

Faithful

S E R V A N T S

There are
different kinds of *gifts*,
but the same Spirit...
There are different kinds of *service*,
but the same Lord.
There are different kinds of *working*,
but in all of them and in everyone
it is the *same God at work*.
1 Corinthians 12:4-6



Special Edition
FaithLife Newspaper
August 10, 2014

.....
Honoring Clergy and Religious
Anniversaries in the Diocese of Erie



Congratulations, jubilarians!

The Mercyhurst family is deeply grateful for your service to the university. Because you answered God's call, our Mercy values continue to inspire the next generation of leaders in justice and service.

Sr. Michele Marie Schroeck, RSM
Sr. Carolyn Gorny-Kopkowski, OSB
Sr. Bernadette Sullivan, OSB
Sr. Mary Matthew Baltus, RSM
Sr. Mary Andrew Himes, RSM
Sr. JoAnne Courneen, RSM
Sr. Christine Kosin, OSB
Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB



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Cathedral Prep and Villa Maria Academy: Together Building the City of God

Congratulations, jubilarians!

Sr. Josette Gocella, SSJ
Sr. Joyce Lowrey, SSJ
Sr. Michele Marie Schroeck, RSM '84
Sr. Betty Ruza, SSJ '54

Rev. Raymond Hahn '66
Rev. Edward Lohse '80
Rev. Lawrence Richards
Rev. Nicholas Rouch '79



CELEBRATING A LIFETIME OF FAITHFUL SERVICE.

UPMC Hamot congratulates
Sister Bernadette Sullivan
on her 60th jubilee.

UPMC Hamot

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Congratulations to all jubilarians!

Sisters, priests, deacons engage in 'exodus' of the self

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Welcome to the pages of *Faithful Servants*, our annual diocesan publication that recognizes the anniversaries of ordinary men and women who have embraced an extraordinary calling: service to the church and humankind.

To abandon one's life to the Lord is no minor work. The sisters, priests and deacons celebrating jubilees this year have shown exemplary trust in God over decades of outreach in the Diocese of Erie and around the globe.

From the first moment they sensed a call to consecrated religious life, they allowed the Holy Spirit to move them along righteous paths. When you read their personal stories, you will hear similar reflections: "I wanted to help others." "The Lord was calling me to teach peace." "My family instilled in me a great love of the church."

These sisters, priests and deacons all said "yes," and they let the Spirit guide them in their presence to others. Some have served in education, others in parishes. Those who possess a gift of healing became nurses or chaplains. And others, of course, have helped draw out the spiritual yearnings of our hearts through deep prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

Pope Francis, in his address to women religious superiors, spoke of a verse in the Gospel of John: "It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you." Those words, said the pope, remind us "that a vocation is always an initiative of God."

God is the one who has called these men and women to do his work. As Pope Francis told the sisters, "It is Christ who has called you to follow him in the consecrated life and this means to continually engage in an exodus from yourselves to center your existence on Christ and on his Gospel, on the will of God, divesting yourselves of your plans, to be able to say with St. Paul, 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.'"

When we step outside ourselves, we are naturally led on the path of service to others. Today, we celebrate this journey of our brothers and sisters in Christ who have served for 10, 25, 40, 50, 60, 70 and even 75 years. What a gift to us all!

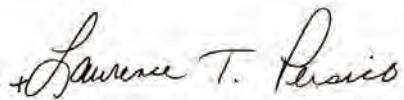
Pope Emeritus Benedict, on numerous occasions, has spoken eloquently about this gift of consecrated life. He called it "a radical imitation of Jesus." Like Jesus, they have handed themselves over to God to build his church on earth. They have revealed the face of God to a broken, struggling world.

St. John Paul II, in his encyclical on consecrated life, asked, "Why embrace this kind of life?" He offered this answer: "Without this concrete sign, there would be a danger that the charity which animates the entire church would grow cold and that the salvific paradox of the Gospel would be blunted. The church needs consecrated persons who, even before committing themselves to service of this or that noble cause, allow themselves to be transformed by God's grace and conform themselves fully to the Gospel."

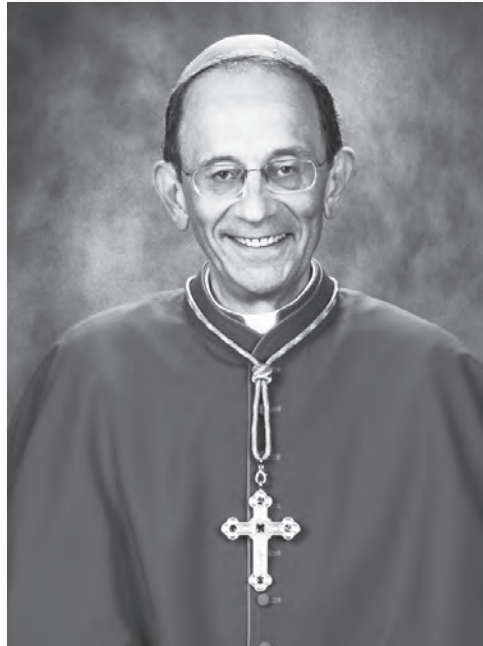
Without this transformation, our diocese and the world would be a less productive, less holy place. Sisters, priests and deacons have served our schools, motivated our parishes and spread Jesus' peace.

In the name of the people of God in the Diocese of Erie, I commend all of our jubilarians for lifting our eyes beyond the overwhelming events of everyday life to the simple, life-giving way of Jesus.

Sincerely in Christ,



The Most Rev. Lawrence T. Persico
Bishop of Erie



**Send congratulatory messages/cards
to the clergy, sisters and deacons
in care of:**

Office of Communications
St. Mark Catholic Center
429 East Grandview Blvd.
Erie, PA 16504

Faithful Servants

The Diocese of Erie is grateful to the clergy and religious featured in this publication. Their dedication and ongoing service have been an inspiration to us all. May God continue to bless you.



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serving Catholics of the Diocese of Erie
since 1874.

Sisters gather for jubilee Mass

Several sisters representing different orders in the Diocese of Erie gathered for a jubilee Mass at St. Mark Catholic Center on July 1.

Bishop Lawrence Persico offered the Mass and delivered a homily congratulating the women religious. He thanked Sister Nancy Fischer, SSJ, director of religious, for organizing the event.

"We celebrate your wholehearted embrace of the mission of Jesus. You have helped to build the church," Bishop Persico told the jubilarians.

Pictured with Bishop Persico at St. Mark Chapel are 10 of this year's sister jubilarians. In the front row, left to right, are: Sister Margaret Frank, SSJ; Sister Joyce Lowrey, SSJ; Bishop Persico; Sister Bernadette Sullivan, OSB; Sister Mary Helen Forney, SSJ; and Sister Betty Ruza, SSJ. In the back row, left to right, are: Sister Perpetua Dickant, SSJ; Sister Marian Wehler, OSB; Sister Helen Heher, OSB; Sister Mary Andrew Himes, RSM; and Sister JoAnne Courneen, RSM.



SR. ANASTASIA VALIMONT, SSJ — 75 YEARS

Sister Anastasia Valimont, SSJ, has spent most of the 75 years of her religious life helping and healing others.

Upon her diamond jubilee celebration this year, she reflects on her long nursing career.

"It's a really great vocation to take care of the sick," says Sister Anastasia, 93, who lives at the Sisters of St. Joseph Community Living Center, Erie.

The sick and aging have taught her the importance of authentic care in times of need. Sister Anastasia saw that up close as a nurse, as a hospital administrator and as director of Saint Mary's Home of Erie. She taught nursing school students and served individuals, families and the elderly.

"I'm experiencing it [aging] now," Sister Anastasia says with a laugh. "It's pretty important to have what they call TLC, tender loving care. I think when you get a little bit older, that's more of what you're looking for."

Sister Anastasia is not able to walk without the assistance of a cane or scooter, but she remains active in praying for others. Today she participates in the Sisters of St. Joseph Prayer Card Ministry.

A native of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish in Karthaus, Sister Anastasia lived on a farm and learned the rudimentary skills of taking care of neighbors. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph on Sept. 24, 1939, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1945.

Sister Anastasia earned a nursing diploma from Saint Vincent School of Nursing in 1943, a bachelor's degree in nursing from Villa Maria College, Erie, in 1950, and a master's in nursing from Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., in 1956.

Sister Anastasia ministered as a nurse at Saint Vincent Hospital in Erie, and the former Spencer Hospital in Meadville. She taught at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and served as director of the nursing school at Spencer Hospital. She later became Spencer Hospital's administrator.

In Meadville, she oversaw the merger of Spencer Hospital and Mead-



My Inspiration "At this time in my life, the 'seven last words' of Jesus are a constant source of inspiration for me: • 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. • Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise. • Woman, behold your son. • Behold, your mother. • I thirst. • It is finished. • Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.'"

ville City Hospital. It is now known as Meadville Medical Center.

For 26 years, Sister Anastasia was affiliated with Saint Mary's Home in Erie, serving as its director of nursing and later as administrator during a period of great growth and expansion. She was instrumental in establishing the Alzheimer's facility at Saint Mary's Home, its adult day care, the Total Continuum of Care program and Friends of Saint Mary's. She oversaw the opening of Saint Mary's at Asbury Ridge.

She retired from Saint Mary's in 2001.

Besides nursing, Sister Anastasia helped form a pro-life organization in Meadville and Erie. She served on Pennsylvania Gov. Milton Shapp's Abortion Law Commission. She was a member of Rotary International for more than 20 years, receiving its Paul Harris Award in 2009. Also, she served on the boards of Meadville Medical Center, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Board of Nursing Home Administrators and Gannon University. She was a consultant to the board of Saint Mary's Home and to its administration.

Sister Anastasia looks to one person who deeply touched her life: Sister Mary Albert Yates, SSJ, a longtime friend and fellow nurse.

"She was a simple, caring person who was always there for anyone who needed her services," Sister Anastasia says.

MINISTRY

- Sisters of St. Joseph Prayer Card Ministry (current)

NURSING

- Nurse, Saint Vincent Hospital, Erie, and Spencer Hospital, Meadville
- Director, School of Nursing, Spencer Hospital, Meadville
- Administrator, Spencer Hospital, Meadville
- Director of Nursing, Saint Mary's Home, Erie
- Administrator, Saint Mary's Home, Erie

BOARD MEMBER

- Meadville Medical Center
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Board of Nursing Home Administrators
- Gannon University, Erie

TEACHER

- Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

MEMBER

- Rotary International

SR. MARY MATTHEW BALTUS, RSM — 70 YEARS

The skies have always held a fascination for Sister Mary Matthew Baltus, RSM.

Before entering the Sisters of Mercy on Aug. 15, 1944, Nancy—as she was previously known—would gaze at the evening stars and ponder the mysteries of the universe. Even as a child, the heavens intrigued her. She and her older brother, George, designed foot-long planes, their propellers powered by a rubberband.

During World War II, Sister Mary Matthew earned an associate degree in engineering from Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y. Her pencil designs of aircraft were made into blueprints at Curtiss-Wright Aircraft Company in Buffalo.

She was trained as a pilot in a small plane and was just five recordable hours away from obtaining a pilot's license.

How did this adventurous woman, who attended public schools until her enrollment at Erie's Mercyhurst University, decide to enter religious life? She found inspiration from the late Sister Carolyn Herrmann, RSM, with whom she became acquainted while helping in the chemistry lab during her freshman year.

"I was very impressed by her intelligence and friendliness. Even after I transferred to Cornell during my sophomore year, I kept in touch with her and other Sisters of Mercy," Sister Mary Matthew says.

Sister Mary Matthew professed first vows on June 21, 1947, and final vows on June 21, 1950. But her interest in the sciences never stopped.

She acquired grants from the National Science Foundation, allowing her to study physics at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N.Y.; astrophysics at Georgetown University, Washington, D.C., and Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La.; organic chemistry at Pennsylvania State University; chemistry at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; radioisotopes at the University of Michigan, Ann



Arbor; planetarium education, West Chester State College in Pennsylvania; radio astronomy, Temple University, Philadelphia; and astronomy at the University of Hawaii.

In 1977, she was granted a Fulbright Scholarship to attend the Ain Shams University, Cairo, Egypt, where she studied Egyptian history and monuments. Also, she did astronomical research at Allegheny Observatory, Pittsburgh; Lowell Observatory, Flagstaff, Ariz.; and Mt. Wilson Observatory, Pasadena, Calif.

"I took great satisfaction in teaching," says Sister Mary Matthew, who taught at the elementary school level at Ss. Cosmas and Damian, Punxsutawney; St. Walburga, Titusville; and St. Adrian School, Delancey.

She also taught high school science and math at the former St. Justin School, Pittsburgh, and Mercyhurst Preparatory School, Erie.

While at the former St. Joseph Academy, Titusville, she taught drafting to young men.

At Mercyhurst University, she was a professor of math and astronomy and received the first-ever "Outstanding Teacher Award." Additionally, she was dean of students, an interim academic dean, president of the college senate and a member of the board

of trustees. She also helped establish the Earth Space Science Club, taking other teachers and students on field trips to Maho Bay in the Virgin Islands, where they studied geology, astronomy and marine biology. In 1967, when Zurn Hall was built, she designed the observatory, which was later named "The Baltus Observatory."

Now celebrating her 70th jubilee, she lists teaching as her favorite ministry.

"In fact," she says with a laugh, "it was my only ministry."

MY INSPIRATION "Jesus Christ should be as a book always opened before us from which we are to learn all that is necessary to know."

TEACHER

- Ss. Cosmas and Damian, Punxsutawney
- St. Adrian, Delancey
- St. Justin, Pittsburgh
- Mercyhurst Preparatory, Erie
- St. Walburga, Titusville
- St. Joseph Academy, Titusville

MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY

- Professor of math, astronomy
- Dean of Students
- Interim Academic Dean
- President of the college senate
- Member, board of trustees

Congratulations

St. Agatha in Meadville proudly recognizes these jubilarians for their steadfast commitment to the Diocese of Erie!

Sr. Anastasia Valimont, SSI

Sr. Betty Ruza, SSI

Sr. Mary Miller, OSB

Rev. Daniel J. Prez

Deacon Harvey R. McQueen

Congratulations
jubilarians!



**Mercy Center for Women
Mercy Center of the Arts
Mercy Hilltop Center
Mercy Terrace Apartments**

SR. RITA PRUCHNIEWSKI, OSB — 70 YEARS

Joyful sounds have filled the 70 years of religious life of Benedictine Sister Rita Pruchniewski.

An accomplished musician, Sister Rita is proficient in piano and violin, having taught music at various elementary and high schools throughout the Diocese of Erie.

“Living each day with gratitude is what guided me through 70 years of religious life. Simply being grateful for what you have, for the blessings of God and the comfort of community makes all the difference in the world,” Sister Rita says.

A native of St. Hedwig Parish, Erie, Sister Rita graduated from St. Benedict Academy in Erie and earned her bachelor’s in sacred music at Manhattanville College, Pius X Institute in New York. She earned her master’s in music at Duquesne University, Pittsburgh.

In December 1942, she entered the Benedictine community in Erie. She professed her first vows in 1944, a decision she has never questioned. The title she was given at her profession was “Mother of the Good Shepherd.”

Her life of prayer and devotion to the community included 38 years of teaching music at St. Scholastica, St. Joseph and Sacred Heart



My INSPIRATION “Every day, I am grateful to be able to pray.”

schools, Sharon; St. Joseph and St. Stephen schools, Oil City; St. Gregory School in North East; and St. Benedict Academy, Erie. Her other talents included bookkeeping, a work in which she was involved at the monastery, Glinodo Conference Center and Benetwood Apartments.

Sister Rita also brought her abilities to the community as oblate director for 12 years and as a longtime reading instructor and tutor at St. Benedict Education Center. Sister Rita is especially happy to now be engaged in the ministry of prayer and presence at the monastery.

MINISTRY OF PRAYER AND PRESENCE (current)

- Mount St. Benedict Monastery, Erie

MUSIC TEACHER/DIOCESE OF ERIE

- St. Scholastica, Sharon
- St. Joseph, Oil City
- St. Gregory, North East
- St. Joseph, Sharon
- Immaculate Conception, Clarion
- St. Stephen, Oil City
- Sacred Heart, Sharon
- St. Benedict Academy, Erie

BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ERIE

- Bookkeeper: Community Business Office, Glinodo Conference Center, Benetwood Apartments
- Instructor/tutor, St. Benedict Education Center
- Oblate director

SR. IRENE WARCHOL, OSB — 70 YEARS

There’s nothing so beautiful as food made with love and care. Benedictine Sister Irene Warchol made it her life’s work to nurture others by creating delicious food. For most of her 70 years in religious life, Sister Irene ministered in food service. She brought her abilities to many kitchens of area churches and convents, including: St. Stephen and St. Joseph, Oil City; St. Joseph and Sacred Heart, Sharon; St. Gregory, North East; and Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie.

In 2011, Sister Irene retired from her longtime ministry of bread-baking. Since then, she has been engaged in the ministry of prayer and presence at the monastery.

A graduate of St. Benedict Academy, Erie, she entered the Erie Benedictine community in July 1942 from St. Patrick Parish, Erie. The title given to her at her profession was “Mother of Our Savior.”

She earned a certificate in food service training from Penn State



My INSPIRATION “Tis the gift to be simple.’ It’s a reminder to me that to live a good life does not have to be complicated.”

University, and a certificate as a nursing aide from Erie County Vo-Tech.

She professed her first vows in August 1944. She considers the daily communal and private prayer life of monastics to be a special blessing. She has always felt privileged to be able to attend to the needs of others, especially the poor.

“For me, the gift to be simple means that I follow the Rule of Benedict and find my strength in community life and prayer. I am blessed to still be able to do that,” Sister Irene says.

MINISTRY OF PRAYER AND PRESENCE (current)

- Mount St. Benedict Monastery, Erie

FOOD SERVICE

- St. Benedict Convent, Erie
- St. Scholastica Convent, Sharon
- St. Stephen Convent, Oil City
- St. Joseph Convent, Oil City
- St. Gregory Convent, North East
- Sacred Heart, Sharon
- Bishop’s residence
- Glinodo Conference Center

MOUNT ST. BENEDICT MONASTERY

- Administrator of food service
- Bread baker



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Sr. JoAnne Courneen (Principal), 50 years
Fr. Larry Richards (Parochial Vicar), 25 years
Fr. Nick Rouch (Native Son), 25 years
Deacon Jerry Sobrowski (Deacon), 10 years



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10 years of Ministry

Fr. George E. Strohmeyer
50 years of Ministry

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Congratulations, Jubilarians!

Thank you
for your dedication to our mission of
"Loving to Care."

Sr. Betty
Ruza, SSJ
60 Years

Sr. Mary Helen
Forney, SSJ
60 Years

Sr. Joyce
Lowrey, SSJ
50 Years

Sr. Anastasia
Valimont, SSJ
75 Years



Saint Mary's Home of Erie

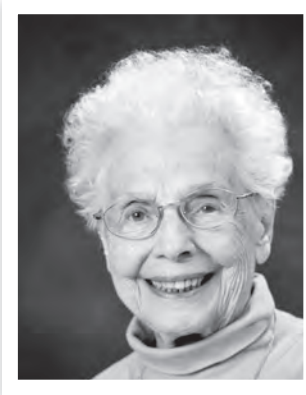
A Continuing Care Retirement Community

SR. PLACIDA ANHEUSER, OSB — 60 YEARS

Sister Placida Anheuser was what in her day would have been called a late vocation. “Maybe so,” she says, “but with many women now entering religious life after the age of 35, I like to think of myself as ahead of the times.”

Sister Placida entered religious life at the age of 35 and professed her first vows in 1954 as a member of the Benedictines of Benet Lake, Wis. She entered the community with advertising experience, a degree in journalism and additional academic studies in philosophy, theology and Scripture.

Catechetical work with children was followed by community formation work, including ministry as director of novices for a number of years before transferring to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. Once in Erie, Sister Placida worked as a clerk in Chapter 57, the community gift shop, and also as portress, the ministry of hospitality, in which she is still engaged. Sister Placida is



an avid reader with a keen interest in current events. In addition, she serves in the ministry of prayer and presence at the monastery.

Sister Placida earned a journalism degree at Marquette University in Wisconsin, and studied theology at St. John University, Collegeville, Minn.

Before coming to Erie, she also was a religious education teacher in Arizona and Texas.

The title given to her at completion of her transfer to the Benedictines of Erie was “Eternal Word of God.”

MINISTRY OF PRAYER AND PRESENCE (current)

• Benedictine Sisters of Erie
HOSPITALITY/PORTRESS (current)

• Mount St. Benedict Monastery, Erie
OTHER MINISTRIES AT MOUNT ST. BENEDICT MONASTERY, ERIE

• Clerk/Chapter 57 Gift Shop
MINISTRIES AT HOLY FAMILY MONASTERY, BENET LAKE, WIS.

- Procurator
- Subprioress
- Council secretary
- Assistant novice mistress
- Novice mistress
- Scholastic director

.....
MY INSPIRATION “One may understand the cosmos, but never the ego; the self is more distant than any star.” —G. K. Chesterton
.....

SR. JOAN CHITTISTER, OSB — 60 YEARS

Erie Benedictine Sister Joan Chittister sees herself as that little guy in the corner of a comic strip who shouts out a commentary on the real message of the cartoon.

It’s a fitting image of Sister Joan, who has made it her life’s work to speak out for peace and justice, particularly on behalf of women.

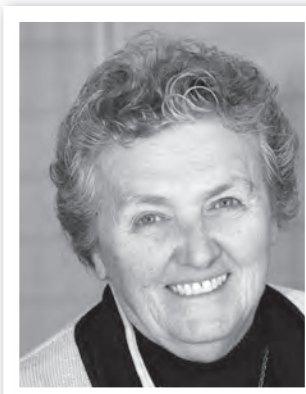
“Our role in life is to bring the light of our own souls to the dim places around us,” Sister Joan has been heard to say.

For 60 years, Sister Joan has done just that as a Benedictine Sister of Erie. A best-selling author and well-known lecturer, both nationally and internationally, she has traveled around the globe sharing her insights on peace-making, justice and contemporary spirituality. She has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards.

Sister Joan became a member of the Benedictines of Erie on Sept. 8, 1952, and professed her first vows in July 1954. She taught in both elementary and high schools in the Diocese of Erie for 20 years. Her classroom now extends throughout the world.

