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FaithLife

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plans events throughout
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BI-WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN OF THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

June 29, 2008

Church Calendar

Events of the local, American and universal church

Feast days



St. Benedict



Our Lady of
Mount Carmel

- June 29 St. Peter and St. Paul
- June 30 The first holy martyrs of the Holy Roman Church
- July 1 Blessed Junipero Serra
- July 3 St. Thomas
- July 4 St. Elizabeth of Portugal
- July 5 St. Anthony Mary Zaccaria
- July 9 St. Augustine Zhao Rong and his companions
- July 11 St. Benedict
- July 14 Blessed Kateri Tekawitha
- July 15 St. Bonaventure
- July 16 Our Lady of Mount Carmel
- July 18 St. Camillus de Lellis
- July 21 St. Lawrence of Brindisi
- July 22 St. Mary Magdalene
- July 23 St. Bridget of Sweden
- July 24 St. Sharbel Makhluf
- July 25 St. James
- July 26 St. Joachim and St. Anne

Clergy appointments



Father Richard Allen, relieved of the office of pastor of St. Agatha Parish, Meadville, and the mission church of St. Bernadette, Saegertown, in anticipation of departure for military service as chaplain this fall. Effective July 11, 2008.

Father Timothy Balliett, appointed parochial vicar of St. George Parish, Erie, for a term of three years. Effective June 20, 2008.

Father John Chaplin, appointed as sacramental assistant to Christ the King Manor, DuBois; the DuBois Medical Center; and to Holy Cross Parish, Brandy Camp, for a term of five years. Effective July 18, 2008.

Father Raymond Gramata, appointed pastor of St. Agatha Parish, Meadville, and the mission church of St. Bernadette, Saegertown, for a term of six years. Effective July 11, 2008.

Father Robert Horgas, appointed pastor of St. Agnes Parish, Morrisdale; Immaculate Conception Parish, Osceola Mills; and St. Peter and Paul mission church, Hawk Run, for a term of six years. Effective July 18, 2008.

Msr. Charles Kaza, E.V., appointed parochial administrator of Holy Cross Parish, Brandy Camp, while remaining pastor of St. Tobias Parish, Brockway. Effective July 18, 2008.

Father Gregory Kirsch, V.F., appointed pastor of Christ the King Parish, Houtzdale, and Immaculate Conception mission church, Madera, as well as the pastoral care of the prisoners at the State Correctional Institution Houtzdale, for a term of six years. Effective July 18, 2008.

Father Robert Manning, appointed parochial administrator of St. Columbkille Parish, Stoneboro. Effective June 27, 2008.

Father John Santor, appointed sacramental assistant at St. Patrick Parish, Erie, while continuing present ministries at Gannondale and as the diocesan coordinator of pastoral outreach to refugees. Effective July 7, 2008.

Father Johnathan Schmolz, appointed parochial vicar of St. Jude the Apostle Parish, Erie, for a term of three years. Effective June 20, 2008.

Msr. Lawrence Speice, appointed to the Office of Dean for the Meadville Deanery. Effective immediately continuing through June 2010.

Father Marc Stockton, appointed parochial administrator of St. Bernard Parish, Falls Creek. Effective July 18, 2008.



View the
ordination
slideshow at
ErieRCD.org

Year of St. Paul

Pauline year dedicated to apostle, author, evangelizer

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

So who exactly was St. Paul and what makes him so relevant today?

"The influence of St. Paul on Christianity is beyond calculation," said Father Ed Lohse, chancellor for the Erie Diocese.

When Pope Benedict XVI announced a special jubilee year dedicated to St. Paul, he said the church needs modern Christians who will imitate the apostle's missionary energy and spirit of sacrifice.

The Pauline year will run from June 28, 2008, to June 29, 2009, to mark the approximately 2,000th anniversary of the saint's birth.

The jubilee year will feature numerous special liturgies and events in Rome but should also be celebrated in local churches and in the sanctuaries, religious orders and other institutions that have a special link to St. Paul, the pope said.

While nothing has yet been planned in the Erie Diocese, Father Lohse said there are many opportunities for prayer, study and reflection that can be done on a diocesan, parish, school and individual level.

