"Education is important," Bales said. "We can't solve problems we don't understand. I hope you never have a case here, but it's possible."

The human trafficking conference was presented by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania, the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas, Erie Regional Community, the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Inter-Church Ministries of Erie County, Gannon University, Mercyhurst College, Allegheny College, Edinboro University and Penn State-Behrend.

Help stop slavery

Crucial to halting human trafficking is getting the information. Here are a few resources provided by Dr. Bales:

www.freetheslaves.net - Download *Hidden Slaves*, a report on modern slavery in the United States

www.usdoj.gov/trafficking.htm - U.S. Department of Justice, includes a toll-free hotline to report trafficking crimes and many useful links

Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy - This book by Kevin Bales reveals the historical and economic conditions behind modern slavery. All royalties Bales receives from the book will go toward the fight against slavery.

For more links, visit www.eriecd.org/charities4g.asp

HELP MAKE A FAMILY REUNION POSSIBLE

I am hoping to find my birth brother who was born in Aosta, Italy, in June of 1957 and was placed with a family in the Erie area in November of 1957. He would now be 47 years old. At birth, this baby had blond hair and light eyes (maybe blue). The name on his birth records is **Giuseppe Lady** but he would likely have been raised under a different name. The baby was placed in the Erie area by Catholic Charities.

I am in the Pittsburgh area and was born to the same birth mother in Italy. I have a good family, a stable life and a fulfilling career. I am younger, and information on this birth brother is listed in my adoption records. Amazingly, I have located a birth sister in Pennsylvania and two birth brothers in Italy. A birth brother is coming from Italy to Pennsylvania at the end of May. We are hoping and praying for an introduction to our Erie birth brother.

If you have any idea to help us find our Erie birth brother, please contact my friend Laura in Pittsburgh via telephone or e-mail: phone number 412.344.0848, lauramagone@msn.com Thank you and God Bless.

advertisement

Bi-weekly news bulletin of the Catholic Diocese of Erie

FaithLife

May 8, 2005

Habemus Papam!

Pope Benedict XVI