The author of 50 books, she attended the 2009 Parliament of World Religions in Melbourne, Australia. She has met such international figures as Palestinian leader Yassar Arafat and the Dalai Lama.

Sister Joan has served her religious community as prioress and was president of the following organizations: the Federation of St. Scholastica, the Conference of American Benedictine Prioresses, and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. She was executive director of the Alliance for International Monasticism/USA,



.....
MY INSPIRATION “The only task worthy of our efforts is to construct the future.” —Teilhard de Chardin
.....

and taught as a National Catholic Educational Association fellow at Penn State University.

In Erie, she founded Benetvision, a resource and research center for contemporary spirituality. She currently is co-chair of the Global Peace Initiative of Women, a partner organization of the United Nations. She is the guiding force behind Monasteries of the Heart, a new monastic movement.

When Sister Joan entered her religious community from St. Peter Cathedral Parish, Erie, she took the title, “The Justice of St. Benedict.”

Why does Sister Joan continue to live her vows with such zeal? “Because,” she says, “as the proverb teaches, ‘Nothing we do changes the past; everything we do changes the future.’”

AUTHOR/LECTURER (current) CO-CHAIR (current)

- Global Peace Initiative of Women

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (current)

- Benetvision Publications

TEACHER

- Immaculate Conception, Clarion
- St. Joseph High School, Oil City
- Venango Catholic, Oil City

TEACHER/NATIONAL CATHOLIC EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATION FELLOW

- Penn State University

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Alliance for International Monasticism/USA

PRESIDENT

- Federation of St. Scholastica
- Conference of American Benedictine Prioresses
- Leadership Conference of Women Religious

PRIORESS

- Benedictine Sisters of Erie

SR. PERPETUA DICKANT, SSJ — 60 YEARS

As a child, Sister Perpetua Dickant was fascinated by a certain image she saw in the *Lake Shore Visitor*, the former newspaper of the Diocese of Erie. Sisters of St. Joseph were pictured holding and caring for babies at St. Joseph Home for Children in Erie.

“This is when my real inspiration came to be a sister,” remembers Sister Perpetua. “From that time on I wanted to work at St. Joseph’s Home to take care of children.”

She personally experienced the loving care of the Sisters of St. Joseph at St. Leo School in her native Ridgway. As early as first grade, she saw the sisters display a goodness that she was eager to emulate.

Meanwhile, Sister Perpetua’s mother was praying that one of her five daughters would join the convent.

With an image of helping children radiant in her heart, Sister Perpetua went on to model her religious career on such principles. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from her home parish of St. Leo Magnus, Ridgway, on Sept. 2, 1954, and taught third grade at Sacred Heart School, Erie, from 1954-55. She professed her final vows on Aug. 15, 1960.

From 1970 until its closing in 1981, Sister Perpetua served as director of the former Erie Day Nursery—Day Care Center.



Then, as if she were stepping into the old pictures she used to admire, Sister Perpetua ministered at St. Joseph Home for Children as housemother and nursery supervisor. Life came full circle when she was photographed with a child for the *Lake Shore Visitor*.

Sister Perpetua received a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Villa Maria College, Erie, in 1972. She attended many workshops and seminars on early childhood education in Washington, D.C., Richmond, Va., and Harrisburg.

In addition to her education ministries, Sister Perpetua received a practical nursing certificate from the Erie School District in 1983. From 1981 to 2010, she ministered as a licensed practical nurse in pediatrics at Saint Vincent Hospital, Erie. Previously, from 1981-82, she was a nurse’s aide at Saint Vincent.

Since 1978, she has served as a Eucharistic Minister at St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community in Erie.

In her 60 years of religious life, Sister Perpetua never ceased to rejoice in her decision to enter the Sisters of St. Joseph.

PART-TIME SCHOOL NURSE (current)

- Villa Maria Elementary, Erie

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER (current)

- St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community, Erie

NURSING

- Licensed practical nurse, pediatrics, Saint Vincent Hospital, Erie
- Nurse’s aide, Saint Vincent Hospital

TEACHER

- Sacred Heart, Erie

HOUSEMOTHER AND NURSERY SUPERVISOR

- St. Joseph Home for Children, Erie

DIRECTOR

- Erie Day Nursery—Day Care Center

My INSPIRATION “We are women of faith and hope believing that: ‘It was not you who chose me, it was I who chose you, to go forth and bear fruit.’” —John 15:15

SR. MARY HELEN FORNEY, SSJ — 60 YEARS

Sister Mary Helen Forney, SSJ, embarked on her religious journey before she even knew it.

“As a baby, I was lifted up in my mother’s arms and offered to God as she prayed on the lawn of the family homestead,” Sister Mary Helen recounts. “My mother was responding to a homily she heard at Mass when the priest had spoken about the importance of religious vocations in the church.”

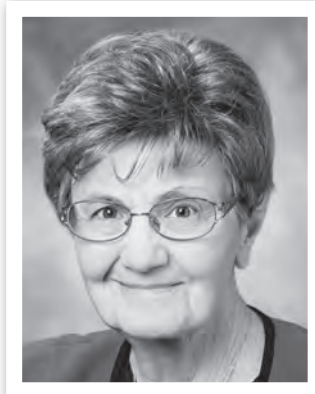
It’s no wonder that she grew up feeling so connected to the vitality of the Catholic Church. She remembers a sense of “closeness to Christ” and the experience of “great joy” at her first Communion.

Born in Olean, N.Y., and baptized with the name Virginia, she started investigating her potential vocation early on.

“I read every pamphlet in the back of church about God’s love and vocations,” Sister Mary Helen recollects.

As a junior in high school, she was inspired by the life and writings of St. Therese of Lisieux. The passionate honesty of the saint’s autobiography touched Sister Mary Helen so keenly that she felt herself at moments moved to tears. St. Therese soon became somewhat of a meditation for her. She took Therese as her confirmation name and as the subject of her senior theme at Olean High School.

My INSPIRATION “The Eucharist and readings from the Word of God are my lifeline and my joy. I delight most in praying the Psalms and meditating on the prophets, such as Isaiah.”



After high school graduation in 1953, Sister Mary Helen heard about Villa Maria College in Erie. She discussed her aspirations to religious life with a neighbor. Soon afterward, the superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Mother Aurelia, telephoned her and invited her to come to Erie.

“That was July of 1954 and I was so ready that I entered that very September,” Sister Mary Helen reminisces on the occasion of her 60th jubilee.

She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Mary of the Angels Parish, Olean, on Sept. 2, 1954, and professed final vows on Aug. 15, 1960. Five years later, she earned a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from Villa Maria College. She received a master’s degree in graduate theology at St. Bonaventure University, and spiritual direction certification from the Cenacle of Our Lady of Divine Providence School of Spirituality in Clearwater, Fla.

For 25 of her 60 years as a Sister of St. Joseph, Sister Mary Helen taught elementary school at the following locations: St. Andrew, St. Patrick, Holy Rosary, Our Lady’s Christian and Our Lady of Peace schools, all in Erie; St. Bernard, Bradford; St. Francis, Clearfield; Notre Dame, Sharon; and Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg. She also taught at Eglemount Family Ministries in Lewisville, Texas.

For years she ministered extensively in pastoral and spiritual ministries.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTER (current)

- Saint Vincent Hospital, Erie

ACTIVITIES MINISTER (current)

- Saint Mary’s Home of Erie

TEACHER

- St. Andrew, Erie
- St. Patrick, Erie
- Holy Rosary, Erie
- Our Lady’s Christian, Erie
- Our Lady of Peace, Erie

- St. Bernard, Bradford

- St. Francis, Clearfield

- Notre Dame, Sharon

- Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg

PASTORAL MINISTER

- St. Bernard, Bradford

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg

SR. MARGARET FRANK, SSJ — 60 YEARS

Sister Margaret Frank, SSJ, says her call to religious life was sudden and surprising, probably much like when the angel appeared to the Virgin Mary.

“It was late in my senior year of high school when I said out loud that I was going to be a Sister of St. Joseph,” she recalls. “I surprised even myself by my proclamation. Up until the moment I said it aloud, I did not know what I was going to do with my life.”

Sixty years of vowed religious life later, Sister Margaret, formerly Sister Immaculata, has not looked back.

Sister Margaret is well known for the 30-plus years she served as administrator/principal of Villa Maria Elementary School, Erie. Previously, she was assistant professor and program director of elementary education at Villa Maria College, Erie, and served from 1968-74 as principal at Sacred Heart School, Erie.

She taught at the following schools in the Diocese of Erie: St. Peter Cathedral, St. Patrick, Blessed Sacrament, St. Andrew and Villa Maria Elementary schools, all in Erie; St. Bernard School, Bradford; and St. Agatha School, Meadville. She ministered during the summer months at St. Joseph Home for Children, Erie, and Harborcreek Youth Services, Harborcreek.

In her religious community, she served as quality of life coordinator at Marycrest infirmary and today ministers at Heritage Apartments, Erie.

Born in St. Marys, she earned her



MY INSPIRATION “This is what God asks of you, only to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God.” —Micah 6:8

bachelor’s degree from Villa Maria College and her master’s in education from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. She studied at Fairfield University in Connecticut, and at Boston College. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph on Sept. 2, 1954, from her home parish of St. Leo, Ridgway. She professed her final vows on Aug. 15, 1960.

According to Sister Margaret, the women in her family—including her mother and grandmother—had a profound influence on her life. Both, she says, had a great devotion to the Blessed Mother.

“They never preached about God. They simply loved and showed by their actions what it meant to be a follower of Christ and say ‘yes’ each day,” Sister Margaret says.

MINISTRY AT HERITAGE APARTMENTS, ERIE (current)

ADMINISTRATOR/PRINCIPAL

- Villa Maria Elementary, Erie

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR/PROGRAM

DIRECTOR OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

- Villa Maria College, Erie

PRINCIPAL

- Sacred Heart, Erie

TEACHER

- St. Peter Cathedral, Erie

- St. Patrick, Erie
- Blessed Sacrament, Erie
- St. Andrew, Erie
- Villa Maria Elementary, Erie
- St. Bernard, Bradford
- St. Agatha, Meadville

MINISTRY SERVICE

- St. Joseph Home for Children, Erie
- Harborcreek Youth Services, Harborcreek

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF NWP

- Quality of life coordinator, Marycrest

SR. JOSETTE GOCELLA, SSJ — 60 YEARS

For nearly 35 years—more than half of her religious life—Sister Josette Gocella, SSJ, ministered outside the Diocese of Erie.

“This has given me new opportunities of sharing community life with sisters of other congregations,” she explains. “It has been rich, but I try hard to maintain my connection to my roots. With pride, I tell those who ask, ‘I am a Sister of St. Joseph.’”

Currently, Sister Josette serves as supervisor of volunteers for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) in Louisville, Ky. Previously, she did special services and grief outreach for the Jefferson County Coroner’s Office, also in Louisville.

From 2004-07, she was a founding member of the administrative team of the Centre International St. Joseph in Le-Puy-en-Velay, France. She also served as chairperson of RCIA committees in the Diocese of Memphis, Tenn., and the Archdiocese of Louisville, Ky. She was a pastoral associate at Church of the Epiphany, Louisville, and at Holy Rosary Parish, Memphis.

While in Erie, she served as principal of Villa Maria Academy, Erie, from 1973-76. She also taught at Villa and these other schools in Erie: St. Andrew, St. John and Villa Maria Elementary.

Sister Josette earned her bachelor’s degree in English from Villa Maria College, Erie, a master’s in religious studies from the University of Chicago, and a master’s in English from Gannon University, Erie. She received spiritual direction training from St. Louis



MY INSPIRATION “There are two liturgies which have never ceased to give me great inner joy, to inspire me, to fill me with deep hope: the Easter Vigil and the Memorial Liturgy for community members who have died.”

University and Milford Retreat Center, Cincinnati.

A native of Bradford, Sister Josette entered the Sisters of St. Joseph on Sept. 8, 1954. She professed her final vows on Aug. 15, 1960.

In the late 1960s, she says, after Vatican II, she experienced a kind of second call. She felt a need to experience a period of deep prayer. She eventually made a life-changing, 30-day retreat in the Ignatian Exercises.

“I distinctly heard God say, ‘I love you and I want you yet,’” Sister Josette remembers. “It was, I believe, a call to religious life that I received as an adult. It has never left me.”

COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATES (CASA), LOUISVILLE, KY. (current)

- Supervisor of volunteers

JEFFERSON COUNTY CORONER’S OFFICE, LOUISVILLE

- Special services and grief outreach

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL ST. JOSEPH, LE-PUY-EN-VELAY, FRANCE

- Founding member, administrative team

PRINCIPAL

- Villa Maria Academy, Erie

TEACHER

- Villa Maria Academy, Erie
- St. Andrew, Erie
- St. John, Erie
- Villa Maria Elementary, Erie

SR. MARY ANDREW HIMES, RSM — 60 YEARS

For the past 31 years, seminarians at St. Mark Seminary in Erie have enjoyed the familiar, steady presence of Mercy Sister Mary Andrew Himes.

Sister Mary Andrew has served since 1983 as coordinator of liturgical music at the seminary. But beyond music, she supports each young man on his priestly journey.

Reflecting on 60 years as a Sister of Mercy, Sister Mary Andrew says that she has enjoyed serving in all of her apostolic placements. Working in liturgical music and teaching music have been her life's labor.

"St. Mark Seminary has been the place where I served the longest, and it has been a privilege," she says.

Sister Mary Andrew has a personal interest in the priesthood, having a brother who is a Catholic priest. In fact, she has made vestments for him. Her sewing talent turned into another endeavor, St. Joseph Vestments, a ministry she started in 1993. She sews vestments by hand for priests and deacons.

Sister Mary Andrew entered the Sisters of Mercy from Immaculate Conception Parish, Brookville, on Sept. 8, 1954.

"I first became really aware of God's call for me to be a sister while



My INSPIRATION "The entire 'Magnificat,' which begins, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.'" —Luke 1:46-55

I was in the eighth grade," Sister Mary Andrew says. "I believe I was greatly influenced by my family and also by the Sisters of Mercy who were our teachers in grade school. The sisters made a deep impression on me because of their prayerfulness, kindness and humor. They were, as a group, great role models."

Sister Mary Andrew professed first vows on July 30, 1957, and final vows on July 30, 1960. She earned a bachelor's degree in music from Mercyhurst University, Erie, in 1962, and a master's degree in music education from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, in 1970.

In addition to her work at St. Mark Seminary, Sister Mary Andrew also served several Erie parishes and their schools, including Our Lady of Mount Carmel, St. Andrew and Blessed Sacrament. She taught music to elementary school students and was involved in liturgical music.

Other teaching assignments in Erie were at Mercyhurst University and its D'Angelo School of Music and Conservatory Program, and Mercyhurst Preparatory School. For a time, she led the chapel choir at Gannon University, Erie.

Sister Mary Andrew considers her vocation a blessing.

"I cherish the opportunities for prayer as well as all the interactions which I have been blessed to share with the young," she says.

COORDINATOR, LITURGICAL MUSIC (current)

- St. Mark Seminary, Erie

LITURGICAL MUSIC/MUSIC TEACHER

- Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Erie
- St. Andrew, Erie
- Blessed Sacrament, Erie

- Mercyhurst University, D'Angelo School of Music and Conservatory Program

DIRECTOR OF CHAPEL CHOIR

- Gannon University, Erie

SR. ROBERTA OCHS, OSB — 60 YEARS

Benedictine Sister Roberta Ochs, a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Elk County the past 60 years, has always said, "When you sing, you pray twice."

She has spent most of her religious life teaching music at various schools in the Diocese of Erie and in Pittsburgh.

A native of St. Joseph Parish, Lucinda, Sister Roberta came from a musical family that encouraged singing and participation in the spiritual events of the parish.

In junior and senior high school, she began to feel a call to enter religious life. At age 18, she entered the Benedictine community in St. Marys, living at St. Joseph Monastery ever since. Upon the monastery's closing this summer, Sister Roberta is in the process of determining where she will live next.

Sister Roberta professed her perpetual vows on July 5, 1957. In 1968, she earned her bachelor's degree in secondary education from Villanova University. Then, in 1976, she earned her master's degree in educational counseling from Duquesne University, Pittsburgh.

She taught music, voice, history and journalism at various schools in the Diocese of Erie and in Pittsburgh.



She taught at the following schools in the diocese: DuBois Central Catholic, DuBois; and St. Mary School, Elk County Catholic and Sacred Heart School, all in St. Marys.

She directed children's choirs at both St. Boniface Parish, Kersey, and St. Benedict Academy of Music, St. Marys. At Sacred Heart Parish, she was choir director. She recently retired from teaching music part-time.

"Music is in me and is my life," Sister Roberta says.

In 1985, Sister Roberta began another ministry that she still reflects upon today. She began working at the World Apostolate of Fatima International Secretariat in Fatima, Portugal. Until 2001, she gave talks about the Fatima message to English-speaking pilgrims. Later, she served as international secretary of the World Apostolate of Fatima.

"The real message of Fatima is not just praying the rosary," she says. "The real message is to accept whatever happens to you, good or bad."

WORLD APOSTOLATE OF FATIMA INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

- Fatima, Portugal

WORLD APOSTOLATE OF FATIMA

- International secretary

PRINCIPAL

- Sacred Heart, St. Marys

TEACHER

- DuBois Central Catholic, DuBois
- St. Mary, St. Marys

- Elk County Catholic, St. Marys

- Sacred Heart, St. Marys

CATECHETICAL DIRECTOR

- St. Mark Parish, Emporium

CHILDREN'S CHOIR DIRECTOR

- St. Boniface Parish, Kersey
- St. Benedict Academy of Music, St. Marys

CHOIR DIRECTOR

- Sacred Heart Parish, St. Marys

My INSPIRATION "Accept whatever happens to you, good or bad."

SR. BETTY RUZA, SSJ — 60 YEARS

Sister Betty Ruza, SSJ, served in education for many of the 60 years of her vowed religious life. But the reforms of Vatican II remain an inspiration to her on a daily basis.

The changes brought about at the Second Vatican Council five decades ago, she says, opened the door to such movements as Cursillo, Charismatic Renewal, House of Prayer, L'Arche and councils of women religious.

According to Sister Betty, "I have been inspired by and been part of each of them."

She looks to "many giants of the Catholic Church" as her guides, among them: Bishop Oscar Romero, Dorothy Day, Jean Vanier, Mother Teresa of Calcutta and, of course, Pope Francis.

Born in Erie, the daughter of the late Stephen and Anna Ruza, she credits her parents and the teachers at Holy Family School and Villa Maria Academy for inspiring her values and vocation.

Sister Mary Claire Kennedy, SSJ, the order's social justice coordinator, and the late Msgr. James Peterson, founder of Maria House Project in the Diocese of Erie, made Sister Betty aware of social issues that need immediate responses. She spent two summers in Appalachia and has participated in other volunteer opportunities.

Sister Betty, formerly Sister Mary Olive, speaks fondly of the 25 years she spent teaching at Holy Rosary, Sacred Heart, St. Peter Cathedral and Villa Elementary schools in Erie; St. Leo School, Ridgway; Seton School, Meadville; and Holy Spirit School in Columbus, Ohio.

She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Villa Maria College in 1963, and did additional studies at St. Francis College in Fort Wayne, Ind.; St. Scholastica College in Duluth, Minn.; and Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. She also earned a gerontology certificate



from Gannon University. For 18 years, she was an activity aide at Saint Mary's Home in Erie.

Today, she remains active on the pastoral team at Saint Mary's Home at Asbury Ridge.

For many years, Sister Betty was involved in religious education. She taught religious education at schools in Farrell and was the weekend religious education coordinator at parishes in Lawrence Park, Conneaut Lake and Farrell. In addition to teaching, she served in the mailroom at Saint Vincent Hospital, as well as in the kitchen at Villa Maria Elementary School and at the Sisters of St. Joseph motherhouse.

Sister Betty entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in September 1954 and professed her final vows on Aug. 15, 1960. She credits Villa Maria Academy's principal, Sister Emilene Pfister, for encouraging her vocation.

"I would never have knocked on that door if the invitation hadn't been given," she says.

My INSPIRATION "I love Psalm 139. It tells me that God knows me through and through and loves me dearly. I also love St. Francis' Prayer: 'Make me an instrument of your peace...'"

PASTORAL TEAM MEMBER (current)

- Saint Mary's Home at Asbury Ridge, Erie

ACTIVITY AIDE

- Saint Mary's Home of Erie

TEACHER

- Holy Rosary, Erie
- Sacred Heart, Erie
- St. Peter Cathedral, Erie
- Villa Maria Elementary, Erie
- St. Leo, Ridgway
- Seton School, Meadville
- Holy Spirit School, Columbus, Ohio

WEEKEND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

- St. Mark the Evangelist Parish, Lawrence Park
- Our Lady, Queen of the Americas Parish, Conneaut Lake
- Our Lady of Fatima and St. Ann parishes, Farrell

OTHER MINISTRIES

- Mailroom, Saint Vincent Hospital
- Kitchen, Villa Maria Elementary and Sisters of St. Joseph motherhouse

SR. BERNADETTE SULLIVAN, OSB — 60 YEARS

Benedictine Sister Bernadette Sullivan of Erie remembers when she first entered Mount St. Benedict Monastery in 1952.

"It was really a wonderful time," she recalls. "We were where we wanted to be. Prayer, classes, chores and recreation turned the days into an adventure and it only got better when we went out on mission."

That spirit of outreach has continued throughout her 60 years of religious life.

A professed member of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie since 1954, Sister Bernadette taught through 1976 in diocesan elementary schools, including St. Joseph, Oil City; St. Joseph and Sacred Heart, Sharon; St. Michael, Fryburg; and St. Mary, Erie. She also taught at St. Benedict Academy in Erie before moving into hospital chaplaincy work at UPMC Hamot, in 1979.

For Sister Bernadette, living and praying in community are what made it possible for her to be a hospital chaplain until her recent retirement. During her 34-year tenure as chaplain, she received the Hamot Ambassador of the Year Award.

"Chaplaincy work was such a blessing for me and it was always my desire to be compassionate and open to all," she says of her life's work.

During her time at Hamot, she also served the Pennsylvania Society of Chaplains as president and as secretary. At present, she is engaged in the ministry of prayer and presence at the monastery.