"It's most appropriate, I think, to celebrate the second millennium of St. Paul's birth," he said, noting that in recent years the church has recognized the second millennium of the birth of the Virgin Mary.

And still down the road is the 2000th anniversary of the suffering, death and rising of Christ, he said.

"They're all connected and they're all intended to lead to Christ," Father Lohse said. "As St. Paul so eloquently put it, 'It is not I who lives but Christ who lives in me.' If you are going to delve into the person and the belief of St. Paul, you cannot help but come closer to Christ. Paul will take you there."

There are two things to consider when reflecting on St. Paul, said Father Michael Kesicki, rector of St. Mark's Seminary and a faculty member of Gannon University's Department of Theology.

First is the life of St. Paul, the man and apostle.

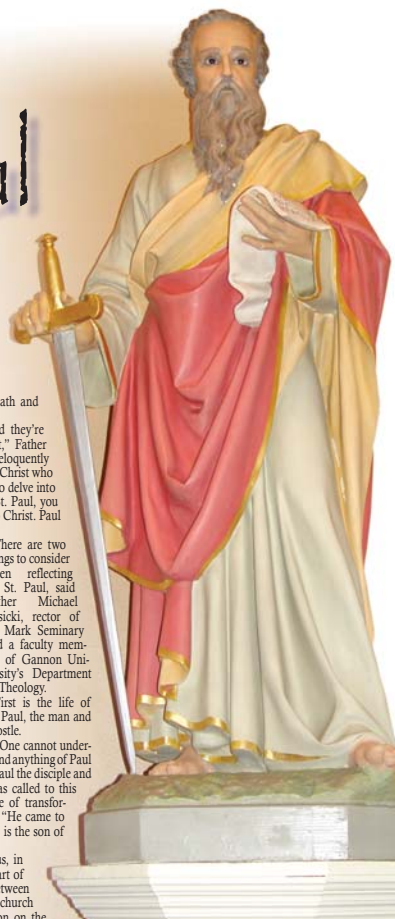
"One cannot understand anything of Paul without understanding, first, Paul the disciple and apostle, the Christian who was called to this unique and radical experience of transformation," Father Kesicki said. "He came to believe in Jesus and that Jesus is the son of God raised from the dead."

St. Paul was born in Tarsus, in what is now Turkey, at the start of the Christian era, sometime between A.D. 7 and 10, according to church historians. After his conversion on the road to Damascus, he became one of the church's foremost evangelizers, first among

"I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me."

— Galatians 2:19-20

See PAULINE, page 3



The jubilee year for St. Paul will run from June 28, 2008, to June 29, 2009, to mark the approximately 2,000th anniversary of the saint's birth. This statue of St. Paul is located at St. Paul Church in Erie.

Indulgences granted for Pauline year events

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

VATICAN CITY — Catholics who participate in events connected with the 2008-2009 jubilee year of St. Paul can receive a special indulgence, the Vatican said.

Pope Benedict XVI authorized the granting of a plenary or full indulgence in order to highlight the Pauline year and open the

way to the "interior purification" of the faithful during its celebration, a Vatican decree said.

Pope Benedict established the Pauline year to run from June 28, 2008, to June 29, 2009, to mark the approximately 2,000th anniversary of the saint's birth.

The plenary indulgence is being offered to pilgrims who come to Rome, to Catholics who participate in local events connected to the jubilee year,

and to those who may be too ill or otherwise prevented from physical participation.

It can be granted on behalf of the individual petitioner or on behalf of departed souls.

Conditions for the special Pauline year indulgence include the normal requirements set by the church for all plenary indulgences: that the person goes to confession, receives the Eucharist and prays for the intentions of the pope.

While Bishop Donald

Trautman has not yet designated a pilgrimage place in the Erie Diocese that would have an indulgence attached to it, Father Ed Lohse, chancellor of the diocese, said the chief opportunities for an indulgence are at the opening and closing of the Pauline year.

An indulgence is a remission of the temporal punishment a person is due for sins that have been forgiven. But what does that mean?

"They are widely misunderstood or not understood at all," said Father Lohse. "For some people, it's not that they have a correct or incorrect understanding of them; they just don't know what they are."