A native of Sacred Heart Parish, Sharon, Sister Bernadette is a prize-winning amateur photographer. She still finds the same adventure in her religious life that she did so many years ago.

"I know that my heart was made for God and it is in God that the physical limitations with which I am presently challenged find their rest," she says. "My faithfulness is rooted in God and that is what brings me peace."

The title given to Sister Bernadette at her profession was "The Sanctity of St. Benedict."

MINISTRY OF PRAYER AND PRESENCE (current)

- Mount St. Benedict Monastery, Erie

CHAPLAINCY

- UPMC Hamot, Erie

TEACHER

- St. Joseph, Oil City
- St. Joseph, Sharon
- Sacred Heart, Sharon
- St. Michael, Fryburg
- St. Mary, Erie
- St. Benedict Academy, Erie

PRESIDENT/SECRETARY

- Pennsylvania Society of Chaplains

My INSPIRATION "Our hearts were made for you, O Lord, and they are restless until they rest in you." —St. Augustine of Hippo

SR. LUCIA MARIE SURMIK, OSB — 60 YEARS

There was a point in Benedictine Sister Lucia Marie Surmik's religious life when she realized "there was a monastic hiding in my heart."

Previously a member of the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius, she began the transfer process to the Benedictines of Erie in 1990.

"It's not easy to make the change from one community to another, but I knew that God was directing me and I have never doubted my decision," Sister Lucia Marie says.

Sixty years after entering vowed religious life, she continues to serve the people of God with a joyful heart. She works part-time at Emmaus Ministries and its Food Pantry in Erie. She considers her ministry to the poor and needy to be an ever-renewing experience.

"Monastics never really retire and it is just beautiful to experience a community where involvement is a priority," she says. "Now that I am working part-time, I am able to be even more involved in peace and justice initiatives in our city, nation and world, and to read and become more educated on women's issues."

Sister Lucia Marie professed her first vows in 1954, entering the Sisters of Saints Cyril and Methodius from St. John Nepomucene Parish in New York. She was an elementary school teacher and administrator for 35 years.

In 1989, she visited the Benedictines of Erie and decided to begin the transfer process. Once in Erie, she became a staff member of Emmaus Soup Kitchen and



My Inspiration "The artist is not a special kind of person, but every person is a special kind of artist." —Eric Gill

Food Pantry. Her final incorporation took place in 1993, when she was given the title, "Of the Joy of God's Unending Goodness."

At Mount St. Benedict Monastery in Erie, Sister Lucia Marie served as co-director of the community's oblate program, a position she held for 13 years while continuing her ministry as coordinator of Emmaus Soup Kitchen and its kitchen and food pantry services.

Sister Lucia Marie earned her bachelor's degree from Marywood University-Scranton, Scranton, Pa.; a master's from Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee, Wis.; another master's from the University of Scranton; and a certificate from Trinity/Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, D.C.

She is an avid photographer, an avocation that has inspired her to see the beauty of God's world. One of her delights is seeing the magnolia tree in full bloom in the courtyard at Mount St. Benedict Monastery.

"In the suffering of a deeply hurting world, it is art that speaks to me and gives me hope," she says. "God's gift of life in all of creation has the power to heal and to fill us with wonder."

PART-TIME MINISTRY (current)

• Emmaus Ministries, Food Pantry, Erie RELIGIOUS EDUCATOR/TEACHER/ ADMINISTRATOR

- St. John the Baptist, Pittston, Pa.
- Sacred Heart, Torrington, Conn.
- Sacred Heart, Phoenixville, Pa.
- St. Mary, Berwick, Pa.
- St. Simon, Chicago
- St. Joseph, Endicott, N.Y.
- St. Michael, Jessup, Pa.
- Nativity School, Charleston, S.C.

BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ERIE

- Coordinator, Emmaus Soup Kitchen, Food Pantry
- Co-director, oblate program

REV. DANIEL C. WOLFEL, OSB — 60 YEARS

Benedictine Sister Benita Bridge asked all the ninth-grade students at the former Central Catholic High School in St. Marys, "What do you wish to become?"

Like most young boys, Daniel Wolfel had no idea. Somehow, though, he was inspired to answer, "Priest."

Today, more than six decades later, Benedictine Father Daniel C. Wolfel recalls: "Sister Benita never let me forget it. When I entered my senior year, she somehow met my brother who was in the Coast Guard and told him of her hopes."

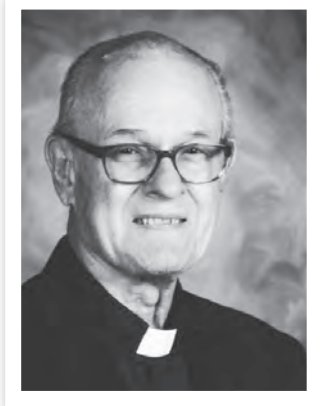
A native of St. Marys, Father Wolfel surprised his mother with his decision to enter the priesthood.

"Mother was shocked," he says. "She never had a clue."

A graduate of St. Vincent Preparatory School, he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Saint Vincent College in 1950,

and a master of divinity degree from Saint Vincent Seminary, Latrobe. He also studied college business management at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Father Wolfel made his simple profession of vows on July 2, 1948, and solemn profession on July 11, 1951. He was ordained a priest on May 22, 1954.



My Inspiration "Ora et labora. That in all things God may be glorified."

In his 60 years as a Catholic priest, Father Wolfel has served parishes in the Pennsylvania dioceses of Greensburg, Pittsburgh, Altoona-Johnstown and Erie, and in the Diocese of Youngstown, Ohio. He also served in various positions at Saint Vincent College and Archabbey.

In the Diocese of Erie, Father Wolfel served as pastor of Sacred Heart Parish, St. Marys, from 1998 to 2002. From 2003-06, he was senior associate at Queen of the World Parish, St. Marys, and from 2006 to the present, he has been senior associate at St. Mary Parish, St. Marys, while continuing to help at Queen of the World.

Father Wolfel draws the most inspiration from the Eucharist, which, he explains, "was previewed at Cana, promised at Capernaum, instituted in Jerusalem and celebrated at Emmaus."

Additionally, Father Wolfel is moved by the image of Christ as the Good Shepherd. He has tried to imitate that role by being committed, caring and courageous. Today's church, he says, requires all of those characteristics.

"I believe there is a future for the church as long as there is a future for humanity," he adds. "That is the way that Christ founded it, isn't it?"

A member of the Knights of Columbus since 1954, Father Wolfel is committed to what he calls "all life issues," from the moment of conception until natural death. During his priesthood, he has been active with senior citizens and scouting.

SERVICE TO THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

- Senior associate, St. Mary Parish, St. Marys (current)
- Senior associate, Queen of the World Parish, St. Marys
- Pastor, Sacred Heart Parish, St. Marys



Thank you

Fr. Daniel Prez for all
you have done for the residents
and families of Pleasant Ridge Manor.



Fr. Justin P. Pino, the staff and faithful of
St. Joseph and Assumption parishes in Oil City
honor this year's jubilarians,
who served our community with
great faith and distinction in these past years:

SR. RITA PRUCHNIEWSKI, OSB
(Teacher, St. Joseph High School)

SR. IRENE WARCHOL, OSB
(Food service, St. Joseph Convent)

SR. JOAN CHITTISTER, OSB
(Teacher, St. Joseph High School)

SR. HELEN HEHER, OSB
(Graduate, St. Joseph High School)

SR. MARIAN WEHLER, OSB
(Catholic Rural Ministry)

FR. THOMAS R. EGAN, MM
(Native Son, St. Joseph Parish)

MSGR. JOHN HERBEIN
(Parochial Vicar, St. Joseph Parish)

Here I Am, Lord, Send Me!

THEN I HEARD THE VOICE OF THE LORD SAYING,

"WHOM SHALL I SEND? AND WHO WILL GO FOR US?"

AND I SAID, "HERE AM I. SEND ME!" -ISAIAH 6:8

Congratulations
to the following jubilarians

Rev. Joseph Czarkowski
Native son (Holy Family)

Sr. Betty Ruza, SSJ
Native daughter (Holy Family)

Fr. Daniel Prez
Native son (St. Casimir)

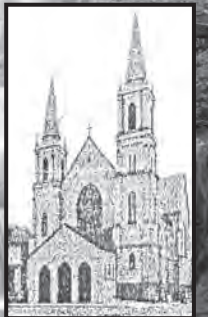
Our Mother of Sorrows, Erie

Father Berdis and the people of Our Lady of Fatima - St. Ann, Farrell,
honor the Rev. Joseph Czarkowski and Sr. Elizabeth Ruza
of Holy Family Church; Sr. Mary Andrew Himes, the Rev. Daniel Prez,
the Rev. Joseph Staszewski and all the jubilarians!

Our Lady of Fatima
St. Ann Church

CENTENNIAL PARISH - 1952 - 2002
601 ROEMER BLVD.
FARRELL, PENNSYLVANIA

REVEREND DONALD E. BERDIS PASTOR



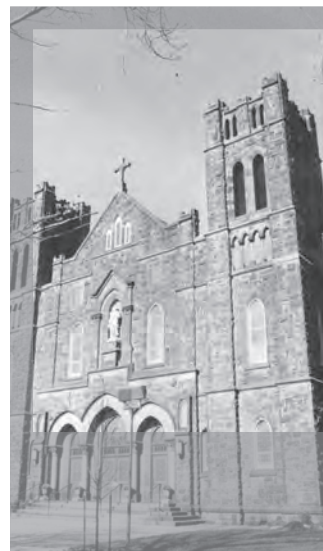
Congratulations
on 60 years of faithful service!
Sr. Roberta Ochs, O.S.B.

From the parishioners of
St. Mark, Emporium,
and St. James, Driftwood

St. Andrew Parish in Erie would
like to warmly congratulate all
the jubilarians, especially...

Sr. Mary Helen Forney, SSJ
Sr. Margaret Frank, SSJ
Sr. Josette Gocella, SSJ
Sr. Mary Andrew Himes, RSM
Sr. Joyce Lowrey, SSJ
Sr. Mary Miller, OSB
and Fr. Daniel Prez

God bless you!



SR. GEMMA CUCCARO, OSB — 50 YEARS

Benedictine Sister Gemma Cuccaro has tried to live by one mantra: “I am always with you. I love you. Trust me.”

“No matter what happened in life, I trusted in that word and found that there is nothing to fear,” says Sister Gemma, who is celebrating her golden jubilee this year.

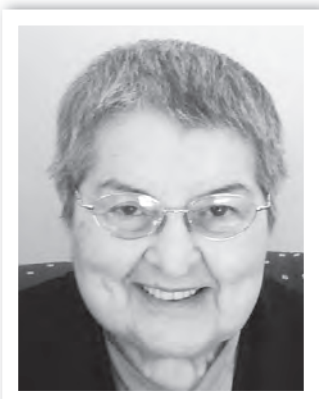
She especially had to trust God when she recently left the place that she called home since 1962. St. Joseph Monastery, the home of the Benedictine Sisters of Elk County, was closed this summer after 162 years. Sister Gemma transferred to the Benedictine community of Bristow, Va.

“Something I love had to die,” Sister Gemma says.

She plans to live out her Benedictine commitment in Bristow, where she is active in prayer ministry.

Sister Gemma entered the Benedictine community in St. Marys at the age of 29. She had thought about religious life in high school—back home in Irwin, Pa.—but finally considered it seriously after a priest friend encouraged her to investigate it as a vocation.

She visited St. Joseph Monastery and decided to become a Benedictine Sister. She made her simple profession of vows on Aug. 22, 1964, and her perpetual vows on Aug. 23, 1969.



My INSPIRATION “As the hind longs for running streams, so my soul longs for you, my God.” —Psalm 42

Initially, Sister Gemma taught second and fourth grades at Sacred Heart School, St. Marys, and third grade at St. Boniface School in Kersey. Later, she was assigned to Kronenwetter Nursery School in St. Marys. At the monastery, she served as procurator, assistant treasurer and subprioress. She also did various housekeeping tasks.

After 50 years as a Benedictine Sister, she keeps answering the call to come closer to God. She encourages others to devote time and energy to their spiritual lives.

“I feel the Lord calling me closer and closer and my love for the Lord grows deeper and deeper. I hunger and thirst for the Lord,” she says. “I have always made a conscientious effort to pray.”

MINISTRY OF PRAYER (current)

- Benedictine Sisters of Bristow, Va.

PORTRESS (current)

- Benedictine Sisters of Bristow, Va.

TEACHER

- Sacred Heart, St. Marys

- St. Boniface, Kersey

- Kronenwetter Nursery School, St. Marys

ST. JOSEPH MONASTERY, ST. MARYS

- Procurator

- Assistant treasurer

- Subprioress

- Housekeeping

SR. JOANNE COURNEEN, RSM — 50 YEARS

Mercy Sister JoAnne Courneen worked from 1976-82 in the So Others Might Eat homeless shelter in Washington, D.C. The experience, she says, inspired her to evaluate her life and appreciate the struggles of others.

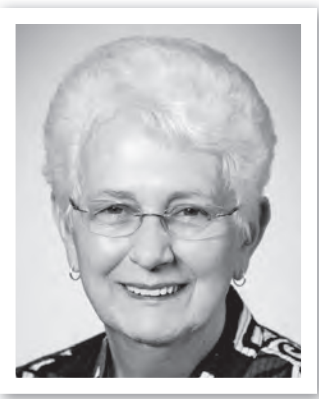
“I saw women who faced enormous challenges and yet for the most part lived with a certain joy and faith that helped them face the road ahead. Through them, I learned to deepen my gratitude and simplify my life. They helped me more than I helped them,” she says.

Today, Sister JoAnne is president of the Sisters of Mercy New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West Community based in Buffalo. She celebrates her 50th jubilee.

Sister JoAnne entered the Sisters of Mercy from St. Teresa of Avila Parish, Union City, on Jan. 26, 1964. She was led to the community by the collective example of the sisters who taught her at Mercyhurst University, Erie.

“I recognized their humanness, love and life and the bond of community that existed among them. Individually and collectively, there seemed to be a deep peace in them that our student antics could not disrupt no matter how hard we tried,” she remembers.

My INSPIRATION “We have one solid comfort amidst this little tripping about; our hearts can always be in the same place, centered in God, for whom alone we go forward or stay back.”
—Venerable Catherine McCauley



Sister JoAnne professed first vows on Aug. 13, 1966, and final vows on Aug. 12, 1970. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Mercyhurst and a master’s degree in administration and supervision from John Carroll University, Cleveland.

Before becoming community president in 2012, she served the leadership team as a councilor from 2008-12. She was president of the Regional Community of Erie from 1996 to 2004. Other assignments included: director of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy at Mercyhurst University, Erie; finance director of the Mercy International Centre, Dublin, Ireland; and director of special programs for the Diocese of Erie’s Catholic Schools Office.

While in Erie, she was a teacher and principal at St. Luke School. She also taught at St. George School. At Mercyhurst Preparatory School, she served as a teacher, an assistant principal and president. Sister JoAnne considers all of her ministries a blessing.

“From the people whom I served I learned more about myself, deepened my appreciation of the realities of others and found God working in and through them,” she says.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

- President, Sisters of Mercy of New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West Community, Buffalo, N.Y. (current)
- Councilor

- President, Regional Community, Erie

DIRECTOR

- Institute of the Sisters of Mercy, Mercyhurst University, Erie

FINANCE DIRECTOR

- Mercy International Centre, Dublin, Ireland

SPECIAL PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

- Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Erie

TEACHER

- St. Luke, Erie
- St. George, Erie
- Mercyhurst Preparatory, Erie

ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

- Mercyhurst Preparatory, Erie

PRINCIPAL

- St. Luke, Erie

PRESIDENT

- Mercyhurst Preparatory, Erie

Oil City native celebrates mission work REV. THOMAS R. EGAN, MM, — 50 YEARS

MARYKNOLL, N.Y.—Father Thomas Egan, MM, a native of Oil City, celebrated his 50th anniversary of ordination as a Maryknoll priest this summer.

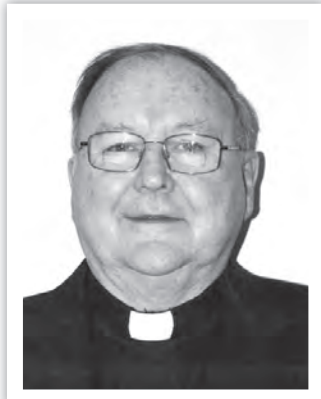
He was one of 31 Maryknoll priests and brothers to commemorate their ordination to the priesthood or their final oath as a brother in ceremonies at the Maryknoll Mission Center in Ossining, N.Y.

Father Egan attended St. Joseph Grade School in Oil City. After graduating from St. Joseph High School in 1955, he attended Gannon University and St. Mark Seminary, both in Erie. He entered Maryknoll College, Glen Ellyn, Ill., in 1957, and earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy in 1959. He also holds a master's degree in religious education from Maryknoll Seminary.

Following ordination on June 13, 1964, Father Egan was assigned to Korea. After completing language study, he served as associate pastor at Bu Pyeng Catholic Church in Inchon, from 1966-69. He was pastor the next four years at Kimpo Catholic Church and then became founding pastor of Ok Su Dong Catholic Church in Seoul. Father Egan served two terms as Maryknoll's regional superior for Korea, from 1977-83, and then he moved to Pusan to serve as pastor of Pan Song Dong Parish until 1986. Father Egan has acted as a mentor to younger priests, encouraging them as they begin their work as pastors.

Returning to the United States, Father Egan was appointed director of admissions and coordinator of the Vocations Department at Maryknoll from 1986-92. He was reassigned to Inchon for one year before volunteering for his teaching assignment in China, from 1993 to the present.

Father Egan has taught in many settings, ranging from a private school serving kindergarten through 12th grades, to the college level and at a large university in Shenyang City.



.....
My INSPIRATION "Put out into the deep water and lower your nets." —John 5:4.
The deep water is always fearful, so whenever challenged with a new situation I think of the passage and gain some courage.
.....

Father Egan currently lives in the City of Yanji in Jilin Province, northeast China. He ministers in the Yanji Parish, which consists of Ethnic Korean Chinese, Han Chinese and South Koreans who work in Yanji.

"The church [in China] is small, struggling and very restricted by government agencies, but finds the presence of foreign clergy and religious a real source of encouragement," Father Egan says.

Of his years in mission work, Father Egan writes: "I would like to thank all who have supported me in my life of mission with their prayers, their love and support—my family, friends, former parishioners in both Korea and China, as well as the American Catholics who love and support Maryknoll. I could not have survived in mission without them."

The Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers follow Jesus in serving the poor and others in need in 27 countries, including the U.S. For more information, visit <http://maryknollsociety.org>.

MISSION ASSIGNMENT (current)

- Yanji Parish, City of Yanji in Jilin Province, China

ASSOCIATE PASTOR

- Bu Pyeng Catholic Church, Inchon, South Korea

PASTOR

- Kimpo Catholic Church, South Korea

- Ok Su Dong Catholic Church, South Korea
- Pan Song Dong Parish, Korea

MARYKNOLL MISSIONS

- Taught kindergarten through 12th grades, and college
- Maryknoll's regional superior for Korea
- Director of admissions, coordinator of Vocations Department, Maryknoll Mission Center, Ossining, N.Y.

CONGRATULATIONS, JUBILARIANS!

We are grateful you have served our parishes and our schools!

St. John the Baptist, Erie

Sr. JOSETTE GOCELLA, SSJ

Sr. MARY MILLER, OSB

Fr. JOHN BEAL

Fr. GEORGE STROHMEYER - NATIVE SON!

Fr. RAY HAHN

DEACON BILL SPINKS - NATIVE SON!



Sr. MARY HELEN FORNEY, SSJ

Sr. BETTY RUZA, SSJ

Fr. JOE CZARKOWSKI



Holy Rosary, Erie

THE SERRA CLUB OF ERIE THANKS OUR JUBILARIANS IN THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

Year after year, priests and women religious in the Diocese of Erie serve the needs of the people of northwestern Pennsylvania, Catholic and non-Catholic alike.

To borrow Winston Churchill's memorable line:
"Never has so much been owed by so many to so few."

With gratitude, The Serra Club of Erie



SR. CAROLYN GORNY-KOPKOWKI, OSB — 50 YEARS

Benedictine Sister Carolyn Gorny-Kopkowski lives day by day, even 50 years after entering the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

“My current philosophy is to live in the present moment with a listening ear and a wide-open heart,” the Erie native says.

Indeed, peacefulness emanates from Sister Carolyn, who leads retreats locally and across the country. She shares her Benedictine spirituality, living out on a daily basis the title she was given at her final profession of vows: “Of the Peace of Christ.”

“The Benedictine witness of prayer, community, peace and justice-making resonates with the ‘call’ I experienced as a lay teacher in 1962 at St. Mary School,” Sister Carolyn says.

In the past several decades, she has spread her love of all creation, having served as director of the Benedictine community’s Benet Center and the Greening Place. She also has served as administrator and staff member of Glinodo Conference Center, Erie, and was dean at Mount St.



.....
MY INSPIRATION “I am so blest. I am so blest.
 I am so grateful for all that I have.”
 —“I Am So Blest” by Karen Drucker

Benedict Monastery. Sister Carolyn was one of the founding sisters of Emmaus Soup Kitchen, Erie, and served as subprioress and director of novices and sisters transferring from other communities.

The Gospel, she says, reminds people that Jesus has invited us to lay down our lives “with the assurance that we have been given everything needed to ‘bear fruit that will last.’”

“To this day, I depend on these sacred words. Their roots continue to deepen in me. I rejoice in our jubilee and celebrate all those persons, events and creation itself that form me,” Sister Carolyn says.

Born in Erie, Sister Carolyn was raised in a creative, loving family. She says the words of the Karen Drucker song, “I Am So Blest,” move her to recognize the blessings of family and friends, her Benedictine community, education, her many relationships in ministry, travel and creation. All of these things, she says, prepared her for future tasks, struggles and challenges.

A graduate of St. Benedict Academy, Erie, she earned her bachelor’s degree from Mercyhurst University, Erie, and her master’s at Mundelein College in Illinois.

For 20 years, Sister Carolyn ministered in education, both as an elementary and secondary teacher. She also served as a principal at St. Mary School, Erie, and St. Gregory School, North East. Today, she facilitates retreats and days of reflection for many different groups at the Erie monastery and around the country.