Their origin, he said, comes from the Acts of the Apostles where the early Christians turned over their property and wealth so they

See INDULGENCES, page 3

Local pilgrims make plans for World Youth Day in Sydney

By Jason Koshinski
FaithLife editor

Joining the tens of thousands of young people in Sydney, Australia, for World Youth Day July 15-20 will be a group of pilgrims from the Erie Diocese.

The group, known as the Erie Doves, includes 32 youth and adults from Grove City, the Oil City and Franklin area, Clearfield and Erie.

The diocesan-wide trip spawned out of a group from Beloved Disciple Parish in Grove City that was planning on making the trip to Sydney.

"It has blossomed into this wonderful thing to include people throughout our diocese," said Marialyce Garvis, outreach coordinator at Beloved Disciple.

Many of the youth and adults going have never traveled out of the country before, Garvis said.

"We've been in contact with our host parish in Melbourne," she said. "The pas-



tor has been very nice in letting us know what's going on."
The group will stay with 20 host families during their trip.

See WYD, page 3

L'Arche featured in Faith

The July/August issue of Faith magazine, which is scheduled to arrive in homes across the diocese before the July 4th holiday, includes an inspiring cover story on L'Arche Erie, established in northwest Pennsylvania 35 years ago as part of an international movement founded by Jean Vanier. The issue also offers coverage of the experiences people from throughout the diocese had when they traveled to Washington, D.C. and New York City to greet Pope Benedict XVI during his visit to America.

Now in its fourth year of production, Faith magazine is distributed, free of charge, to the 65,000 Catholics registered



in parishes of the Erie Diocese. If you do not receive your complimentary copy, please contact Brenda Williams, circulation manager, at 814.824.1168 or by email at bwilliams@eriercd.org.



IN THE U.S.

■ The Society of St. Vincent de Paul, one of the oldest lay service organizations in the U.S., will mark its 175th anniversary with what it has been doing for all those years: serving the poor. The organization has planned a special event to highlight its work and raise money for the poor. A nationwide event called "Friends of the Poor Walk" will take place Sept. 27, the feast day of St. Vincent de Paul. Diocesan councils, district councils and parish-based conferences of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul have all been invited to participate; walks will be organized locally. As of June 17, 61 walks had been scheduled across the country. Individuals and groups can register for the event on the walk's Web site, www.svpfriendsofthepoorwalk.org.

■ Iowa officials were calling the state's catastrophic flooding "the tsunami of the plains," as it wreaked havoc on citizens, business owners and Catholic parish property statewide. Record flooding from nine of Iowa's rivers has covered millions of acres of farmland and crippled numerous towns and cities in its path. While the water had begun to recede, it was only the beginning of a long recovery process, federal and state authorities confirmed. The destructive flooding also has caused devastation to many Catholic parish properties and the homes and businesses of parishioners, said Dubuque Archbishop Jerome G. Hanus. In the Archdiocese of Dubuque — which covers 30 counties in the northeast quadrant of Iowa — Cedar Rapids experienced the worst flooding. In Iowa's second largest city, with a population of more than 120,000, a 9.2-square-mile area was under several feet of water. St. Patrick Church and parish buildings in the heart of downtown Cedar Rapids were swamped and water came within a foot of the roof of the four-year-old parish center.

AROUND THE WORLD

■ In a cordial and festive visit to the Vatican, U.S. President George W. Bush met with Pope Benedict XVI in the lush Vatican Gardens for private talks, an informal stroll and a choral performance by the Sistine Chapel Choir. The hour-long visit June 13 was the fifth time Bush came to the Vatican for a papal audience and his third meeting with Pope Benedict. However, it was the first in recent memory a head of state was welcomed in such an informal way and at such a unique location. The Vatican had said it wanted to break with protocol to show its appreciation for the president's warm hospitality during the pope's visit to the White House during his April 15-20 trip to the U.S.