Above her office desk are the inspiring words of Marilyn Chandler McEntyre: “I have nothing to give that was not a gift to me.”

“I realize that all these blessings and love are gifts to me that are to be given away in ministry and in inter-relationships,” she says.

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MINISTRY OF SPIRITUALITY (current)

- Retreat Facilitator, Benedictine Sisters of Erie

TEACHER

- St. Mary, Erie
- St. Michael, Fryburg
- St. Gregory, North East
- St. Benedict Academy, Erie

PRINCIPAL

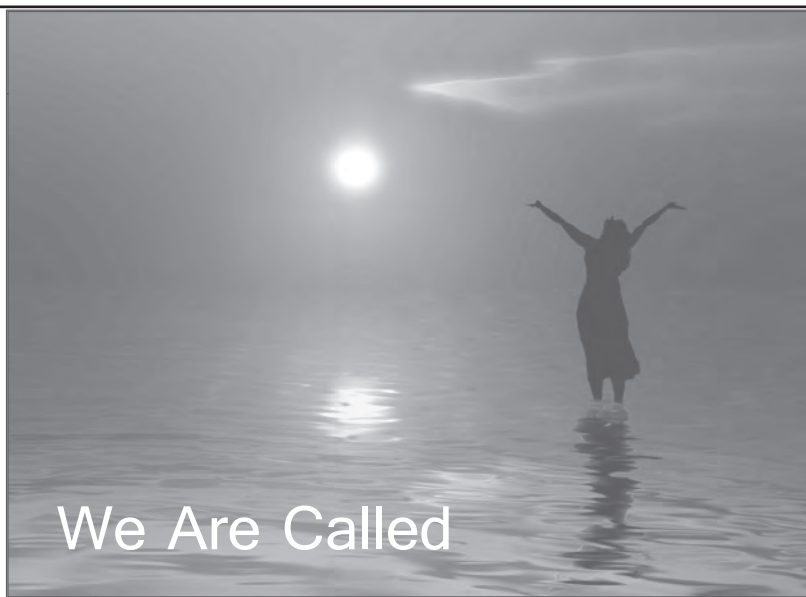
- St. Gregory, North East
- St. Mary, Erie

AIDE

- L’Arche, Erie

BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ERIE

- Director, Benet Center
 - Director, Greening Place
 - Administrator and staff, Glinodo Conference Center
 - Dean, Mount St. Benedict Monastery
 - One of founding sisters, Emmaus Soup Kitchen
 - Subprioress
-



We Are Called

God Bless the Jubilarians

Benedictine Sisters of Erie
 Benedictine Sisters of Elk County
 Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania
 Sisters of Mercy New York, Pennsylvania, Pacific West

SR. HELEN HEHER, OSB — 50 YEARS

“The reasons I came to this community are not the reasons I stay in this community,” says Benedictine Sister Helen Heher of Erie.

Fifty-two years ago, ready to turn 18, she left her home in Oil City to follow the spirit that she admired so much in the sisters who taught her at St. Joseph High School. She remembers her principal, Benedictine Sister Maureen Tobin, asking her what she wanted to do with her life.

“I replied that I wanted to become a sister. I wanted to save the world at 17,” Sister Helen says. “I loved the sisters because they enlarged my innate gifts and emerging talents. Mostly, they invited me into their lives and immersed themselves into my life.”

Now, 50 years after taking her vows, she is recommitting herself to the Benedictine way of life out of gratitude for the freedom and encouragement to be the person she is.

“From 2014 to 2034, my anthem will be the regeneration of the self for the sake of this community and the world community,” she says.

She entered the Benedictine Sisters of Erie in 1962, taking the title, “Of the Creative Love of God.”

She taught at various elementary schools in the Diocese of Erie, including: St. Michael, Fryburg; Mount Calvary and St. Mary, both in Erie; and St. Gregory, North East.

Sister Helen earned a bachelor’s degree in therapeutic recreation from Villa Maria College, Erie. She became activities coordinator and bookkeeper at John XXIII Home in Hermitage. Within her religious community, she served as administra-



MY INSPIRATION “For you shaped me inside and out. You knitted me in my mother’s womb long before I took my first breath. I will offer you my grateful heart, for I am your unique creation, filled with wonder and awe.” —Psalm 139

tive assistant at St. Benedict Academy, Erie, and was summer camp director and recreation program director at Glinodo Conference Center, Erie.

Currently, she is wellness coordinator at Mount St. Benedict Monastery, a ministry she began in 1993.

At various periods in Sister Helen’s life, as she discerned the direction she would take, she took time to reflect on Psalm 139, which discusses the unique creation of each individual.

“I go to the public library; I seek a seat way back where I can see a ship and the lake; and I peer out windows that rise from the floor to ceiling—a portal to my meanderings,” she says.

WELLNESS COORDINATOR (current)

- Mount St. Benedict Monastery, Erie

BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ERIE

- Food services, Mount St. Benedict Monastery
- Administrative assistant, St. Benedict Academy
- Director, summer camp, Glinodo Conference Center
- Recreation program director, Glinodo Conference Center

ACTIVITIES COORDINATOR/ BOOKKEEPER

- John XXIII Home, Hermitage
- ### TEACHER
- St. Michael, Fryburg
 - Mount Calvary, Erie
 - St. Mary, Erie
 - St. Gregory, North East

SR. M. HELEN HERBSTTRITT, OSB — 50 YEARS

Music and children have been at the center of Benedictine Sister Helen Herbstritt’s 50 years as a member of the Benedictine Sisters of Elk County.

Even as a seven-year-old, Sister Helen was drawn to share her faith with others. A native of Sacred Heart Parish in St. Marys, she remembers reading Bible stories, the lives of the saints and an assortment of Catholic books for children.

“Devoting time and energy to our spiritual lives has to be a daily priority for persevering in faith and one’s commitment,” Sister Helen says. “It is the only way to true peace in good times and in bad.”

As she marks her 50th jubilee year, Sister Helen is trusting that God is leading her. This summer, St. Joseph Monastery in St. Marys—her home since 1962—closed.



MY INSPIRATION “We know that all things work together for good for those who love God.” —Romans 8:28

Sister Helen has transferred to St. Emma Monastery in Greensburg, Pa., a monastic Benedictine community devoted to prayer, hospitality and retreats.

“In the normal lifespan of a religious/monastic community, it is established, expands, diminishes and sometimes dies,” she says. “No one wants to see a community die, but once God’s will has been discerned, there is nothing to do but move on to the next place where God awaits us with all blessings and graces necessary.”

Sister Helen has given the St. Marys community everything she has had the past five decades. After making her simple profession of vows on Aug. 22, 1964, she made permanent vows on Aug. 23, 1969. For several years, she taught at Sacred Heart and Queen of the World schools in St. Marys, and at St. Boniface School in Kersey. She also taught religious education in those parishes.

Sister Helen earned her bachelor’s degree in elementary education at Villa Maria College, a master’s in elementary education at the University of Dayton, and a master’s in music, with a concentration in liturgical music, at St. Joseph’s College, Rensselaer, Ind.

From 1981 to 2014, she served as her community’s liturgist and organist, as well as piano/organ teacher. Also at the monastery, she was sacristan for 11 years, served as a council member and secretary, and was a formation team member and community historian. From 1994 to 2014, she was organist for Sacred Heart Parish.

MONASTIC MINISTRIES (current)

- St. Emma Monastery, Greensburg, Pa.

TEACHER

- Sacred Heart, St. Marys
- Queen of the World, St. Marys
- St. Boniface, Kersey

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TEACHER

- Sacred Heart Parish, St. Marys
- Queen of the World Parish, St. Marys

- St. Boniface Parish, Kersey

ST. JOSEPH MONASTERY

- Liturgist, sacristan, organist and piano/organ teacher
- Council member, secretary, formation team member, community historian

ORGANIST

- Sacred Heart Parish, St. Marys

SR. CHRISTINE KOSIN, OSB — 50 YEARS

Benedictine Sister Christine Kosin took the title “Of the Risen Christ” when she made her final profession of vows 50 years ago with the Benedictine Sisters of Erie.

“It is this light of Christ that guides me to see the way I should walk in relationships, in community, in ministry. It is this light that enlightens my mind and spirit to live life fully,” Sister Christine says.

Sister Christine, who currently teaches at St. Benedict Child Development Center in Erie, points to Michael Casey’s book, *The Road to Eternal Life*, as descriptive of the Rule of Benedict and how it “maps out the road to eternal life.”

According to Sister Christine: “Jesus not only indicates the road we should walk, but he is the road, the only road that leads to eternal life. On the road, I have been guided to walk with the poor, with little children, with those seeking peace. At jubilee, I celebrate the ongoing journey.”

Sister Christine began her ministry in education as a primary school teacher at several schools in the Diocese of Erie. She then became involved in Head Start and day care at St. Benedict Child Development Center, handling both teacher and administrative duties. She also served in the follow-



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MY INSPIRATION “Sing joyfully to God all the earth. Walk in the holy presence.” —Psalm 100

ing capacities: director of the Child Development Lab at Mercyhurst University, director of East Coast Migrant Head Start, and service coordinator for Case Management Support Services.

In addition, Sister Christine has been a member of the Monastic Council and director of Monastic Formation at Mount St. Benedict Monastery. In 2012, she began teaching again at St. Benedict Child Development Center.

She earned a bachelor’s degree from Mercyhurst University and a master’s from Boston College.

Sister Christine sums up her call to monastic life by referring to an idea from the Rule of Benedict: Prefer nothing to the work of God—the work being prayer and praise.

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TEACHER

- St. Benedict Child Development Center, Erie (current)
- Sacred Heart, Sharon
- St. Joseph, Sharon
- Mount Calvary, Erie

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

- St. Bartholomew Parish, Sharpsville

DIRECTOR, CHILD DEVELOPMENT LAB

- Mercyhurst University, Erie

SERVICE COORDINATOR

- Case Management Support Services, Erie

BENEDICTINE SISTERS OF ERIE

- Head Start and day care teacher, St. Benedict Child Development Center
- Director, East Coast Migrant Head Start
- Director, Monastic Formation

SR. JOYCE LOWREY, SSJ — 50 YEARS

The message of the potter’s vessel from Jeremiah means more to Sister Joyce Lowrey, SSJ, now that she works with clay.

“I know I am the clay that God is forming, molding me until I become the person God is calling me to be,” she says.

Now marking her 50th anniversary as a Sister of St. Joseph, Sister Joyce (formerly Sister Virginia) looks to forgiveness as a vital element of spirituality.

Born in Meadville, Sister Joyce entered her religious community from St. Bartholomew Parish in Pittsburgh, on Sept. 8, 1964. She professed final vows on Aug. 26, 1972.

From 1965-68, Sister Joyce taught at St. Andrew and Blessed Sacrament schools in Erie. She then taught at Notre Dame School, Hermitage, until 1977.

She graduated from Villa Maria College in 1973 with a bachelor’s degree in elementary education. In 1978, Sister Joyce obtained a master’s in special education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Sister Joyce taught and served as director of the Perceptual Development Center in Erie until 1981. She taught learning disabled students at Villa Maria Elementary School and served as a faculty member at both Villa Maria College and Gannon University. She was founder and director of the college program to serve students with learning disabilities.

From 1995-99, Sister Joyce served in leadership for her congregation. From 2007-11, she was secretary.

Among those people who have enriched Sister Joyce’s spiritual journey is Father George Strohmeyer, founder of the L’Arche community



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MY INSPIRATION “The story of the paralyzed man from Luke 5:17-26. In my prayer life, I have been every person in that story. Jesus helps me to listen to his words carefully so I can know what I am called to at this time in my life.”

in Erie. L’Arche is an international ministry that invites people with and without disabilities to live together in community.

“Father George is a living example of the loving, caring and giving of Jesus Christ,” she says. “The core members at L’Arche have taught me what reconciliation truly is and how to love and serve others every day.”

Initially, Sister Joyce tried to dismiss the calling to religious life. But, finally, she sent a letter to the Sisters of St. Joseph in Erie in September 1963. Not hearing back right away, she thought it was the end of her search.

“But then President [John] Kennedy was assassinated and I told God, ‘I will send one more letter and see what happens,’” she recalls. “I received a response to my letter and the rest is history. If I were to re-live my life, would I write that second letter in November 1963? Absolutely!”

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SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH COMMUNITY LIVING CENTER (current)

- Various ministries

TEACHER

- St. Andrew, Erie
- Blessed Sacrament, Erie
- Notre Dame, Hermitage
- Villa Maria Elementary, Erie

DIRECTOR

- Perceptual Development Center, Erie

.....
FACULTY/FOUNDING DIRECTOR OF LEARNING DISABILITIES PROGRAM

- Villa Maria College, Erie
- Gannon University, Erie

SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH OF NWPA

- Leadership
- Secretary

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT LEADER (current)

SR. MARY MILLER, OSB — 50 YEARS

For more than half of her 50 years in religious life, Benedictine Sister Mary Miller has looked into the eyes and hearts of those in need.

As director of Emmaus Ministries in Erie, an outreach of the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, Sister Mary has overseen the care of people served by Emmaus Soup Kitchen, its Food Pantry and its Kids' Café. She also has coordinated the housing and beautification efforts in a neighborhood near Holy Trinity Catholic Church on Erie's eastside.

It is through these ministries that she has come to see the face of God in the most difficult, heart-wrenching situations.

"When I was a novice, I was attracted to this quote by Teilhard de Chardin: 'Nothing is pro-



profane? Really? I wrestled with the meaning of Chardin's quote until I realized that the key words were 'know how to see.'"

Sister Mary understood, finally, that it was up to her to look at things differently, to take "a long loving look at the real" and find God there.

"All of it is real—the beauty and the suffering, the kindness and greed, the hospitality and loneliness, the sense of justice and oppression," Sister Mary says. "And all of these realities live in me, too. I cannot turn away."

Sister Mary professed her first vows in 1964 as a Sister of St. Joseph, Erie. During her time with that community, she ministered primarily in education, including teaching and administrative positions in schools in the Diocese of Erie.

A graduate of St. Agatha High School in Meadville, she earned her bachelor's degree at Villa Maria College, Erie. Later, she earned a master's at Boston College.

In 1981, she became involved at Emmaus Ministries. Three years later, she began the transfer to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie, a process that was completed in 1987. She was given the fitting title, "Of the Compassionate Heart of God."

Sister Mary continues to work at Emmaus Ministries, where she has been the director for 33 years.

DIRECTOR (current)

- Emmaus Ministries, Erie

TEACHER

- Villa Maria Elementary, Erie
- St. Ann, Erie
- Notre Dame, Hermitage
- St. Andrew, Erie

PRINCIPAL

- St. Andrew, Erie

DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- St. John Parish, Erie

My Inspiration "Nothing is profane to those who know how to see." —Teilhard de Chardin

fane to those who know how to see.' Given my limited world view at the time, I had a naïve interpretation of its meaning," Sister Mary says. "The lovely children I taught, the caring families I encountered, the simple and sheltered convent life of the time made it easy for me to see all of life as a reflection of a loving God."

The years passed and Sister Mary's world view widened. She visited Haiti five times and saw what she describes as "unbearable poverty and destitution."

"I began working at Emmaus Soup Kitchen and listened daily to story after story of depression, abuse and suffering," she remembers. "Nothing is

SR. CARMEL ROJEK, SSJ — 50 YEARS

Sister Carmel Rojek, SSJ, never considered religious life until her young adulthood. A series of profound questions started urging her toward her final profession of vows.

"I remember," she says, "looking out of the window of my room at home to the evening sky and watching the traffic go up and down the street, asking myself basically philosophical questions: Where is everyone going? Where are they rushing to? What is life all about? Is this all there is?"

She began to weigh different options for doing charity, like the Peace Corps. Eventually, she realized that she was trying to escape the real message that God was sending her.

"I was only fooling myself and trying to run from God," she says. "I chose Jesus Christ as my personal savior. God called—I was sure—and the best way to realize this was to become a religious sister."

A native of Lackawanna, N.Y., Sister Carmel is celebrating her 50th anniversary of religious life this year.

She spent 44 years as a member of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Assisi, located in Maryland and Massachusetts. In 2011, she was welcomed into perpetual profession to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Northwestern Pennsylvania.

Most of her religious life was spent in nursing. She earned a degree in nursing from the University of Massachusetts and went on to work in psychiatric nursing at Northamp-



ton State Hospital in Northampton, Mass. She also worked as a nurse practitioner at the same location. Sister Carmel was a part-time school nurse at St. Stanislaus Parish in Chicopee, Mass., and a part-time nurse in the retirement house for sisters.

In 1987, Sister Carmel was sent to Rome for religious studies at Regina Mundi College. Three years later, she returned to Massachusetts to serve in leadership for her congregation.

Active for many years in religious education, she served as religious education coordinator and teacher at St. Stanislaus Parish in Chicopee; religious education teacher at Holy Cross Parish, Holyoke, Mass.; and religious education coordinator and teacher at Immaculate Heart of Mary, Grandby, Mass.

My Inspiration "I am always touched by St. Francis' 'Canticle of the Creatures,' as God is always seen in the wonder of all that is around us."

CAREGIVER (current)

- Home Instead Senior Care, Erie

PRAYER MINISTRY (current)

- Saint Vincent Hospital, Erie

MINISTRIES OUTSIDE DIOCESE

- Psychiatric nursing, nurse practitioner, Northampton State Hospital, Mass.
- Part-time school nurse, St. Stanislaus Parish, Chicopee, Mass.
- Religious education coordinator/teacher, St. Stanislaus Parish, Chicopee

- Religious education teacher, Holy Cross Parish, Holyoke, Mass.

- Religious education coordinator/teacher, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Grandby, Mass.

FRANCISCAN MISSIONARY SISTERS OF ASSISI

- Part-time nurse, retirement house for sisters
- House leadership
- FMSA, Chicopee
- Vice provincial of American Province, FMSA, Holyoke, Mass.

REV. JOSEPH P. STASZEWSKI — 50 YEARS

If someone asked Father Joseph Staszewski to give one last homily, he would offer this simple advice: “Live the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.”

“That sums up everything,” he says.

That same message struck the future priest when he was an altar boy at Christ the King Parish in Houtzdale. The message was conveyed to him through the lives of the many priests he met.

“The priests cared for their people and made sure everything around the church was done properly; I was so impressed by their example,” he reflects. “I felt an attraction to the priesthood. That attraction grew stronger as years went by.”

As a young man, Father Staszewski decided to attend St. Mark Seminary to determine whether he really was being called by God. His parents and pastor agreed that he should try. So, in 1957, he entered St. Mark with a significant conviction to become a priest. When

he attended St. Mary Seminary in Baltimore, he was absolutely convinced of his vocation.

My INSPIRATION “Follow me. I will make you fishers of men.” —Matthew 4:19



He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Erie on May 7, 1964.

Father Staszewski’s initial assignments were as a parochial vicar: first at St. Bartholomew Parish in Sharpsville, and then at Holy Trinity in Erie, and Our Lady of Fatima in Farrell.

He served as a part-time teacher of history and theology at Kennedy Catholic High School from 1965-66. He also earned a master’s degree in psychology from Westminister College in Pennsylvania.

In 1972, Father Staszewski was drafted into the U.S. Army Reserves, and remained in the Reserves for the next 28 years. He was

PASTOR

- St. Bonaventure, Grampian
- St. Joseph, Lucinda
- Immaculate Conception, Brookville

PAROCHIAL VICAR

- St. Bartholomew, Sharpsville
- Holy Trinity, Erie
- Our Lady of Fatima, Farrell

DEAN

- DuBois Deanery, Punxsutawney

TEACHER

- Kennedy Catholic, Hermitage

ADMINISTRATOR

- Our Lady of Fatima, Farrell
- St. Bonaventure, Grampian
- St. Mark, Emporium
- Christ the King, Houtzdale

U.S. ARMY RESERVES

never shipped overseas, but was sometimes put on active duty.

Father Staszewski’s first pastorate came in 1983, when he was installed at St. Bonaventure Parish in Grampian.

He became more and more deeply involved in the religious structure of the diocese, serving as an administrator at Our Lady of Fatima in Farrell, St. Mark in Emporium, St. Bonaventure in Grampian, and Christ the King, Houtzdale. He served as dean of DuBois Deanery from 2000-09. In 2009, he retired.

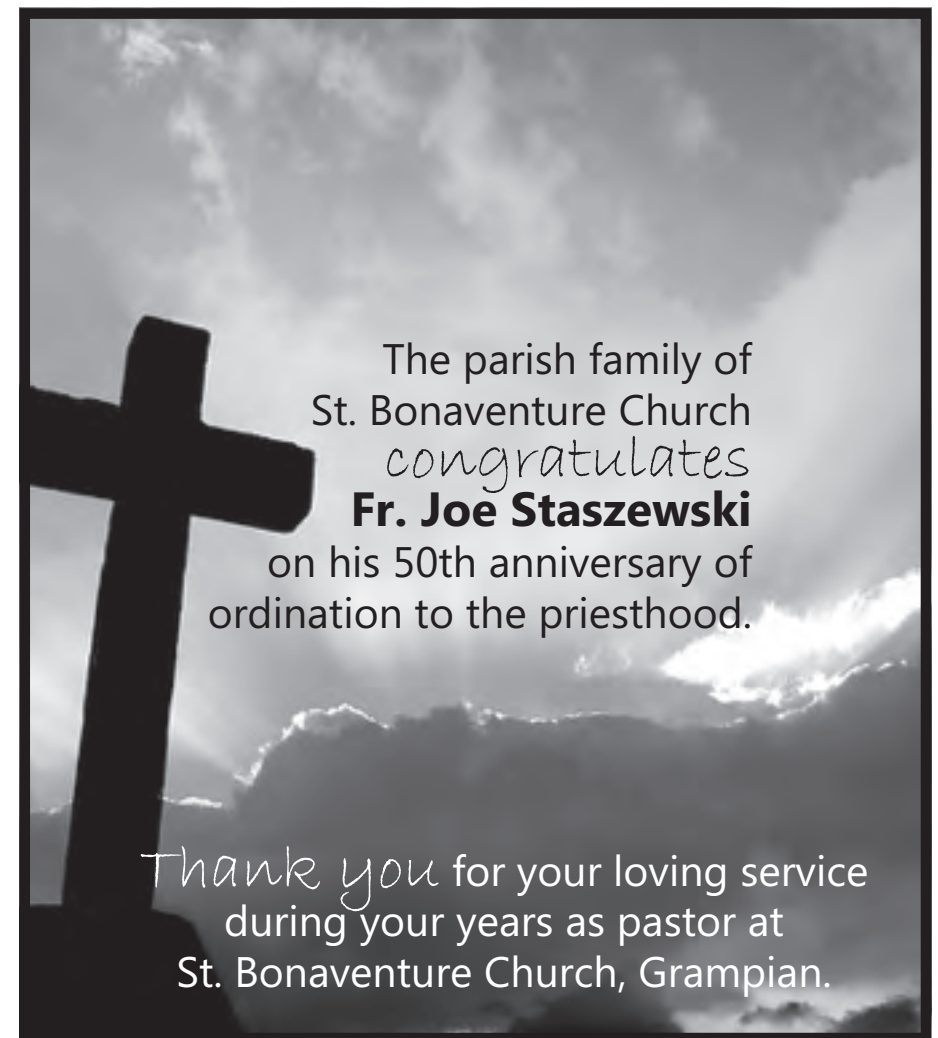
Father Staszewski believes that most people need a better understanding of the Catholic faith. Education about Catholic teaching is vital, he says, and there needs to be better evangelization of the faithful.