PEOPLE OF FAITH

■ NBC News Washington bureau chief and "Meet the Press" moderator Tim Russert, who died June 13 at the age of 58, was remembered for his warm lifelong ties to the Catholic Church and his support for Catholic education as well as for his career covering politics. Russert collapsed of a heart attack at work. An active Catholic who apparently kept a promise to God to never miss Sunday Mass if his son was born healthy, Russert spoke often and fondly of his Catholic school education and of the role of the church in his life. "Americans valued his tremendous command of the political electoral process and his commitment to discovering each aspect of the story that contributed to people having a better awareness of the issues of public life and candidates for political office," said Archbishop George H. Niederauer of San Francisco, chairman of the U.S.

bishops' communications committee, who was attending the U.S. bishops' spring meeting in Orlando, Fla. "But those of us who shared his Catholic faith and his deep love for it appreciate his sharing of the story of his own faith and his loyalty to the life of the Catholic Church in this country and the many charities to which he contributed his time and talent," the archbishop told Catholic News Service.



Pope Benedict XVI meets Tim Russert, NBC News Washington bureau chief and moderator of "Meet the Press," April 17 at The Catholic University of America in Washington. Father David M. O'Connell, center, president of the university, made the introduction during the pontiff's U.S. visit.

■ U.S. Cardinal John P. Foley, grand master of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, and Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, have been appointed to posts in the Roman Curia. The Vatican made the announcement June 12 as part of appointments for those elevated to the College of Cardinals last November. Cardinal Foley was named a member of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments as well as the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. The pope appointed Cardinal DiNardo to be a member of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers. Cardinal Francisco Robles Ortega of Monterrey, Mexico, was named to the Pontifical Commission for Latin America.

By the Way...



Jason Koshinski

The Roman Catholic Chapel at the Millcreek Mall in Erie is still going strong and will remain open through at least August. Priests hearing confessions at the chapel report that they are quite busy during the scheduled times, including one remarking that he recently heard them for an hour-and-a-half straight. The chapel, located just outside the entrance to Bon Ton, opened on Ash Wednesday this year. It is open from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Saturday and closed on Sunday. Priests are available for confession from 2-4 p.m. on Wednesday and 11 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturday.

Please allow us to brag a moment — the Erie Diocese is home to some award-winning publications!

FaithLife and *Faith* magazine recently took home some honors and the 2008 Catholic Press awards of North America, held this spring in Toronto. *FaithLife* won two awards — second place for best front page among broadsheet newspapers and honorable mention for best one-shot special issue with our Bishop Michael Murphy tribute last spring. Congratulations to Rich Papalia, diocesan Web master, who designs each issue.

Faith's Anne-Marie Welsh won third place for individual excellence for writer/editor.

Faith Publishing Service also won nine national awards. Earlier this spring, Elizabeth Polakowski won an Addy Award from the Erie Ad Club for the design of the Office of Communications' Christmas card. Papalia was awarded one for the layout of an editorial spread in the Bishop Murphy tribute. Alice Welsh picked up a silver Addy in the student division as illustrator of the Christmas card.

In tribute to the late Tim Russert, the Christophers are making a 1996 televised interview with the NBC News Washington bureau chief and "Meet the Press" moderator available in its entirety on the Web site www.christophers.org. Russert died June 13 at the age of 58.

The half-hour interview was conducted by then-Christophers director, Msgr. Tom McSweeney, who is the Erie Diocese's director of the Office of Evangelization for Communications and Public Relations and parochial administrator of Holy Trinity Parish in Erie.

The veteran newsmen, who had interviewed countless politicians and world leaders during his career, sat in the "other" chair for a change and offered "Russert on Russert" commentary on the role and responsibility of good journalism and his own approach to digging for answers.

FaithLife will skip its next regularly scheduled issue for a summer break and resume publication the weekend of July 26-27.

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

Unresolved liturgy debate, stem cells, abuse key topics for bishops

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
Catholic News Service

ORLANDO, Fla. — A lively and intense debate over a 700-page translation of part of the Roman Missal dominated the public sessions of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' spring general assembly in Orlando June 12-14, but the bishops failed to come to a conclusion about the fate of the liturgical text.

With much less discussion, they approved a 2,000-word policy statement calling embryonic stem-cell research "gravely immoral," directed their Committee on Doctrine to begin revising guidelines for Catholic health care institutions on medically assisted nutrition and hydration, designated Sept. 26, 2010, as National Catholic Charities Sunday, and voted to replace the more formal "vosotros" with the more familiar "ustedes" in Spanish-language Masses in the U.S.