In his opinion, that evangelization must include the dual principles of universality—in keeping with the meaning of catholic—and individuality.

“The church needs a greater sense of unity and a return to a deeply rooted sense of spirituality,” Father Staszewski says. “But every person has his/her own way of communicating with God.”

Regardless of the means by which one chooses to come into contact with God, it is necessary, according to Father Staszewski, that everyone be lovingly dedicated to that communion.

“The maxim ‘anything worth doing is worth doing well’ certainly applies to our spiritual lives,” he says. “The example we give can and will lead others to the church of Jesus Christ. I am so fortunate that Jesus called me to serve his people in his church for 50 years.”



REV. GEORGE E. STROHMEYER — 50 YEARS

In the midst of the Second Vatican Council—in 1964—25-year-old George Strohmeyer was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Erie.

The closing message of the council a year later epitomizes the radical message of Jesus Christ and the 50-year priesthood of Father George E. Strohmeyer:

All who feel heavily the weight of the cross, you who are poor and abandoned, you who weep, you who are persecuted for justice, you who are ignored, you the unknown victim of suffering, take courage. You are the preferred children of the kingdom of God, the kingdom of hope, happiness and life. You are the brothers of the suffering Christ, and with him, if you wish, you are saving the world. This is the Christian science of suffering, the only one which gives peace.

Father Strohmeyer has spent most of the past five decades spreading this message of inclusion and peace. Since the first year he was ordained, he has been affiliated with L'Arche, an international federation of communities of faith and friendship in which people with and without intellectual disabilities share a life together. In 1972, he and the late Sister Barbara Karsnia, OSB, co-founded L'Arche in Erie, the first American city to establish a L'Arche community.

Today, thanks to the longtime effort of Father Strohmeyer and a core group of members, there are 18 communities in the United States. Founded by Jean Vanier in 1964, L'Arche operates in 40 countries around the globe.

Active over the years in campus ministry, teaching and chaplaincy at Gannon University, Erie, Father Strohmeyer has served as a spiritual director for L'Arche Erie and as a chaplain for L'Arche Worldwide.

"I have over the last 50 years experienced both the intellectually gifted students of Gannon as well as the developmentally challenged persons in L'Arche, each of them as beloved of God and called to live the Gospel values of liberation from fear and isolated self-preoccupation to those of discipleship, namely creating communities of joy, peace and justice in our suffering world," Father Strohmeyer says. "I have discovered, moreover, that I am partners with them and they with me."



.....
My INSPIRATION *"The other is no other than myself."*
 —Buddhist proverb

Father Strohmeyer considers Jean Vanier a brother and teacher "who never ceases to inspire me to the depth of the love of Christ for me, for us and for the world." By sharing daily struggles with those the world often rejects, Father Strohmeyer says his priesthood has been enlivened.

"Jesus saved me through L'Arche," Father Strohmeyer says.

A native of St. John the Baptist Parish, Erie, Father Strohmeyer graduated from Cathedral Preparatory School in 1956. He attended St. Mark Seminary and Gannon, and then went on to St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, earning a bachelor's degree in philosophy.

After his ordination, he taught at Gannon and served as parochial vicar and administrator of St. Stephen Parish, Erie. His affiliation with L'Arche was his primary focus as he continued to serve Gannon in the roles of campus minister and chaplain. He also was one of the founding members of the Faith and Light Community in Erie.

For several years, he trained in Christian contemplation and Zen meditation at Redemptorist Retreat Center in Arizona. He became a certified teacher in Christian contemplation after studying in Germany from 1998 to 2001. Between 1982-90, he was trained in spiritual direction and retreat leadership in Ignatian methods in L'Arche.

He earned his master's degree in sociology with a concentration in marriage counseling at Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

The story of Ety Hillesum, a Jewish mystic who died at the Auschwitz concentration camp, inspires Father Strohmeyer. Hillesum refused to hate her Nazi oppressors. He suggests that people listen to her story to inspire them spiritually.

"Ety calls me and us to the deep and strong call to cultivate the inner life," Father Strohmeyer says. "I would like to teach others the basics of contemplative prayer to give them a

way of discovering for themselves the inner well of deep silence and peace from which comes clarity of mind, peace of heart and courage of living the Gospel message of Jesus in all circumstances of human community."

It is no wonder that Father Strohmeyer reflects today on the moment in which Jesus—the humble servant—washes the feet of his disciples. Imitating this action has helped Father Strohmeyer live his priestly life for others.

He explains: "What is seen as an outstanding gesture of humility is an act of self-surrender on the part of Jesus, motivated solely by the desire to have full part in the life of his friends, just as he is consumed with the desire for them to have part with him."

.....
ASSOCIATE CHAPLAIN (current)

- Gannon University, Erie

SPECIAL MINISTRY

- Co-founder, founding member of L'Arche, Erie (current)
- Spiritual animation, L'Arche, Erie (current)
- Spiritual director, L'Arche, Erie
- Chaplain, L'Arche Worldwide
- Campus minister/chaplain, Gannon University, Erie
- Founding member, Faith and Light Community, Erie
- Chaplain, Hospice of Metropolitan Erie

DIOCESAN BOARDS

- Priests' Personnel Board, Erie

ADMINISTRATOR

- St. Stephen Parish, Erie

PAROCHIAL VICAR

- St. Stephen Parish, Erie

FACULTY

- Gannon University, Erie
-

Congratulations and best wishes to all Jubilarians!

We especially pay tribute to the following:

60 years - Sr. Roberta Ochs, OSB

40 years - Rev. John Beal

40 years - Rev. Joseph Czarkowski

25 years - Rev. Nicholas Rouch

Thank you for your dedication to our schools and community!

May God bless you for your service!



Elk County Catholic School System

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SR. MARIAN WEHLER, OSB — 50 YEARS

“You are a real Benedictine if you are truly seeking God,” a woman once told Sister Marian Wehler, OSB.

Celebrating her 50th jubilee as a Benedictine nun, Sister Marian has always taken that statement as an affirmation of her own vocation.

“Seeking God and experiencing God seeking me have been both beautiful and challenging on my faith journey these last 50 years,” Sister Marian says.

Anyone who has encountered Sister Marian—with her infectious smile and peaceful disposition—would agree that she is truly seeking the Lord. In fact, in 2007, after more than 40 years in religious life, she began her present ministry at Catholic Rural Ministry in the Oil City Deanery.

With Mercy Sister Tina Geiger, she ministers to schools, colleges and 19 parishes in the deanery. Her outreach includes planning and conducting retreats. Sister Marian also does prison ministry at the State Correctional Institution-Forest.

Sister Marian first entered the Benedictine Sisters of Elk County in St. Marys. She taught elementary school in the Diocese of Erie until 1980, when she became a missionary at the Arusha Catholic Seminary in Tanzania, Africa.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in education from Villa Maria College, Erie, and certification from the National Association of Catholic Chaplains.

Back in St. Marys, she served for a time as pastoral care director and chaplain at Elk Regional Health Center. In 1996, Sister Marian began the



transfer process to the Benedictine Sisters of Erie. She worked as secretary and staff member for AIM, the Alliance for International Monasticism. In 2004, she became director of religious education at St. Bernard Parish, Falls Creek.

“Being a member of two monastic communities—first in St. Marys and now in Erie—and the experience of living in community with the people of Tanzania all have given me a global Benedictine heart,” Sister Marian says. “For this and so much more, I feel so blessed and full of joy.”

For Sister Marian, God’s presence is manifest in her family, friends, sisters and the people to whom she has ministered the past 50 years. She says they have been “the face of God to me and often God’s voice.”

Through the years, Sister Marian has been inspired by John 6:1-14, the Gospel account of Jesus feeding the 5,000.

“When I feel inadequate or overwhelmed by many needs around me, I know Jesus wants just what I have and that will be enough,” Sister Marian explains. “God does the rest.”

My INSPIRATION “Above all, trust in the slow work of God.” —Teilhard de Chardin

CATHOLIC RURAL MINISTRY (current)

- Oil City Deanery

PASTORAL CARE DIRECTOR/CHAPLAIN

- Elk Regional Health Center, St. Marys

TEACHER

- St. Mary, St. Marys
- Queen of the World, St. Marys
- Sacred Heart, St. Marys

- St. Boniface, Kersey

MISSIONARY

- Arusha Catholic Seminary, Tanzania

SECRETARY/STAFF MEMBER

- Alliance for International Monasticism (AIM)

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DIRECTOR

- St. Bernard Parish, Falls Creek

Fr. Zab, we are grateful to the God of Mercy for blessing us with the opportunity to travel a portion of our earthly journey together. With praises and prayers to our Lord Jesus, we join you in celebrating your ministry.

Holy Trinity Parish, Ramey





Congratulatiions, Jubilarians!

*From the
Staff
of
St. Mark
Catholic Center*

ST. MARK
CATHOLIC
CENTER

REV. ZAB AMAR — 40 YEARS

As Father Zab Amar cultivates his unpretentious organic garden—pressing seeds in the earth and watering them—he cannot help but be reminded of a verse from 1 Corinthians 3:6, in which St. Paul describes the spread of God’s word:

“I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth.”

As Father Amar reaches the 40th anniversary of his ordination, he finds serenity in his quiet pastime.

“Gardening,” he says, “provides me the opportunity to sense in my heart God’s presence around me and thus listen to him.”

Like the subtle and gradual growth of one of his beloved sprouts, the call to priesthood came gradually and subtly for Father Amar.

“For me, the call did not come with bells and whistles. I believe that my grandmother had received the call in my name long before I realized it was meant for me,” he explains. “She probably felt in her soul that she had to nurture it for me through her many devotions and prayers.”

Raised in the Philippines, Father Amar finally realized the call when he was ordained to the priesthood on May 25, 1974.

“During the blessed occasion of the ordination ceremony,” he recalls, “as I knelt before the ordaining prelate and as he laid his

hands over my head in the silence before the consecratory prayer, my heart danced and cried with joy. I realized at that moment that I had been following the call to serve all along.”

Father Amar served as a parochial vicar following his incardination to the Diocese of Erie in 1999. He took over as pastor of Christ the King, Houtzdale, in 2005. Today, he is the pastor of Holy Trinity Parish, Ramey, and St. Basil the Great, Coalport. He is grateful for the loving communities that he has served and which have, in turn, nurtured him.

“The love and prayers of magnanimous hearts and of the faith-filled parishioners with whom I serve the Lord support me in many untold ways,” he says.

Father Amar recognizes the gift of faith in so many people around him, including an elderly layperson who has endured excruciating pain due to bone-scraping. He is inspired by her faith.

“To me, it is a testimony of her deep trust and love for the Lord,” he says. “It is a privilege to have met such a grateful soul whose faith gives meaning to a pain-filled life.”

Father Amar says that to be ordained to the ministry of service is grace; to persevere in the ministry of the ordained is mercy. He adds, “To keep one’s heart focused on the call at all times is not easy, at least for me. I need to renew my answer every time I celebrate the Eucharist, so as to keep the ‘core of my being’ centered on the crucified Savior.”

Father Amar says that the “art of periodic silence is a vital part of any program on spiritual health. Silence trains our hearts to sense the divine presence.”

Such silence might be useful in our rapidly changing society and in the church itself. For Father Amar, people are gardeners, nurturing themselves and others to bloom in God’s light.

“It’s part of taking care of planet Earth, it’s part of the vision God has for us,” the gardener-pastor says. “Nothing really comes to fruition unless God makes it so.”



PASTOR

- St. Basil the Great, Coalport (current)
- Holy Trinity, Ramey (current)
- Christ the King, Houtzdale

PAROCHIAL VICAR

- Beloved Disciple, Grove City
- St. Catherine, DuBois

MY INSPIRATION “Love never fails.” —1 Corinthians 13:8

Congratulations, Jubilarians!

Sr. JoAnne Courneen, RSM (50 years)

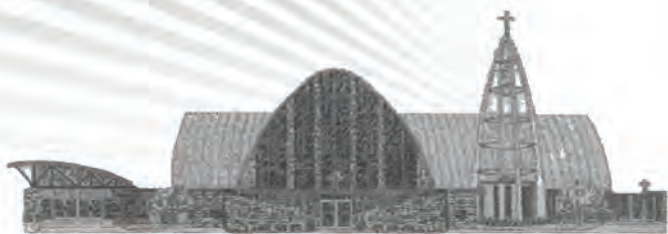
Rev. John Beal (40 years)

Rev. Raymond Hahn (40 years)

Sr. Michele Marie Schroeck, RSM (25 years)

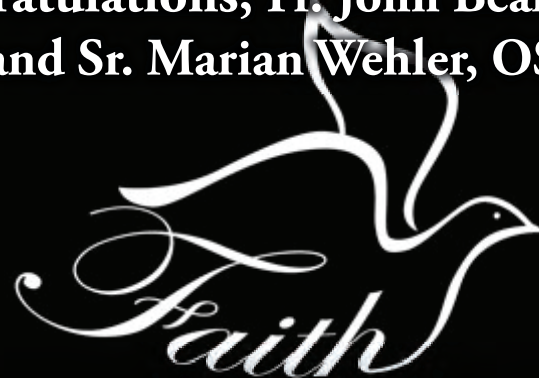
Deacon Stephen Washek (10 years)

Thank you for being constant
guiding lights in our diocese!



St. George Church, Erie

Congratulations, Fr. John Beal (native son) and Sr. Marian Wehler, OSB!



With gratitude, the Catholic Community of Titusville at St. Titus,
St. Walburga and Immaculate Conception Mission

REV. JOHN P. BEAL III — 40 YEARS

The young John Beal sat in his classroom at St. Titus School in Titusville, intently listening to Father Richard Butryn give a pep talk to garner vocations to the priesthood.

Father Butryn finished his speech and then duly asked whether any young man present was interested in taking the entrance exam to St. Mark Seminary High School in Erie. Silence took over the room. The future Father Beal looked up, realizing that the quiet would be broken by him alone. His classmates waited. Finally, the young Beal raised his hand.

“And here I am,” Father Beal says, matter-of-factly, decades later.

Today he celebrates his 40th anniversary as a priest of the Diocese of Erie.

Since 1992, Father Beal has served on the faculty of Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

A lifelong academic, he teaches canon law, procedural law, and the philosophy and theology of law. He holds a

doctorate in canon law, which he obtained at Catholic University in 1985.

During his time in the Diocese of Erie, he was a teacher and assistant headmaster at Elk County Catholic, St. Marys. From 1980-92, he worked in the Chancery Office, serving as assistant chancellor and judicial vicar for the diocese.

Ordained on May 17, 1974, Father Beal says he remembers the famous prayer composed by Reinhold Niebuhr: “God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

It is perhaps in the spirit of that prayer that Father Beal spontaneously affirmed his calling all those years ago in grade school.

He cites prayer as vital to securing in oneself the necessary wisdom to affirm or deny change.

“Without prayer, I am prone to overestimate what I can change and



My INSPIRATION “We are unprofitable servants; have done only what we are obliged to do.” —Luke 17:10

lack the courage to take on things I can,” he says.

Father Beal has tried to make a difference in the lives of the poor, suffering and neglected. He credits the late Msgr. James Peterson for instilling this realization in him.

“Father Pete was the closest thing to a living saint I have ever encountered—or expect to encounter,” Father Beal says. “He was my first spiritual director at St. Mark’s. He etched indelibly in my heart the truth that the spiritual life always involves concern for the marginal.”

Father Beal devotes attention to the neglected because, in his belief, God reveals himself through them.

“They can often teach us to find happiness, even in constrained situations,” Father Beal reflects. “They are grateful for what they do have, and I am inspired by the faith that they often exhibit.”

During his priesthood, Father Beal has recognized God’s steady hand.

“In my experience,” he continues, “God does not crash into my life in spectacular epiphanies, but seeps in through the cracks. Unless I take time to pray, I miss God’s comings and goings.”

When people are not attuned to those subtle divine visitations, according to Father Beal, they risk allowing boredom and disorder into their lives. If he had to give a final homily, Father Beal would address one subject: hope.

“So many people I encounter, young and old, seem to plod through life as if there were nothing more to look forward to than putting one foot in front of the other,” he says. “We need to have hope that God is not finished with us yet.”

MINISTRY OUTSIDE THE DIOCESE OF ERIE

- Faculty, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. (current)

CHANCERY OFFICE, DIOCESE OF ERIE

- Assistant chancellor
- Judicial vicar

SECONDARY EDUCATION ASSIGNMENTS

- Faculty, Elk County Catholic, St. Marys
- Assistant headmaster, Elk County Catholic

WEEKEND ASSISTANT

- Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg
- Holy Trinity, Erie
- St. George, Erie
- Holy Cross, Fairview
- St. John the Baptist, Erie

DIOCESAN BOARD

- Priests’ Personnel Board, Erie

CHAPLAINCY

- Chaplain, Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse, Erie
- Co-chaplain, Mount St. Benedict Monastery, Erie

For dedicated service to Christ’s church that touches people’s lives through Catholic Charities agencies and programs we honor...

Sr. Marian Wehler, OSB - 50 years
Deacon Tony Indelicato Sr. - 10 years

Bringing Faith, Hope and Charity to Life

REV. JOSEPH R. CZARKOWSKI — 40 YEARS

The Mass—in pre-Vatican II Latin—intrigued the young Joseph Czarkowski.

“I was taken up in the mystery of the Mass,” he says now, 40 years after having been ordained a Catholic priest. “From that point on, I began to feel a need to help God’s people. I contacted the seminary after high school and went from there.”

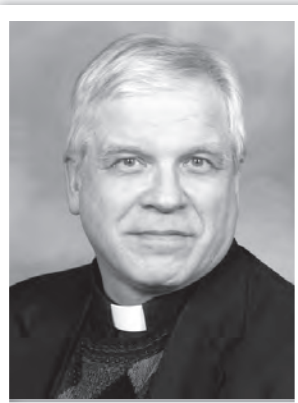
Father Czarkowski reached his ordination day on May 17, 1974, and was shortly thereafter installed as a parochial vicar at St. Michael Parish in Greenville. He served as a parochial vicar three more times, and also taught and coached at Elk County Catholic in St. Marys for three years before becoming pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Walston in 1985.

In his four decades as a priest for the Diocese of Erie, Father Czarkowski has been pastor at eight different churches. Currently, he is pastor at St. Joseph Parish in Lucinda, a position he has held since 2012 and previously from 1997 to 2005. He was dean of the St. Marys Deanery from 1989-94, and the Erie East Deanery for a brief time in 2010.

To Father Czarkowski, a person is led to God by the same mystery that is experienced during Mass.

“The mystery,” he explains, “is what you can’t totally describe, as you become the incarnation.”

The way to fulfill that incarnation, he says, is to always locate oneself spiritually in God and commune with him. To



familiarize oneself with Scripture and to pray both help achieve this communion.

“Prayer is important,” he says, “because it helps with a very intimate and personal relationship with God. In that relationship, we become [one with] Jesus—thus doing the will of our heavenly Father. This relationship becomes strong in us through the power of the indwelling Spirit.”

The Psalms, in particular, have heightened Father Czarkowski’s awareness of that spirit.

“The Psalms are fantastic. They talk about the human condition. They helped me to understand people and God. When you can identify yourself in them, you become more aware of the Incarnation, and you are more open to God,” he says.

As Father Czarkowski grew up in his home parish of Holy Family in Erie, he witnessed his own family living out Christ’s love. He remembers the generosity of his parents and their commitment to attending Mass.

“The door was always open to my house,” he reflects. “And my parents were always grateful. They had a respect for life, God and their neighbors. My mom and dad lived what they believed. God was important to them and it rubbed off on me.”

That same mysterious force that has led Father

Czarkowski all these years was an inspiration to his family, too. His grandfather had a daily commitment to reciting the rosary and attending daily Mass after he retired.

“God commands us to live the mystery 24/7, every day of our lives,” Father Czarkowski says.

It’s a mystery that eludes full understanding, but Father Czarkowski offers some insight after 40 years: “To understand God is to come to be grateful. Happiness and peace is really only in doing God’s will.”

MY INSPIRATION “God became one of us so that we could become like God.”

PASTOR

- St. Joseph, Lucinda (current)
- St. Anthony, Walston
- Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg
- St. Anne, Wilcox
- St. Eulalia, Coudersport
- Holy Rosary, Erie
- St. John, Tidioute
- St. Anthony, Tionesta

PAROCHIAL VICAR

- St. Michael, Greenville
- St. Leo Magnus, Ridgway

- Christ the King, Houtzdale

- St. Stephen, Oil City

TEACHER

- Elk County Catholic, St. Marys

DEAN

- St. Marys Deanery, Force

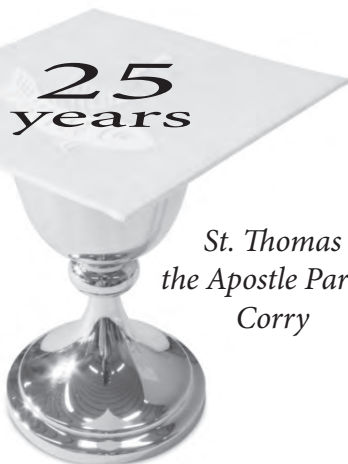
- Erie East Deanery, Erie

DIOCESAN BOARDS

- Bishop’s Pastors Review Board (current)
- Presbyteral Council

~ Father Edward Lohse ~

You came to us in 1988 as a seminarian, not much older than the youth you cared for and loved like your own. It was here you were ordained a transitional deacon, then after priestly ordination served as our parochial vicar before launching into your teaching career in 1990. God bless you and congratulations on your 25th jubilee of priesthood!



WE PROUDLY HONOR
REV. JOSEPH R. CZARKOWSKI

AND

SR. MARY MATTHEW BALTUS, RSM

FOR THEIR REMARKABLE SERVICE

THROUGHOUT THE YEARS!

FROM MSGR. RICCARDO AND PARISHIONERS OF
SS. COSMAS & DAMIAN IN PUNXSUTAWNEY,
AND ST. ADRIAN, ST. ANTHONY
AND ST. JOSEPH MISSIONS.

REV. RAYMOND W. HAHN — 40 YEARS

Father Raymond Hahn has one message in mind as he teaches students at Cathedral Preparatory School in Erie: Be a thinker.

For 34 years—from 1974 to 2008—he taught theology and social studies full-time to the young men at Prep. Today, he continues to teach there part-time while serving as adviser to the Speech and Debate team.

Father Hahn describes his long teaching career as fruitful, “expanding students’ horizons, getting them to become an adult with a willingness to ask and inquire.”

In 1977, he was appointed assistant headmaster at Prep. From 1994-95, he was acting headmaster.

Father Hahn was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Erie on May 17, 1974. Today he is pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish and is celebrating his 40th jubilee.

In addition to his longtime service in education, Father Hahn served as a weekend assistant at various parishes: Holy Trinity, St. Boniface and St. John the Baptist, all in Erie; and Beloved Disciple in Grove City.

He was a member of the board for Clergy Continuing Education from 1986-91. He was named chairperson in 1989. Also, he was chairperson for the diocesan Medical/Moral Advisory Committee.

In recent years, Father Hahn has served as a chaplain on vari-



ous cruises sponsored by the Apostleship at Sea.

When he was an elementary student at St. George School in Erie, Father Hahn first felt his calling to be a priest. He observed the “willingness to serve others” in his parents, priests and teachers. They provided what he calls “the faith foundation and model life to consider priesthood.”

Although he is not involved full-time in education at this time, Father Hahn considers his priesthood somewhat of an ongoing education. Prayer, he says, can help a person listen to divine lessons.

“Prayer includes being quiet and listening,” Father Hahn remarks. “You can’t always hear things when you’re being noisy. We have

.....
MY INSPIRATION “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.” —2 Corinthians 4:7

to listen to whatever the Spirit wants to tell us.”

To communicate Catholicism more clearly and compellingly to others, Father Hahn suggests that all Catholics must be teachers. By expressing love and charity, they can inspire others to listen to the Spirit.

“Getting the message across includes taking care of people,” he says. “My hope is that we will remain open to the spirit of Jesus and find ways to make his message available to those who are busy listening to a different teaching.”

He maintains that the way to spiritual health is through reflection and commitment.

“As with a married couple,” Father Hahn says, “if you don’t spend time deepening the most important relationship in your life, you won’t have one for very long. If you don’t develop the spiritual part of yourself, you won’t have a relationship with God for very long.”

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
 AND ST. DOMINIC CHURCHES
 CONGRATULATE FR. JOSEPH STASZEWSKI
 ON THE OCCASION OF HIS

.....
50th Anniversary

OF ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD.
 THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE TO OUR
 PARISH AND THE DIOCESE. GOD BLESS YOU.



.....
PASTOR (current)

- Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Erie

PART-TIME TEACHER AND ADVISER (current)

- Cathedral Preparatory School, Erie

**ASSISTANT HEADMASTER/
 ACTING HEADMASTER/TEACHER**

- Cathedral Preparatory School, Erie

WEEKEND ASSISTANT

- Holy Trinity, Erie
- St. Boniface, Erie
- Beloved Disciple, Grove City
- St. John the Baptist, Erie

DIOCESAN BOARDS

- Chairperson, member, Clergy Continuing Education
- Chairperson, Medical/Moral Advisory Committee

TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATOR

- St. Julia, Erie
-

REV. MSGR. JOHN J. HERBEIN — 40 YEARS

Whether he's bicycling the foothills of the Alleghenies or saying Mass at St. Patrick Parish in Franklin, Msgr. John Herbein envisions the face of Christ before him.

Trained in Franciscan spirituality, he sees divinity in the natural world.

"We should keep Christ right at the center of our lives," he says. "We all have our own picture of Jesus in our minds. I see him often in my mind's eye. He's gentle and kind and smiling."

God has been smiling down on Msgr. Herbein the past 40 years as a priest of the Diocese of Erie. Ordained on May 17, 1974, he has spent the last 18 years as pastor of St. Patrick Parish in Franklin.

Parishioners, he says, espouse a "disciplined holiness." He expects a lot from them and they give back in an authentic, loving way.

"It is wonderful here. We have a parish that tries to do things according to Vatican Council II," Msgr. Herbein says.

A native of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish, Jamestown, N.Y., Msgr. Herbein looks to the example of devout family members who were priests and a great-great-grandfather who was a sexton at a church in Germany in the 19th century.

During the Prussian wars, Msgr. Herbein's great-great-grandfather rescued a large silver Madonna plaque that remains in the family to



this day. "She's still watching over us," he says.

Msgr. Herbein's two great uncles, the late Msgr. Anthony Wiersbinski and the late Father Felix Wiersbinski, were both active priests of the Diocese of Erie. Msgr. Herbein didn't know Father Felix, who built St. Boniface Church in Erie, but he did know Msgr. Wiersbinski, who was pastor of St. Bernard Parish, Bradford, and served as vicar general of the diocese. Msgr. Herbein's first assignment as a priest was at St. Bernard.

"I grew up with a good role model. He [Msgr. Wiersbinski] was a wonderful man. He was just a good priest and well-loved," Msgr. Herbein says.

From his home in Jamestown, N.Y., Msgr. Herbein enrolled in Franciscan-run St. Bonaventure University. In his third year there, he decided to enter the seminary in Camden, N.J. During his second year of theology, however, Msgr. Herbein's father became ill.

Msgr. Herbein moved back to this area and was ordained for the Diocese of Erie. His first assignments included serving as parochial vicar at the following

PASTOR

- St. Patrick, Franklin (current)
- St. John, Tidioute

PAROCHIAL VICAR

- St. Bernard, Bradford
- Our Lady of Peace, Erie
- St. Joseph, Oil City
- St. Patrick, Franklin

DEAN

- Oil City Deanery, Oil City

parishes: St. Bernard, Bradford; Our Lady of Peace, Erie; St. Joseph, Oil City; and St. Patrick, Franklin. From 1985-96, he was pastor at St. John Parish, Tidioute, and then was named pastor in August 1996 at St. Patrick.

He considers the former pastor of St. Patrick, the late Msgr. John Snyder, a good friend and mentor. As Msgr. Snyder's assistant at St. Patrick from 1982-85, Msgr. Herbein learned the ropes of running a parish.

He also learned to take care of himself by keeping active. So far this year, Msgr. Herbein has bicycled about 250 miles throughout Venango County. He expects to be fit for the priesthood for many more years to come.

"The Lord is still calling me," he says. "Being called to the priesthood has to be your first love."

MY INSPIRATION "I love being able to say the Mass every morning. I always try to say it as if it were my last. That's what keeps me grounded. It puts me in the presence of God like nothing else can."

Our heartfelt appreciation and congratulations go out to the following jubilarians for their accomplishments and support:



25 years

Rev. Lawrence Richards

Parochial Vicar - St. Bernard Church

40 years

Msgr. John Herbein

Parochial Vicar - St. Bernard Church

Rev. Daniel Prez

Special Ministry - St. Bernard Church

60 years

Sr. Mary Helen Forney, SSJ

Teacher - St. Bernard School
Pastoral Minister - St. Bernard Church

Sr. Margaret Frank, SSJ

Teacher - St. Bernard School

Sr. Josette Gocella, SSJ

Home Parish - St. Bernard Church

St. Bernard of Clairvaux Church &
St. Bernard Elementary/Middle School
Bradford, Pa



*Congratulations
& God's Blessings*
to all the jubilarians, especially...
Sr. JoAnne Courneen, RSM
Rev. George Strohmeier
& Rev. Daniel Prez.

~ St. Teresa, Union City

REV. DANIEL J. PREZ — 40 YEARS

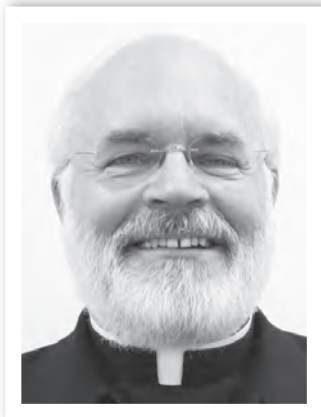
Father Daniel J. Prez became a priest because of the influence of his family and the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth who taught him at St. Casimir and St. Stanislaus schools in Erie. But he owes the daily spirituality of his 40-year-priesthood to a number of priests, sisters and laity with whom he has ministered over the years.

These mentors, he says, “taught me to use our priest title, ‘Father,’ in a loving, respectful and family way to all people.”

A native of St. Casimir Parish, Father Prez celebrates the 40th anniversary of his ordination this year. He was ordained at St. Peter Cathedral on May 17, 1974.

Father Prez’s first assignment as a new priest was as a faculty member at DuBois Central Catholic High School in DuBois from 1974-79. He then became director of Campus Ministry at Clarion University of Pennsylvania, a position he held until 1981.

He was pastor of St. Anthony, Sheffield, and St. Teresa, Union City. Father Prez says he served the diocese “quietly” as a priest, high school teacher, pastor, administrator, and as a chaplain for hospitals, con-



vents, prisons, nursing homes and military bases.

“My ministry has long been influenced by the motto of St. Mark Seminary in Erie which says, ‘Strive to live in a holy and devout way,’” Father Prez says.

He counts several priests, both living and deceased, as influencing him the most. They include the late Father Joseph Kacprowicz and the late Msgr. James Peterson. Pope John Paul II, now St. John Paul, also played a significant role in his spiritual development.

“Holy Scriptures, the lives of God’s saints and the Second Vatican Council have been sources of inspiration, reflection and meditation for me over the years,” Father Prez adds.

Today, he serves as administrator of Our Lady of Lourdes Mission, Cochranon, and St. Hippolyte Parish, Guys Mills. He resides in Frenchtown and at St. Andrew Parish, Erie.

As a chaplain, Father Prez has felt the depth of despair, suffering, joy and redemption experienced by the people of God.

“In the midst of humanity’s sufferings and joys on earth, God is patiently calling all people, especially through the efforts of the church, to glory in heaven,” Father Prez says.

In his various ministries, he has tried to listen to the needs of the people he serves. His current prayer, he explains, is for the Catholic Church to show God’s love to those who have abandoned the faith and for those who are growing up in the church today.

.....
My Inspiration “Strive to live in a holy and devout way.” —Motto of St. Mark Seminary, Erie

ADMINISTRATOR

- Our Lady of Lourdes, Cochranon (current)
- St. Hippolyte, Guys Mills (current)
- Immaculate Conception, Osceola Mills

CHAPLAINCIES

- Pleasant Ridge Manor, Girard (current)
- Veteran’s Administration Medical Center, Erie
- State Correctional Institution, Cambridge Springs
- Erie County Prison
- Warren State Hospital
- U.S. Air Force

PASTOR

- St. Anthony Parish, Sheffield
- St. Teresa Parish, Union City

CO-PASTOR

- Sacred Heart Parish, Erie

TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATOR

- St. Elizabeth Parish, Smethport
- St. Joseph Parish, Mount Jewett

WEEKEND ASSISTANT

- St. Patrick Parish, Erie

PAROCHIAL VICAR

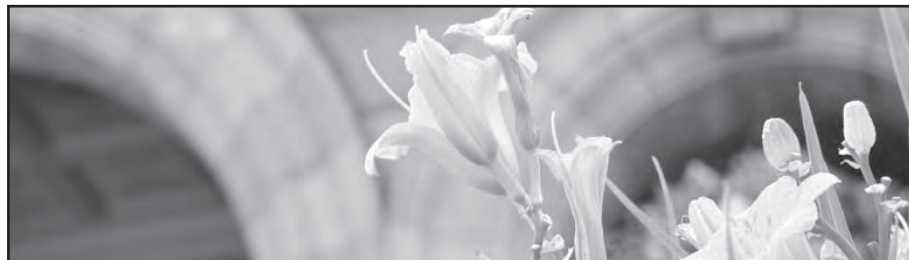
- St. Tobias Parish, Brockway
- Our Lady Queen of the Americas Parish, Conneaut Lake

TEACHER

- DuBois Central Catholic

CAMPUS MINISTRY

- Director, Campus Ministry of Clarion University of Pennsylvania



Congratulations!

FR. GEORGE STROHMEYER—50 YEARS

DEACON STEVE WASHEK—10 YEARS

*FROM THE GANNON UNIVERSITY OFFICE
OF MISSION AND MINISTRY*

GANNON
UNIVERSITY

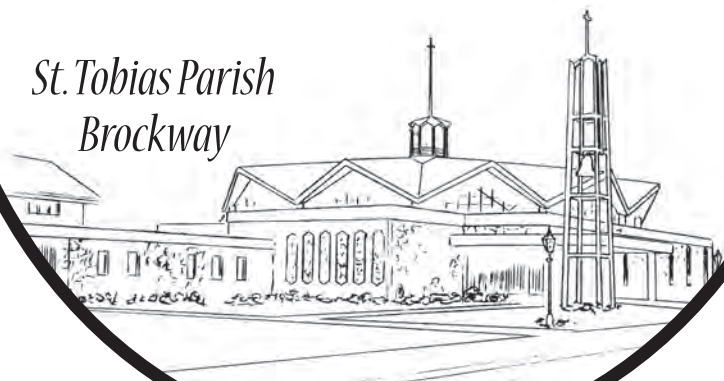
Believe in the possibilities.



CONGRATULATIONS

**Father Ed Lohse (25 years)
Father Daniel Prez (40 years)**

*St. Tobias Parish
Brockway*



*“Always be ready
to give an explanation
to anyone who asks you
for a reason for your hope.”*

1 Peter 3:15

Fr. Larry Richards

**Congratulations on your 25th anniversary to the priesthood,
and happy 10th birthday to you and
The Reason for Our Hope Foundation!
May many more lives be changed forever in the next 25 years!**



**With Love and Gratitude,
The Staff and Board of Directors
THE REASON FOR OUR HOPE
FOUNDATION**

CHRIST Above Me



*The parishioners
of
St. Patrick Parish
Franklin, PA
congratulate
Msgr. John J. Herbein
on
40 years of ordination to the
priesthood of Jesus Christ
and
Deacon Walter G. Jones
and
Deacon Richard A. Reed
on
10 years of ordination to the
permanent diaconate.*

*“His master
replied, ‘Well
done, good
and faithful
servant!’”*

Matthew 25:23

Saint Francis Xavier Parish
1838 2014



**CONGRATULATES
Reverend Edward Lohse
our native son
AS HE CELEBRATES HIS**



ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION



Photo above: The late Bishop Michael Murphy is pictured standing with Fathers Ed Lohse, Larry Richards and Nicholas Rouch after their ordination to the priesthood in April 1989.

Photo on right: Fathers Rouch, Lohse and Richards pose in a chapel within St. Peter's Basilica in Rome on the occasion of their 25th anniversary.



Priests mark jubilee in Rome

Canonization of John Paul II fittingly marks the occasion

Three priests ordained in the Diocese of Erie 25 years ago reunited in Rome this past spring for their silver anniversary and for the canonization of the late Pope John Paul II, under whose pontificate they first committed themselves to the priesthood.

Fathers Ed Lohse, Larry Richards and Nicholas Rouch concelebrated a Mass for their jubilee year while in Rome the week after Easter. As a bonus, they got tickets to witness the April 27 canonization of Pope John Paul II and Pope John XXIII.

The classmates were ordained together at St. Peter Cathedral on April 21, 1989, during the long papacy of John Paul II.

"For me, the most important thing is to be together on our anniversary, wherever it might be, to celebrate in unison our common priestly vocation," Father Lohse says.

On the very day of their silver jubilee, the priests concelebrated Mass in a chapel within St. Peter's Basilica, near the tomb of the Apostle for whom it is named.

REV. EDWARD M. LOHSE — 25 YEARS

"I have always wanted to be a priest, for as far back as I can remember," says Father Edward M. Lohse, who is celebrating the 25th anniversary of his ordination this year.

While he considered other options from time to time in elementary and high school, he always found himself coming back to the priesthood. That commitment remains central to his life.

"Since the time of my ordination, I have been given many duties and assignments," he observes. "But through them all, I have always tried to remember that I am a priest, first."

His assignments have been diverse, including teaching in a high school, serving as vocation director and working as a canon lawyer. Today, he lives in Rome, serving as an official with the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy.

He has embraced each ministry, remembering advice he received early in his priestly journey: "Ask nothing. Refuse nothing."

Father Lohse considers the farmhouse in which he grew up in McKean "the first and best of seminaries, in many ways." But he also points to many sisters and priests who helped shape his vocation.

"I remember very fondly the example of the Sisters of St. Joseph from my days in grade school, together with the Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St. Benedict during my high school years," he says.

He credits priests at Our Lady of Peace School, those who taught him at Cathedral Prep and his pastor at St. Francis Xavier Parish in McKean with having made a great impact on his vocation. He continues to be grateful for the role played by his late uncle, Msgr. Walter Lohse.

It comes as no surprise that the Eucharistic prayer—specifically the consecration—is the part of the Mass that touches Father Lohse most profoundly.

"That is the time when I feel most united to Christ, the divine high priest," he says. "Every time I celebrate Mass, I am reminded that in the gift of the Lord's

body and blood, he pours out his entire self for us, and that as a priest, I am called to do the same."

Father Lohse has been living and working in Rome since 2010. As a Vatican official, he has an opportunity to see the "big picture" of the Catholic Church. The Congregation for the Clergy addresses a full range of issues on the life and ministry of priests and deacons, catechesis, and patrimony, assisting bishops in their administration of goods.

Father Lohse's primary duty is to handle assignments that arrive in the form of letters in English. He summarizes these in Italian for his superiors and then includes a proposed response in English.

"I do have a greater admiration for a lot of the clergy around the world who work in very adverse conditions in areas marked by war or religious persecution," Father Lohse says.

Father Lohse also serves as a spiritual director at the North American College in Rome, contributing to the formation of American seminarians studying in the Eternal City.

He is moved by Pope Francis' call for the church to be present in the peripheries, assisting the poor and the marginalized. He also hopes for a church "deeply imbued with a love for mercy, one that is an instrument of forgiveness, gentle with the weak but firm with the strong," and always unyielding in its fidelity to Christ.

Should he have just one more homily to give, he says he would go straight to the heart of the matter.

"I would preach on the unmerited mercy and unconditional love of God for us, poured out upon the cross," he says.



My INSPIRATION "He must increase; I must decrease." —John 3:30

VATICAN OFFICIAL (current)

- Congregation for the Clergy, Rome

DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATION

- Chancellor
- Promoter of Justice
- Vocation director
- Vice chancellor

DIOCESAN BOARDS

- Presbyteral Council
- Bishop's College of Consultors
- Priests' Personnel Board

- Priest-moderator of the Tridentine Rite

CHAPLAINCY

- Acting chaplain, Gannon University, Erie

PARISH ASSIGNMENTS

- Resident, St. Tobias, Brockway
- Weekend assistant, Immaculate Conception, Brookville
- Parochial vicar, St. Thomas, Corry
- Transitional deacon, St. Thomas, Corry

TEACHER

- DuBois Central Catholic

REV. LAWRENCE R. RICHARDS — 25 YEARS

On any given day, Father Larry Richards can be found crisscrossing North America, spreading the “Good News” of Jesus Christ.

The pastor of St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community, Erie, and founding president of The Reason for Our Hope Foundation, Father Richards leads spiritual retreats, conferences and missions throughout the United States and Canada. The best part, he says, is knowing that people back home are praying for him and those to whom he is ministering.

“I have the best praying community around, especially because we have been praying 24 hours a day, seven days a week for the last 10 years at our Perpetual Adoration Chapel,” Father Richards says. “When I am on the road preaching, there is a little sign in front of the Blessed Sacrament telling people where I am preaching. I know that 24/7 there are at least two people praying for me and the people I am speaking to.”

The power of prayer is central to the priesthood of Father Richards, who this year celebrates his 25th anniversary of ordination. Prayer, he says, is as vital to life as breathing. That’s why he is committed to spending at least one hour a day before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

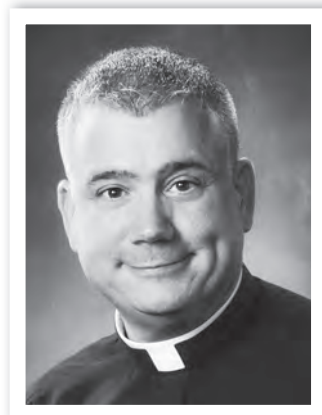
“The most important practice anyone can do is pray,” he says. “I cannot talk about Jesus unless I know Jesus.”

Father Richards shares his belief in the power of introspection and stillness through his lectures, CDs, DVDs and an ever-growing list of books that advance the spiritual life.

Since 2009, he has written three books, particularly geared to men. The first, published by Ignatius Press, is titled, *Be a Man! Becoming the Man God Created You to Be*. It has sold more than 100,000 copies worldwide. In it, Father Richards asks readers to focus on how to live as a beloved son of God, acknowledge one’s faults and live according to the Holy Spirit.

His second book, *Surrender! The Life-Changing Power of Doing God’s Will*, was published by Our Sunday Visitor in 2011. It challenges people to let go of attachments, assumptions and excuses that prevent them from giving themselves fully to God. His latest book, *A Men’s Bible*, was released this year by Our Sunday Visitor.

Beyond the written word, Father Richards hosts a radio show, “Changed Forever with Father Larry Richards.” It can be heard nationwide on Relevant Radio on Saturdays at 8 p.m., EST. A believer in technology to reach the masses, Father Richards tweets inspirational thoughts twice a day. The website of The Reason for Our Hope Foundation



(www.thereasonforourhope.org) is a popular resource.