The bishops gathered in Orlando also heard an interim report from researchers at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice on the causes and context of child sexual abuse by priests and began a confidential dialogue with representatives of half of the nation's priests on issues that arose during and after the sex abuse scandal.

The liturgical document under consideration was a translation of the proper prayers for Sundays and feast days. The second of 12 sections of the Roman Missal translation project, it had been in the works for more than two years.

But after more than a dozen bishops rose to speak against the translation, it failed to reach the needed approval of two-thirds of the 250 Latin-rite members of the conference.

Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, USCCB president, did not announce the vote totals but said the document had not obtained the 166 "yes" votes needed to approve it or the 83 "no" votes that would have resulted in its rejection. USCCB members not present at the spring general assembly in Orlando



CNS photo

Members of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' spring general meeting in Orlando, Fla., June 12, the first day of their spring general meeting.

will vote by mail on the issue.

Many bishops expressed frustration that the translation by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy ignored recommendations they had submitted to clarify the sentence structure or revise archaic language, including the use of words such as "gibbet," "wrought" and "ineffable."

"John and Mary Catholic have the right to have prayers that are clear and understandable," said Bishop Donald W. Trautman of Erie, Pa.

The stem-cell document had a much easier path, with few amendments, little debate and a 191-1 vote of approval. It is designed to set the stage for

a later, more pastoral document explaining why the Catholic Church opposes some reproductive technologies.

"Even our opponents admit that ours is one of the most effective voices against destroying human embryos for stem-cell research," said Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kan., who introduced the document.

"The issue of stem-cell research does not force us to choose between science and ethics, much less between science and religion," the document says. "It presents a choice as to how our society will pursue scientific and medical progress."

In response to a question, Archbishop Naumann said the document did not address the topic of the adoption of so-called "spare embryos" that would otherwise be destroyed when not needed for in vitro fertilization. He said "the Holy See is itself reflecting on this topic, and we hope to have guidance" from the Vatican before commenting on that issue.

Reporting on the causes and context study, which is expected to be completed by December 2010, researcher Karen Terry said she and her colleagues at John Jay in New York have found some correlations between the frequency of child sex abuse by priests and the increase or decline in societal patterns of divorce, premarital sex and illegal drug use.

It remains to be seen, however, whether the various phenomena are "shaped by the same social factors," Terry said.

The Orlando meeting also marked the first of two scheduled meetings between the bishops' Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People and representatives of the nation's priests to discuss how the clergy sex abuse scandal has affected the bond between bishops and their priests.

"Some felt guilty by association," while others felt their fellow priests who were accused of wrongdoing were not treated fairly or with pastoral concern, Bishop Gregory M. Aymond of Austin, Texas, told Catholic News Service after the closed-door listening session June 12. The second session

Spring Meeting at a Glance

At the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' spring meeting in Orlando, Fla., the bishops:

- Approved a 2,000-word policy statement calling embryonic stem-cell research "gravely immoral."
- Failed to reach a conclusion on the fate of a 700-page translation of the proper readings of the Roman Missal.
- Gave permission for work to begin on new ethical guidelines on medically assisted nutrition and hydration.
- Heard an interim report on the causes and context of child sex abuse by priests.
- Began a dialogue with priests' representatives on fallout from the clergy sex abuse scandal.
- Declared Sept. 26, 2010, as National Catholic Charities Sunday to mark the 100th anniversary of the network of Catholic social service agencies.
- Agreed to change the Spanish word "vosotros" to "ustedes" in Spanish-language Masses in the U.S.
- Voted to keep the 2008 assessment on dioceses at the same level as 2008.
- Heard presentations on the implications for church life of recent surveys.
- Got an update on the work of task forces focusing on five USCCB priority areas.
- Spent nearly half of the meeting in closed regional meetings, executive session or in prayer.



is to take place in November in Baltimore. Bishop Aymond is chairman of the Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People. They spent nearly half the time at their spring meeting in regional meetings, executive session or in joint prayer.

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Catholic Services Appeal parish projects

The 2008 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 the \$3.65 million 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 overage funds:



DuBois Deanery

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Sykesville – Capital campaign

Immaculate Conception, Brookville – Improvements to parking lot, start a fund for new church doors

St. Anthony, Walston – General fund

St. Bernard, Falls Creek – Capital campaign

St. Catherine, DuBois – Capital campaign

Ss. Cosmas and Damian, Punxsutawney – Capital campaign

St. Joseph, DuBois – Capital campaign

St. Mary, Reynoldsville – Capital campaign

St. Michael the Archangel, DuBois – Capital campaign

St. Tobias, Brockway – Capital campaign

St. Adrian, Delancey – New boiler

St. Dominic mission, Sigel – Improvements to parking lot

St. Joseph, Anita – General fund

St. Marys Deanery

Holy Cross, Brandy Camp – No project listed

Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg – No project listed

Queen of the World, St. Marys – Paving of new parking lot

Sacred Heart, St. Marys – Continue to use for building fund

St. Ann, Wilcox – No project listed

St. Boniface, Kersey – New dishwasher for cafeteria; attention to boilers for parish plant, new aisle rugs in church

St. Joseph, Force – Refurbish wooden flooring, interior painting and residing front of social hall

St. Leo, Ridgway – Building project

St. Mark, Emporium – Boiler for religious education center

St. Mary, St. Marys – Replacing and refurbishing vessels and vestments used in liturgy

St. James mission, Driftwood – New roof for church

Briefly

Marriage Encounter Beach 11 sunrise service canceled

ERIE — The sunrise service normally scheduled on July 4 at Presque Isle's Beach 11 by the Worldwide Marriage Encounter Community has been canceled. If you know of someone who normally plans to attend, please pass this announcement along to him or her.

Catholic Rural Ministry sponsors Day of Reflection for Women

PORT ALLEGANY — The sisters of Catholic Rural Ministry of the Bradford Deanery will host a Reflection Day for Women July 19 at St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 203 Arnold St. in Port Allegany.

Sister Carolyn Gorny-Kopkowski of the spirituality ministry of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie will present "Celebrate the Beauty of the Present Through Simplicity and Sabbath Living." The program will focus on two psalms from the book "25 Windows into the Soul: Praying with the Psalms" by Sister Joan Chittister, OSB.

There will be time for input, discussion, reflection and prayer. Contact Margaret French at 814.945.6245 or Sister Phyllis Schlicher, OSB, at 814.544.8017 or e-mail cmr@zitonmedia.net to register by Wednesday, July 16.

The program begins at 10 a.m. and closes at 3 p.m. with prayer. Donation of \$15 includes lunch and a copy of the book.

Carmelite Days of Prayer — July 11-16

ERIE — The annual Carmelite Days of Prayer will be held July 11-16 at Carmel of the Holy Family Monastery, 510 East Gore Road, Erie. The morning service, each day at 8:30 a.m., consists of Mass, homily and prayers. The evening service, daily at 7:30 p.m., consists of homily, prayers and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

The featured speaker is Father Angelus Shaghnessy, OFM. All are welcome.

World Youth Day home event, Frenchville — July 19-20

FRENCHVILLE — Young People Who Care Center in Frenchville is hosting a World Youth Day Home Event July 19-20, which will be held in conjunction with events in Sydney, Australia.

The youth gathered in Frenchville for the weekend event will be connected via satellite to the events happening in Sydney, particularly to the welcoming ceremonies for Pope Benedict XVI, as well as his homily from Mass.

Father James DLuzio, a Paulist priest from New York City, will be the keynote speaker for Saturday. His presentation will focus on inviting people to be a witness for Christ in the world today.

Saturday will also include a bag lunch and community building exercises, culminating with entertainment put on by participants.

The Sunday Mass will be offered by Bishop Donald Trautman.

For questions or to register, contact Sister Suzanne Thibault, youth director of Young People Who Care, at 814.263.4177 or e-mail help@youth@penmswoods.net.

Visit Young People Who Care on the Web at www.yppwconlines.org.

Pauline year dedicated to apostle, author, evangelizer

PAULINE from page 1

Jews, then among Gentiles.

"What would be a good way to make use of this year is to come to know Paul the man, the missionary," Father Kesicki said. "We hear so much of his writings, but he's also a saint. So we want to understand this person who was called in a unique way to follow Jesus Christ."

So what examples of his life can we profit from today?