A native of Pittsburgh, Father Richards discovered his vocation at age 17. He would visit the Church of the Epiphany in Pittsburgh every day. Kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, he one day heard God say to him, “Be a priest.”

“So I obeyed!” Father Richards says. “I love being a priest.”

MY INSPIRATION “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself up for me.” —Galatians 2:20

His hope is that Catholics truly live as disciples of Jesus and strive to make disciples of others, “to give everyone the ‘reason for our hope’ who is Jesus Christ.”

After his ordination on April 21, 1989, Father Richards was appointed parochial vicar at Our Lady of Peace Parish, Erie. Later, he served in the same capacity at St. Bernard Parish, Bradford, and St. Luke Parish, Erie. He was campus minister at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford and at Penn State Behrend, Erie.

For 10 years, Father Richards taught part-time at Cathedral Preparatory School, Erie, and became a moderator of the growing Bread of Life Community, which eventually merged with St. Joseph Parish.

As pastor since 2002 at St. Joseph/Bread of Life, Father Richards continues to set people on fire with the Holy Spirit.

PASTOR (current)

- St. Joseph/Bread of Life Community, Erie

FOUNDER/PRESIDENT/NATIONAL SPEAKER (current)

- The Reason for Our Hope Foundation

AUTHOR (current)

- *Be a Man! Becoming the Man God Created You to Be*, Ignatius Press, 2009
- *Surrender! The Life-Changing Power of Doing God’s Will*, 2011
- *A Men’s Bible*, 2014

RADIO HOST (current)

- “Changed Forever with Father Larry Richards,” Relevant Radio

ADMINISTRATOR

- Bread of Life Community, Erie

WEEKEND ASSISTANT

- St. Luke, Erie

PAROCHIAL VICAR

- Our Lady of Peace, Erie
- St. Bernard, Bradford
- St. Luke, Erie

CAMPUS MINISTRY

- Penn State Behrend, Erie
- University of Pittsburgh, Bradford

PART-TIME TEACHER

- Cathedral Preparatory School, Erie

FOUNDER

- Divine Mercy Encounter, Diocese of Erie

We congratulate **Fr. Ed Lohse**,
a former teacher,
on his 25th anniversary.
Thank you for your service
to our school and the diocese!



REV. NICHOLAS J. ROUCH — 25 YEARS

There was a turning point in Nicholas Rouch’s life when what he wanted and what God wanted finally coincided.

“I was delighted to realize that if God actually wanted me to be a priest, I just might enjoy it,” says Father Rouch, who is celebrating his 25th anniversary of ordination this year. “I love being a priest and doing priestly ministry. It is a real privilege and joy to be called to this vocation.”

Father Rouch looks back to his elementary school days at St. Luke Parish in Erie with fondness, and still considers his pastor, the late Msgr. Robert Goodill, to have played a crucial role in his vocation decision. But it really wasn’t until his senior year at Gannon University in Erie that he came to a crossroads and had to make a decision.

His quarter-century of ministry has brought many surprises into Father Rouch’s life. Today, he is the vicar for Education in the Diocese of Erie, overseeing a vast system of Catholic schools in 13 counties of northwestern Pennsylvania.

While he has embraced his work as an administrator, it is quite different from the classroom and parish work he had envisioned for himself. Adept as a leader, he continues to interact with people in all walks of life.



MY INSPIRATION “I have been crucified with Christ. The life I live is not my own. Christ lives in me. I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith in the Son of God who loves me and died for me.” —Galatians 2:20

ADMINISTRATION

- Vicar for Education (current)
- Vice rector and associate director of seminarians, St. Mark Seminary (current)
- Vice president of Mission and Ministry, Gannon University
- Continuum Office
- Director, Seminary College Program

DIOCESAN BOARDS

- Presbyteral Council (current)
- Erie representative, Pennsylvania Catholic Conference Administrative Board (current)
- Priests’ Personnel Board

PARISH ASSIGNMENTS

- Sacramental assistant, St. Luke, Erie
- Administrator, St. Elizabeth, Corry
- Weekend assistant, Holy Rosary, Johnsonburg
- Parochial vicar, Notre Dame, Hermitage

SCHOOL ASSIGNMENTS

- Full- and part-time faculty, Gannon University
- Campus ministry associate, Gannon University
- Faculty, Elk County Catholic, St. Marys

CHAPLAINCIES

- Co-chaplain, Holy Family Monastery (current)
- Co-chaplain, Serra Club of Erie (current)

Each July, he works on a Pre-Cana team for the diocese. This summer, that meant spending a day with 20 engaged couples.

“It was a real joy to be with them,” Father Rouch says. “They understand the church wants to teach and guide them. They have a beautiful eagerness and it’s a unique moment of openness to truth. They know what they are about to do is important. It’s a good opportunity to help them strengthen their desire to be faithful, self-sacrificing and generous in their marriages.”

Recognizing the many challenges of today’s culture, Father Rouch says that even after 14 years of working with Pre-Cana, “I still get fired up about it. Marriage preparation is so important.”

Involvement with families has been another cherished aspect of Father Rouch’s ministry.

“For a priest, it’s such a privilege to be with families,” he observes. “There is much brokenness in life. But many families strive to live their lives in a manner that pleases God, even in that woundedness.”

Father Rouch says people don’t expect priests to solve their problems, “but they are grateful when we walk with them, offer counsel and pray with them. That’s a sweet spot of ministry,” he says.

Like many priests, Father Rouch finds it difficult to choose any one aspect of the liturgy that is more inspirational than another. Yet he is deeply moved by the simple encounter of the faithful, the ordained priest and Christ just after the consecration.

“When the priest raises the Body of Christ and says, ‘Behold the Lamb of God’ and the people respond, ‘Lord, I am not worthy,’ it’s uncomplicated. It’s full of holy desire on the part of the faithful and God’s mercy and love for us,” he says.

Although he’s busy, Father Rouch tries to get away to renew his own spirit. He most enjoys canoeing or hiking. He had an opportunity this year to spend time in Glacier National Park, where he hiked every day for a full week. He finds such exercise conducive to praying the rosary.

“For me, hiking is a great combination of enjoying the beauty of nature, good exercise and prayer,” he explains. “That’s what draws me to the outdoors: having all three of those aspects woven together.”

Sr. Mary Andrew Himes, RSM, and Fr. Nicholas Rouch:

Your service is
unwavering

Your dedication is
admirable

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do in our diocese!

~Blessed Sacrament, Erie

SR. MICHELE MARIE SCHROECK, RSM — 25 YEARS

The Sisters of Mercy were quite familiar to Michele Marie Schroeck. They taught her at St. George School, Erie, and at Mercyhurst University, where she earned a bachelor's degree in education and taught in its teacher cadet program.

It was no surprise that she would later become a Sister of Mercy herself, having had such positive role models as Mercy Sister Emmauel (Phyllis) Carlino, her eighth-grade teacher, and Mercy Sisters Bernadette Bell, Lisa Mary McCartney and Patricia Whalen, all from her college days.

"Most sisters I knew wore regular clothes and were real people. They were happy and cared about their students," Sister Michele Marie says.

But for Sister Michele Marie, the possibility of entering religious life became more concrete after she taught for one year with the Mercy Volunteer Corps at St. Joseph Mission School, Acoma/Laguna Pueblo in San Fidel, N.M. The experience was rooted in service, simplicity, spirituality and community.

"Mercy Volunteer Corps changed my life forever," she says. "Being away from home, I grew and changed so much that year. I lived with all vegetarians and learned to eat whatever was provided. I joined the sisters for prayer in the morning and appreciated a broader perspective and the cultural opportunities the experience offered."

She entered the Sisters of Mercy on Sept. 1, 1989, professed first vows on Feb. 12, 1994, and made final vows on Aug. 15, 1998. At Mercyhurst, she earned masters' degrees in special education and organizational leadership.

For several years, Sister Michele Marie taught at Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, Erie. From 1997 to 2001, she taught at and was education coordinator for Mercy Migrant Education Ministry in Florida and Ohio. Fluent in Spanish, she addressed the family needs of farmworkers.

Sister Michele Marie also has served as director of



.....
My INSPIRATION "Live a life worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."
 —Ephesians 4:1-3

service learning at Mercyhurst University and was director of the International Student Program at Mercyhurst Prep, Erie. In 2002, she helped establish the House of Mercy, a neighborhood outreach ministry in east Erie, for which she has served as director the past three years.

"I believe the Mercy way of ministry is to connect those who have with those who need. All of my ministries have enabled me to do that," she says.

She describes as "mutually enriching" the opportunities to serve others as a Sister of Mercy.

"I like the global perspective of the Sisters of Mercy and being part of the timeless legacy of mercy and service to the poor," Sister Michele Marie adds. "Being a Sister of Mercy is an opportunity to make God alone the center of my life. The well of spiritual growth and relationship with Christ never runs dry."

DIRECTOR

- House of Mercy, Erie (current)
- Service learning, Mercyhurst University, Erie
- International Student Program, Mercyhurst Prep

- Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Erie
- Mercy Migrant Education Ministry, Florida and Ohio

EDUCATION COORDINATOR

- Mercy Migrant Education Ministry, Florida and Ohio

TEACHER

- St. Joseph Mission School, Acoma/Laguna Pueblo, San Fidel, N.M.

The families and friends of St. Hippolyte, Frenchtown, and Our Lady of Lourdes, Cochranton,

40
years

wish Father Daniel Prez a very happy jubilee celebration of his priestly ordination.

Rev. John Beal
 Congratulations on your 40th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood

The community of Holy Cross Church in Fairview rejoices with you and thanks you for your dedicated service and the countless ways you've touched our lives with your excellent preaching.



**CONGRATULATIONS,
FR. LARRY ON YOUR
25TH JUBILEE!**



AS YOU BEGIN YOUR 13TH
YEAR AS OUR PASTOR, WE
CONTINUE TO FEEL THE
LOVE, GUIDANCE AND
VISION THAT YOU BRING
TO OUR PARISH EVERY DAY!

WE, YOUR PARISHIONERS, ARE
GRATEFUL THAT GOD HAS LED
YOU TO US. WE LOOK FORWARD TO
ANOTHER 13 YEARS WITH YOU AS
OUR SHEPHERD!

WITH LOVE AND GRATITUDE,
ST. JOSEPH CHURCH - BREAD OF LIFE COMMUNITY, ERIE

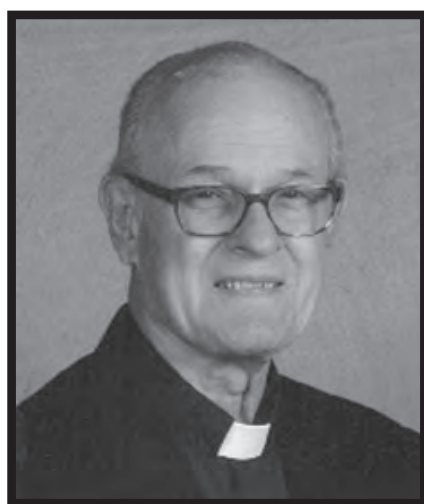


**CONGRATULATIONS AND BLESSINGS
TO REV. RAYMOND HAHN ON
40 YEARS OF FAITHFUL SERVICE!**

From your parishioners at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Erie



Your service in this diocese and beyond has been most impressive!



Fr. Daniel Wolfel, O.S.B.

Erie
Sacred Heart, St. Marys
Queen of the World, St. Marys

Altoona-Johnstown
St. Bernard, Hastings
St. Nicholas, Nicktown
St. John the Baptist, Summerhill
Immaculate Conception,
N. Germany

Pittsburgh
St. Boniface,
Pittsburgh

Greensburg
Ascension Parish, Jeannette
St. Gertrude, Vandergrift
St. Bruno, S. Greensburg
Sacred Heart, Jeannette
St. Mary, Forbes Road
St. Bede, Bovard

Youngstown
St. Benedict, Canton, OH

Thank you for being a loyal and faithful servant for 60 years!

- St. Mary Parish, St. Marys, PA

VME would like to congratulate
the following sisters
who are celebrating their jubilees:

60 years Sr. Margaret Frank, SSJ

Former VME principal for 35 years

Sr. Perpetua Dickant, SSJ

Current VME nurse

Sr. Josette Gocella, SSJ

Former VME faculty

Sr. Betty Ruza, SSJ

Former VME faculty

50 years Sr. Joyce Lowrey, SSJ

Former VME faculty

Former VME board member

Sr. Mary Miller, OSB

Former VME faculty

And a special
congratulations to all of
our diocesan sisters, priests
and deacons celebrating
jubilees this year. Well done,
good and faithful servants!



*Blessings and
congratulations...*

**Fr. Nick Rouch,
Fr. Larry Richards
and Fr. Ed Lohse**

on your respective
25th anniversaries!

*God bless,
Carmelite Monastery*



St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church, Smethport

**Congratulations, jubilarians,
and thank you for your many years
of faithful service!**
**Special thanks to Father Daniel J. Prez
for 40 years of service.**

St. Joseph Church, Mount Jewett





Learn more about the diaconate at www.ErieRCD.org/diaconate.asp

Deacons celebrate 10th anniversary



The 2004 diaconate class for the Diocese of Erie included 11 men, the largest number of deacons ordained for the diocese in one year.

"This has been a very engaged group of deacons. Four serve on the deacon council and all are serving in various capacities in their parishes, nursing homes or in a wide range of other ministries," says Deacon Bill Saborsky of the Corry Catholic Community.

Next year's class is scheduled to have 14 men ordained to the diaconate for the Diocese of Erie.

Members of the 2004 class gathered for a 10th anniversary Mass at St. Mark Catholic Center on June 6. The deacons are pictured with their wives and Msgr. Robert Smith, vicar general, center. Pictured in the front row, left to right, are: Jeanne Saborsky, Kathy Reed, Richard Reed, Msgr. Smith, Bill Spinks and Debbie Spinks. In the second row, left to right, are: Bill Saborsky, Mary Good, Tim Good, Tom Conlin, Marie Conlin, Pat Dunnabeck (widow of Tom Dunnabeck), Harvey McQueen, Linda McQueen, Steve Washek and Vickie Washek.

Missing from the photo are Tony and Reba Indelicato, Walter and Laura Jones, Jerome and Denise Sobrowski, and Terry and Sandra Schmader.

DEACON THOMAS J. CONLIN JR. — 10 YEARS

A deacon for 10 years, Tom Conlin has enjoyed baptizing children the most.

"It's just so wonderful to have that child in your hands and administering their first sacrament, especially when you say the words, 'You are now recognized as a child of God.'"

Since he was ordained a permanent deacon by Bishop Emeritus Donald W. Trautman, Deacon Conlin has baptized about 50 children.

Although he was ordained in Erie, Deacon Conlin has spent all of his years of ministry in the Harrisburg area. The late Bishop Joseph P. McFadden incardinated him into the Harrisburg Diocese on Oct. 19, 2011.

Married to Marie McKim Conlin for the past 37 years, they moved to Danville in the southeast part of the state when Deacon Conlin was offered a health care management position at Bloomsburg Hospital the



CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS

- St. Columba Parish, Bloomsburg, Pa.
- Holy Angels Parish, Kulpmont, Pa.

MY INSPIRATION "The Lord is my shepherd." —Psalm 23

summer after his ordination. He later took the position of chief operating officer (COO) at Maria Joseph Manor, a position that was outsourced this summer.

Currently, Deacon Conlin is assigned to two parishes in the Harrisburg Diocese: St. Columba in Bloomsburg, under Msgr. Robert Lawrence, and Holy Angels in Kulpmont, under Father Andrew Stahmer.

St. Columba is his main parish, where he serves in various capacities as a deacon. He participates in marriage preparation classes and has been approved by the diocese to teach the candidates for the role of extraordinary minister of Holy Eucharist.

He serves Holy Angels the third weekend of each month.

For Deacon Conlin, the past 10 years have gone by quickly. As he prepares for his next ministry, he has heard from many parishioners who have extended their well wishes. One person, he says, approached him, saying how much a particular homily changed his life.

"You don't realize how much you've impacted people's lives," Deacon Conlin said.

DEACON TIMOTHY G. GOOD 10 YEARS

Deacon Timothy Good considers his patron to be St. Francis of Assisi. In keeping with the saint's well-known outlook on life, Deacon Good perceives the glory and humility of our worldly existence.

"I can feel that when I speak to people," says Deacon Good. "It is not me speaking, but the Holy Spirit speaking through me. It is as if I can step aside and just let him speak—and the words flow so smoothly. To be that open and submit to being used as an instrument is truly humbling to me."

Deacon Good has felt this deep Franciscan spirituality throughout the past 10 years as a permanent deacon for the Diocese of Erie. Currently, he serves at St. Boniface Parish in Erie.

Deacon Good believes in the importance of sustaining the integrity of the parish community. He thinks a parish must function as a family; within a family, one must humble himself before the needs of others.

"To realize that our community is where we encounter Christ in all his faces is to become a true Christian disciple," he says, "even if this is uncomfortable or disagreeable at times."

Love, according to Deacon Good, heals those disagreements and discomforts in human communities.

MY INSPIRATION "I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone." —Thomas Merton

"To approach God in a manner that even the small child can understand is to understand the deepest mystery of the universe," he says. "What more would we need to say?"

In Deacon Good's view, a person discovers deep spirituality within the everyday experiences of life.

"You do not need to run off for a 30-day retreat or become a monk," he says. "God is in all things—including your family, your work, your recreation—if you can step back and see God at work in every aspect of your life."

He is happily married to Mary Good.



CURRENT ASSIGNMENT

- St. Boniface Parish, Erie

DEACON ANTHONY P. INDELICATO SR. — 10 YEARS

For Deacon Tony Indelicato, one of the highlights of the past 10 years was when he was chosen to lead the Good Samaritan Center, a homeless shelter in Clearfield.

The late Father James McKee, SJ, who founded the center, chose Deacon Indelicato as his successor in 2004. Father McKee also was the first person to introduce Deacon Indelicato to the diaconate program of the Diocese of Erie.

"In my younger years, I was a police officer and I enjoyed being of assistance to those in need," Deacon Indelicato says. "I now run a homeless shelter for men. Jesus said, 'When you do it for these, the least of my people, you do it for me.' Without realizing it, I have always followed his teaching of this passage."

Besides his diaconate duties at both St. Timothy Parish in Curwensville and St. Bonaventure in Grampian, Deacon Indelicato also served Christ the King Parish in Houtzdale, from November 2007 to September 2010.

Deacon Indelicato and his wife, Reba, have been busy for the past 21 years rebuilding their 120-year-old house. They are almost finished with this labor of love.

CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS

- St. Timothy Parish, Curwensville
- St. Bonaventure Parish, Grampian
- Director, Good Samaritan Center, Clearfield

He is fiercely devoted to the family unit. In fact, if he had one more homily to give, he says he would say, "Children, honor your parents; parents, love your children."

With husbands and wives so busy raising children and working, Deacon Indelicato suggests that everyone make room for Jesus.

"Most of us have full-time jobs and families," he explains. "We say, 'It's hard to devote much time to doing Jesus' work.' But you will have time for all if you incorporate them into one mission."

Deacon Indelicato would like to see "a strong revival of back-to-the-basics" in the church today.

MY INSPIRATION "I will be with you always, until the end of time." —Matthew 28:20



Congratulations and Thank You!



- Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB
- Sr. Bernadette Sullivan, OSB
- Sr. Marian Wehler, OSB
- Msgr. John J. Herbein
- Rev. Joseph R. Czarkowski
- Rev. Nicholas J. Rouch

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Fr. Edward Lohse, past faculty at DuBois Central Catholic High School

Fr. Daniel Prez, past resident at St. Catherine of Siena, and faculty at DuBois Central Catholic High School

Fr. Zab Amar, parochial vicar and former resident

Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB, our native daughter

From your friends at
St. Catherine of Siena Parish, DuBois



DEACON WALTER G. JONES 10 YEARS

After converting to the Catholic faith, Walter Jones thought his calling to ministry was over. After all, he was married.

But when he learned about the diaconate program in the Diocese of Erie, he was overjoyed.

"I felt that maybe, just maybe, God had not given up on me and instead of having the one sacrament of marriage, I could possibly be blessed with the second sacrament, that of ordination," Deacon Jones now says.

Since being ordained a permanent deacon for the diocese 10 years ago, Deacon Jones has served at St. Patrick Parish in Franklin. He assists with the RCIA program and leads Bible study groups. He serves on the parish council and finance council, preaches, and offers assistance with marriages and other sacraments.

"It is hard to believe how fast these blessed 10 years have gone," he says.

For Deacon Jones, the most inspirational part of the liturgy is the celebration of the Eucharist.

"As a priest elevates the sacred body of Christ and repeats the words which Christ gave to us at the Last Supper, and then raises the chalice containing the precious blood of Christ, we are going back in time and space to the night in the upper room where Christianity was born," Deacon Jones says.

My Inspiration "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope." —Jeremiah 29:11

Married to Laura Jones, Deacon Jones loves to spend time with his family, which he considers his only true hobby. He has seen the importance of family in his ministries over the past decade.

From 2004-09, Deacon Jones was the Catholic chaplain at Grove City's George Junior Republic, one of the nation's largest private non-profit residential treatment facilities. From 2009-13, he was the chaplain at UPMC Northwest, Seneca, Pa.

Deacon Jones considers the loss of youth membership in the church one of the most troubling issues facing the church today. He also thinks abortion has claimed future generations.

"With church leaders such as Pope Francis who seems to inspire all peoples worldwide, we still can hope and believe that the Catholic Church in this world will continue to be the 'light of faith' to generations of people to come," Deacon Jones says.



CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS

- St. Patrick Parish, Franklin
- Deacon Personnel Board

DEACON HARVEY R. MCQUEEN 10 YEARS

The road to the permanent diaconate was circuitous for Deacon Harvey R. McQueen.

From an evangelical childhood, he slowly drifted into agnosticism until, at age 40, he considered himself to be an atheist. In 1991, he attended a Cursillo, for the benefit of his wife, Linda. That's when he discovered that God had other plans.

"We became Catholic at the Easter Vigil in 1992," Deacon McQueen says.

When he heard about the possibility of becoming a permanent deacon for the Catholic Church, he was excited but didn't think it was possible since he was so new to the faith. Eventually, thanks to advice from a priest and another deacon, he entered the diaconate formation program and was finally ordained in 2004.