"Certainly his complete and utter dependence upon God, his willingness to undergo all kinds of persecutions for the sake of his mission and the great care he had for the people to whom he ministered," Father Kesicki said. "We see this in some of his emotional moments in the letters to the Corinthians, for example, and the let-

ter to the Philippians, one of his warmest letters."

The second way to find spiritual nourishment with St. Paul is through his letters, he said. The saint's letters are a primary source of information about the life of the early church and have strongly influenced church thinking through the centuries.

Word for word, St. Paul is the single greatest contributor to the New Testament. So for those who aren't familiar in studying his work, where do you start?

Father Kesicki advises beginners not to start with St. Paul's letter to the Romans, which is a systematic presentation of Paul's own thought that he gave to the Christian community of Rome in advance of his planned arrival there.

"It was really a summation



of his well-developed by now teaching of justification by faith," Father Kesicki said.

He suggests starting with the first letter to the Thessalonians, the letter to the Philippians and the letter to the Galatians.

"Both of the Corinthian letters touch on a wide number of themes that were important to Paul and also give an insight to the early Christian communities and the problems and challenges that they faced," he said.

"The letter to the Galatians is a good way to get into Paul's the-

ology of justification. Then get into Romans eventually."

In a special way, the Pauline year will also be ecumenical, reflecting on the saint's commitment to the unity and harmony among all Christians.

"I think the Holy Father really intends this to have an ecumenical component," Father Lohse said, citing the fact the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity ends each year on the feast of the conversion of St. Paul. "There's a sense that St. Paul is one of the things that we all have in common as Christians. Paul is like the archetypal ecumenical figure. This is something that we can all share in common by our study and prayer."

Catholic News Service contributed to this report.

Congress highlights Eucharist as 'Gift of God'

By Catholic News Service

CNS photo

QUEBEC CITY — The Eucharist is the church's "most beautiful treasure" and introduces the faithful to eternal life, Pope Benedict XVI said in his homily during the closing Mass of the 49th International Eucharistic Congress June 22.

The history of Quebec, which is celebrating the 400th anniversary of its founding this year, and the global participation in the congress were highlighted throughout the week of events June 15-22.

More than 12,000 people participated in the conference's wedding conferences, lectures and liturgies. Although 75 percent of the participants are Canadians, pilgrims came from more than 70 countries.

Nearly 25,000 Catholics from around the world poured through the narrow streets of Quebec City June 19, accompanying the Eucharist in a nearly milelong procession.

When people pause and question the purpose of their lives, they "yearn for a spiritual answer," said Slovakian Cardinal Jozef Tomko, Pope Benedict XVI's representative at the congress, at the opening Mass.

"So many people are moving here and there — 6.5 billion people busy working to improve their living conditions," Cardinal Tomko said.

A eucharistic congress "allows us to examine the meaning of our life and death," said the cardinal.

Catholics process in an evening eucharistic procession through the streets of Quebec City June 19. The puppets in the rear represent Canadian Catholic historical figures.



"What does it mean to be the gift of God" and what is the Eucharist, he asked, referring to the theme of the congress. "The Eucharist, Gift of God for the Life of the World."

Jesus is the gift of God, he "is the food that feeds us and fulfills us and allows us life in eternity," said Cardinal Tomko. "The Eucharist is a person, not an object, not a dead gift. Maybe we should ask not what is the Eucharist, but who is the Eucharist?"

The first International Eucharistic Congress was held in France in 1881 as a gathering of 300 Europeans. Over the years, the congresses grew into an international event of celebrations, seminars and charitable works. The last International Eucharistic Congress was in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 2004.

The pope also announced that Dublin, Ireland, would host the next International Eucharistic Congress in 2012.

Speaking via satellite video in both English and French on two giant video screens that loomed over the historic Plains of Abraham in the city's Battlefield Park, Pope Benedict told more than 55,000 pilgrims that the Eucharist "is the sacrament par excellence" and contains the mysteries of salvation.

"It is the source and summit of all action and the life of the church," he said.

The pope said the Eucharist does not separate the faithful from their contemporaries, but as the supreme gift of God's love calls people to make the world a better place.

Indulgences granted for Pauline year events

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could be distributed to those in need. From the very beginning of the church, he said the apostles themselves had the task and the authority to dispense to those in need from the wealth of the church which was given by its members.

"This we continue to do today, for example, in our annual Catholic Services Appeal, giving to the local apostle, meaning the bishop, the wealth of local Christians so it can be distributed to those in need," he said. "We've been doing that from the very beginning."

Over time, he said people began to think if the apostles can gather together the earthly wealth of the church so that it can be distributed to those in need in an earthly sense, can they do that spiritually, as well? Can they collect together the spiritual graces and prayers of the church and offer them to those who come to them in need?

"The temporal punishment due to sin is our attachment to things that are not of God. And most of us, when we leave this world, are still attached to things that are not of God. So the church assists us by its prayer and by the graces and merits of the saints at that hour of need. It's a part of what it means to belong to the communion of saints."

— Father Ed Lohse on indulgences

"In a nutshell, it's essentially what an indulgence is," Father Lohse said. "The word itself means forgiveness. It is prayers for the grace to assist Christians at the hour of their death specifically to help them let go of any remaining attachment to sin so they can enter Heaven empty-handed to receive the glory of God."

The phrase "to remit the temporal punishment of sin" is very technical and is not well understood, he said.

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that are not of God," Father Lohse said. "And most of us, when we leave this world, are still attached to things that are not of God. So the church assists us by its prayer and by the graces and merits of the saints at that hour of need. It's a part of what it means to belong to the communion of saints."

The Vatican decree explained in detail some specific requirements for the plenary indulgence:

Those visiting the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome in the form of a pilgrimage must offer personal prayers before

the Altar of the Most Blessed Sacrament; they must also recite the Our Father and the Creed in front of the Altar of the Confession, adding invocations to honor Mary and St. Paul.

The Catholic faithful in any local church can obtain the indulgence by participating with devotion in a liturgy or other public event dedicated to St. Paul — in any sacred place on the opening and closing days of the jubilee year, and on other days in places designated by the local bishop.

Catholics impeded by sickness or other serious cause, as long as they have the intention of fulfilling the other conditions as soon as possible, can obtain a plenary indulgence by joining spiritually in a jubilee celebration honorably of St. Paul and offering their prayers and suffering for Christian unity.

The decree said individuals can obtain more than one plenary indulgence during the jubilee year, but not more than one per day.

Catholic News Service contributed to this report.

Local pilgrims make plans for World Youth Day in Sydney

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"When I talk to people from our group, the most interesting aspect everyone talks about is how many people are going to be there from all over the world," Garvis said. "A lot of people are excited about seeing the pope and hearing him speak in person."

World Youth Day events typically draw hundreds of thousands of youths and in some countries they have reached or surpassed the 1 million mark. This year's event will be on a much smaller scale.

World Youth Day officials have been saying they expect 225,000 pilgrims to take part in this year's events, including 100,000 Australians. But local news reports have questioned if the projected figure is accurate, stating the final count may be significantly lower.

The World Youth Day office had projected the United States would be sending about 21,000



Surfers welcome the World Youth Day cross and icon on Bell's Beach near Melbourne, Australia, May 8. The cross and icon have been carried thousands of miles through Australia in advance of World Youth Day in July.

pilgrims to Sydney, but as of May 23, the number of registered U.S. pilgrims was significantly lower. Sister Eileen McCann, a sister of St. Joseph and coordinator for youth and young adult ministry for the U.S. bishops, said 13,400 U.S. pilgrims are registered.

Distance and expense this year are major factors. Twenty-five thousand U.S. pilgrims attended World Youth Day in Cologne in 2005, compared to 57,000 in Toronto in 2002 and 20,000 in Rome in 2000.

While this year's World Youth

Day may be smaller, it hasn't dampened enthusiasm for the event.

One of the popular activities at World Youth Day over the years has been the trading of items with people from other countries. The diocesan group has already ordered its trinket to trade away, a small one-inch pin that says "Erie Diocese, Pennsylvania" along with the diocesan shield.

The group has also been meeting on a regular basis for prayer, where people have been sending them their intentions, and journaling sessions. The youth will continue both in Sydney.

"We'll continue to pray for people before and during the trip," Garvis said. "For journaling, we want them to not only write their thoughts and feelings about what went on that day but how God was involved, as well."

Catholic News Service contributed to this report.