"Ten years later," Deacon McQueen says, "it is still new and fresh for me."

Since his ordination, he has served as a permanent deacon at St. Agatha Parish in Meadville.

CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS

- St. Agatha Parish, Meadville
- Chaplain, Crawford County Jail and State Correctional Institution at Cambridge Springs

Simultaneously, he serves as a chaplain at both the Crawford County Jail and the State Correctional Institution at Cambridge Springs.

He gives regular talks about prison ministry and conducts Bible study and RCIA classes at SCI-Cambridge Springs. Incarcerated men and women, he says, have taught him about "grace under fire." He credits his own mother for showing him how to be forgiving and loving to everyone.

Deacon McQueen points to Father Henri Nouwen's message that we are all God's beloved children.

"Christians perceive God in so many different ways," Deacon McQueen says. "We see God as demanding, forgiving and occasionally nice to us, but I doubt that many truly believe that God loves each one of us; that we receive the same love as the Father has for the Son; that we are, each one of us, God's beloved. How such awareness could change our lives and the world around us!"

Deacon McQueen has hope for the Catholic Church in the United States, despite a priest shortage.

"The good news is that the merging of parishes has allowed the church to allocate its resources more efficiently and to greater effect, and has also spawned some creative thinking in how to 'do church,'" he says.

My Inspiration "Cain's question in the fourth chapter of Genesis: 'Am I my brother's keeper?' inspires me. I was 3 or 4 when I first heard it and, although God does not give a direct answer, I knew early on that the answer is, 'Yes.' Much of my life, even when I was drifting from faith, has been spent defining and redefining the question, determining what being 'my brother's keeper' truly means and applying it to my daily actions."



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CONGRATULATIONS and BEST WISHES!

Deacon Walter Jones
Deacon Richard Reed
(St. Patrick Church, Franklin, PA)

THANK YOU...

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

- **SR. BETTY RUZA, SSJ, AND SR. ANASTASIA VALIMONT, SSJ**—
THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOVING SERVICE AND DEDICATION.
FONDLY, ANN AND GARY FLICK, SSJ ASSOCIATES
- CONGRATULATIONS **SR. MARIAN WEHLER, OSB!**
FROM OIL CITY KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
- GRATITUDE AND BLESSINGS TO **SR. CAROLYN GORNY-KOPKOWSKI, OSB; SR. HELEN HEHER, OSB;**
AND **SR. BERNADETTE SULLIVAN, OSB!**
FROM ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL CHURCH, FRYBURG
- CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE JUBILARIANS FOR YOUR
EXEMPLARY SERVICE TO OUR DIOCESE.
FROM IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH, CLARION
- A SPECIAL NOTE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO **SR. ANASTASIA VALIMONT, SSJ.** GOD BLESS YOU!
FROM RICHARD AND SALLY DeLUCA



10th Anniversary

The parish families of
St. Timothy Church in Curwensville and
St. Bonaventure Church in Grampian
congratulate **Deacon Anthony P. Indelicato**
on his 10th anniversary to the diaconate.

Thank you Deacon Tony for the
dedication and kindness
you give to our
faith communities!



CONGRATULATIONS

FR. JOSEPH CZARKOWSKI
SR. MARY HELEN FORNEY, SSJ
FR. NICK ROUCH
FR. JOHN BEAL

HOLY ROSARY, JOHNSONBURG

Congratulations, Deacon Steve Washek!



With love from Vicki, Jamie,
Amanda, Cameron, Meghan,
Justin, Brady, Landon,
Isaac and Matthew.

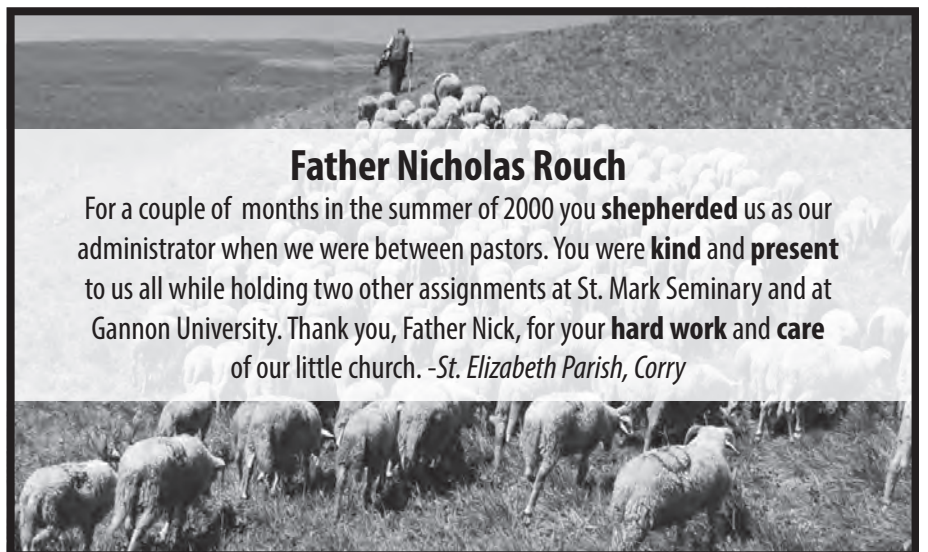
We are very proud of you!

Congratulations!

Notre Dame in Hermitage
wishes to recognize
Fr. Nick Rouch (25 years)
Sr. Mary Helen Forney, SSJ (60 years)
Sr. Joyce Lowrey, SSJ (50 years)
and Sr. Mary Miller, OSB (50 years)
for your loyal service. God bless you all!

Father Nicholas Rouch

For a couple of months in the summer of 2000 you **shepherded** us as our administrator when we were between pastors. You were **kind** and **present** to us all while holding two other assignments at St. Mark Seminary and at Gannon University. Thank you, Father Nick, for your **hard work** and **care** of our little church. -St. Elizabeth Parish, Corry



DEACON RICHARD A. REED 10 YEARS

Deacon Richard Reed has immersed himself in the Franklin community the past 10 years as a permanent deacon, serving the parishioners of St. Patrick Church and responding to the spiritual needs of people at Polk Center School and Hospital.

It's a community he knows well, having previously served for 15 years as director of St. Patrick Cemetery. It's through all these interactions that he and his wife, Kathy, have come to appreciate the importance of family and moral values.

"Bringing children up in the faith by hands-on teaching and lessons in the home and weekly Mass together is important," he says.

He believes it is critical for bishops, priests and deacons to preach loudly against abortion and other moral issues in the world today. The "culture of death" in our society troubles Deacon Reed, who takes inspiration from Jeremiah's message, "I knew you before I formed you in the womb."

"This assures anyone that God gives life and God ends life," he says. "He is the Alpha and the Omega. He creates all things."

At St. Patrick Parish, he is involved in Bible study and offers the Divine Mercy chaplet every Sunday afternoon. In addition to his regular duties there, Deacon Reed makes visits to Polk Center for Eucharist every Monday. He participates in Mass at Polk State School and visits Polk residents at the hospital every Monday.

Deacon Reed is active with the St. Thomas More House of Prayer in Cranberry Township. He exposes the Eucharist there every Thursday for Adoration, and he says private prayer for two hours before exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

He credits his mother for instilling in him a deep faith in the church. His family regularly attended Mass and novenas, as well as participated in the sacrament of reconciliation once a week.

"I come from a family of 12 and my mother made sure we learned how important our faith was for everyone," Deacon Reed says.



CURRENT ASSIGNMENT

- St. Patrick Parish, Franklin

My INSPIRATION "I knew you before I formed you in the womb."

—Jeremiah 1:5

DEACON WILLIAM J. SABORSKY 10 YEARS

Wearing his inimitable smile, Deacon Bill Saborsky has one piece of advice to those seeking the spiritual life: "Just get started!"

He points to prayer and commitment as dual paths to getting to know God.

"Eventually, it absolutely creates in us a change in how we look at our daily lives," Deacon Saborsky says. "We start to be aware that God is with us, which for me has led to praying at times I never expected. It makes me other-centered, especially when every prayer includes the element, 'Not my will, but your will be done.'"

Deacon Saborsky suggests that people use various resources to come closer to God. He recommends going online to seek information about prayer, subscribing to a daily meditation guide, reading the Bible, getting a spiritual director or joining a faith sharing group.

Celebrating his 10th anniversary as a deacon at both St. Thomas and St. Elizabeth parishes in Corry, Deacon Saborsky shares his faith in various capacities. He serves Corry Manor Nursing Home, works as a Human Resource consultant for the Diocese of Erie and is on the Deacon Council. Since 2008, he has been the co-chairperson of the Deacon Personnel Board and a member of the Priest Retirement Board.

Besides those duties and his regular parish work, Deacon Saborsky assists in Scripture study sessions at the Diocesan Lodge and serves with the spiritual director team for the Cursillo movement in the diocese. He is a small group leader, along with his wife, Jeanne, for the Corry/Union City Marriage Encounter.

In fact, Jeanne Saborsky, he says, is the one person who has guided him on the right spiritual path.

"Her unconditional love through the toughest of times has shown me that she is a mirror of Jesus' love for me," he says. "She knows me best and her constant support and compassion enable us to embrace ministry as a way of life."

For Deacon Saborsky, an authentic faith life means putting worldly goals and worries aside and surrendering to God's care. Hopefulness comes with such surrender.

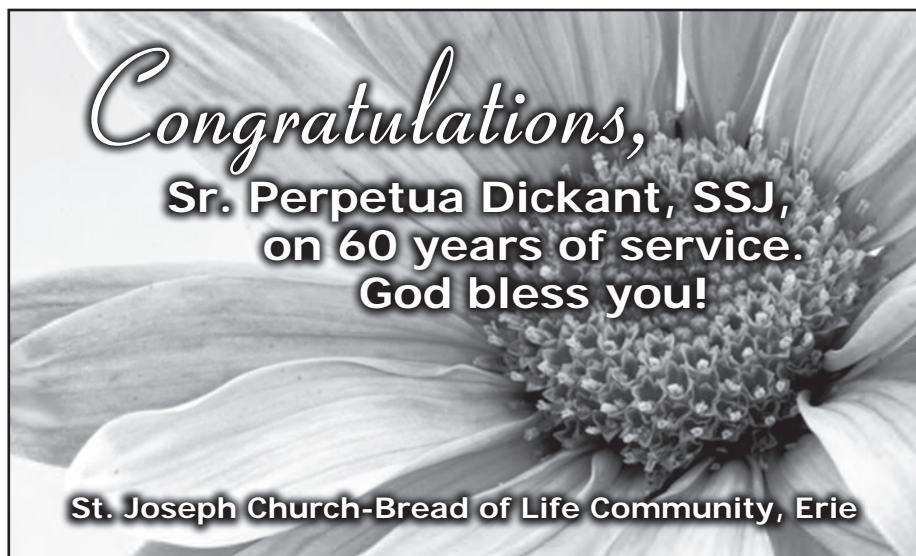
"It isn't the heavenly reward that I seek," he says, "it's the opportunity of finally being in complete harmony, without any distractions, fully present to God who created me and all others in the world."



CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS

- St. Thomas Parish, Corry
- St. Elizabeth Parish, Corry
- Human Resource consultant, Diocese of Erie
- Member, Deacon Council, Diocese of Erie
- Co-chair, Deacon Personnel Board
- Member, Priest Retirement Board

My INSPIRATION "Right now, I'm working on Pope Francis' call to adopt three simple attitudes: hopefulness, openness to being surprised by God and living in joy. It's changing my life!"



Deacon William Saborsky,

WE ARE SO *blessed* THAT YOU ARE OUR PARISH DEACON!

YOU INDEED HAVE BEEN OUR *steady* COMPANION ON THE

JOURNEY OF *faith* OF THE CORRY CATHOLIC COMMUNITY.

WE LOVE YOU AND JEANNE VERY MUCH! HAPPY TEN-YEAR JUBILEE!

THE CORRY CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF
ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE AND ST. ELIZABETH, CORRY

Congratulations

Father Joseph Staszewski (50 years)

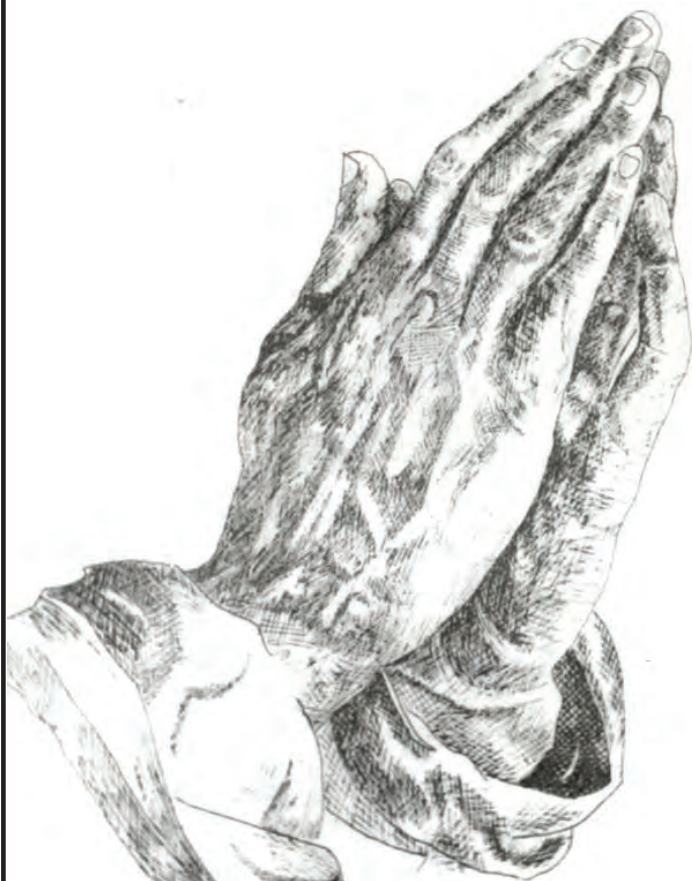
Father Joseph Czarkowski (40 years)

&

Sr. Roberta Ochs,

O.S.B.

on 60 years!



St. Joseph Parish in Lucinda

DEACON TERRY M. SCHMADER 10 YEARS

Terry M. Schmader's 10 years as a deacon have been filled with change.

Ordained to the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Erie on June 4, 2004, he immediately went on to serve as the deacon assistant at St. Stephen Parish in Oil City. For eight years, he ministered there and also served as coordinator of Catholic Charities in the Oil City area.

Then, about two years ago, Deacon Schmader and his wife, Sandra, moved to Colorado, where they have made homes in Denver and now Grand Junction.

Currently, they are attending Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, Grand Junction.

Deacon Schmader has not yet been installed as a deacon for the Diocese of Grand Junction.

"The time will come when I meet with the new bishop, but I am not aware of when it will happen," Deacon Schmader says.

While in Denver, Deacon Schmader was assigned to the Shrine of St. Anne Church. While there, he taught classes on the women of the Bible, handled counseling, assisted at Masses and preached. He hosted communion services at a Lutheran home.

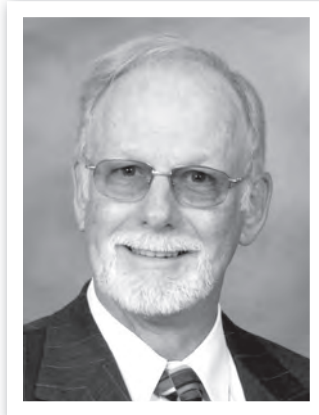
Deacon Schmader first recognized his call to the diaconate when he served in Vietnam from 1969-70. He was working with villagers, serving food, medicine and friendship.

"That call persisted for years and finally was answered after moving back to Oil City and meeting Father Jeff Noble, who encouraged me to pursue the call," Deacon Schmader says.

Deacon Schmader puts great emphasis on following the doctrine of the Catholic Church as it is written, "not picking and choosing what is in vogue, like thinking abortion is OK and a right." In fact, if he had one homily to give, he would focus on the need to end abortion.

An avid painter and sculptor in his free time, Deacon Schmader draws inspiration from St. John Paul and Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

He hopes that the Catholic Church will grow stronger and be what he calls "a well-spring of hope" for all people.



PREPARING FOR ASSIGNMENT

- Grand Junction, Colo.

MY INSPIRATION "Do unto others as you would have others do to you." —Luke 6:31

DEACON JEROME T. SOBROWSKI 10 YEARS

Jerome Sobrowski says considering the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Erie was like "an itch that I couldn't scratch." After serving a decade now as a deacon at St. Luke Parish in Erie, he believes it was a true calling.

"I have always desired to serve God and others and the diaconate was my calling to do just that in a more profound manner," Deacon Sobrowski says.

An avid runner and outdoor enthusiast, Deacon Sobrowski loves taking walks with his wife, Denise, at Presque Isle State Park. Among the clergy who has most inspired him is Msgr. Tom Snyderwine, who guided him in his diaconal formation.

"He was a great teacher and his kindness and insight truly shaped and inspired my vocation," Deacon Sobrowski says.

Deacon Sobrowski loves Ignatian/Jesuit spirituality, which, he says, perceives God in everyday life. He receives spiritual direction from a Jesuit priest and has come to appreciate the sense of communion with the entire congregation during the Eucharistic prayer at Mass.

"Awesome!" he says.

The current chairperson of the Deacon Council of the Diocese of Erie, Deacon Sobrowski occasionally teaches for the Deacon Formation program. He is involved in RCIA, parish council and makes weekly visits to homebound parishioners of St. Luke.

People's lives are so hectic today that Deacon Sobrowski thinks there is less time for spirituality.

"I encourage others to prioritize prayer and attention to the Spirit as they do any other aspect of their lives," he says. "Get a spiritual director and follow the 'great ones' that came before us, such as Mother Teresa, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Ignatius of Loyola and others."

According to Deacon Sobrowski, the Catholic Church has been renewed recently by Pope Francis. The Holy Father, he says, has brought people a "renewed sense of energy."

"My hope is that the church will continue to be a beacon of hope for those most in need and that all of us will continue to strive to know Jesus in a more intimate way," he says.



CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS

- St. Luke Parish, Erie
- Current chair, Deacon Council, Diocese of Erie

MY INSPIRATION "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." —Romans 8:38-39

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DEACON WILLIAM C. SPINKS 10 YEARS

Every day of his life, Deacon Bill Spinks says he answers the call to the permanent diaconate.

“Deacon John Brophy gave me an application for the diaconate and I just put it on my desk and forgot about it. Then I kept feeling a pull to fill out the application. I finally filled it out and sent it in. I follow that call every day of my life,” Deacon Spinks says.

His 10 years as a deacon have been rewarding, he says. Not only does he minister to All Saints Parish in Waterford, but he offers a Communion service every Wednesday morning at Niagara Village, an independent senior living center in Erie. He also visits the sick at Saint Vincent Hospital and UPMC Hamot, both in Erie.

“I am happy to do this,” Deacon Spinks says. “I feel a great reward in it all.”

Father Tom Whitman, former pastor of All Saints Parish, was an inspiration the past decade. He used to give Deacon Spinks books to read and they would go over the volume, chapter by chapter, discussing it at length. Father Whitman also gave him books at Christmas.

Three of the books that were especially inspiring were: *The Unexpected Teachings of Jesus*, *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality*, and *Sacred Space*.

My INSPIRATION “Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and you recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift.” —Matthew 5:23

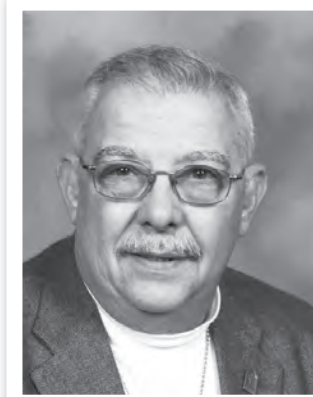
Deacon Spinks considers the decline in the number of priests as one of the most difficult issues facing the Catholic Church today. He’s concerned about other issues, too, including Catholics not attending Mass and young people falling away from the church after confirmation.

“Prayer and the Eucharist are important parts of our lives as Catholics. You feel a closeness to God in prayer,” he says.

He advises people to take a few minutes of the day to simply think about the gifts God has given them: the earth, our lives, the love between husband and wife and how that love is shared in our family and the people around us.

Deacon Spinks is married to Debbie Spinks, who, he says, has been instrumental in the success of his ministry. She listens to his homilies and offers advice.

“She’s been a really big help and a big supporter of mine,” Deacon Spinks says.



CURRENT ASSIGNMENT

- All Saints Parish, Waterford

DEACON STEPHEN J. WASHEK 10 YEARS

No sooner had Stephen Washek become a Catholic in his early 20s than he felt “a tug” to the priesthood.

“But the call to be married and have a family was stronger,” he says. “The desire to serve the church in some way never really left me, however. I entered formation and began to feel that God had really called me into the diaconate.”

Celebrating his 10th anniversary as a permanent deacon with the Diocese of Erie this year, Deacon Washek believes marriage and family complement the life of a deacon.

Deacon Washek’s journey toward the diaconate began simultaneously with his journey to Catholicism. Raised Lutheran, he had his first taste of authentic Catholicism when he



CURRENT ASSIGNMENTS

- St. George Parish, Erie
- Director, Campus Ministry, Gannon University, Erie
- Co-director, spiritual formation, Diocesan Deacon Formation Program
- Director, Diocesan Catholic Campus Ministry

met Father George Strohmeyer at Gannon University in Erie. Father Strohmeyer suggested that Deacon Washek participate in L’Arche, a worldwide movement in which people with and without disabilities live together.

Working with L’Arche, the future deacon concurrently grew to love Catholicism and his future wife, Vicki. They met while they were both assistants with Erie’s L’Arche community.

My INSPIRATION “God does not call the equipped, he equips the called.” —Anonymous

Deacon Washek became Catholic on Nov. 1, 1981, and was married on May 7, 1983.

Since his entry into the permanent diaconate on June 4, 2004, Deacon Washek has served as a deacon at St. George Parish in Erie. He also is director of Campus Ministry at Gannon University. He and his wife direct Diocesan Catholic Campus Ministry and are involved in Engagement Encounter and the Cursillo movement.

The Washeks currently are in the process of welcoming a person with a disability to live in their home.

Deacon Washek insists that people must be willing to sacrifice their personal desires to the higher goal of improving their spiritual lives.

“You must die to yourself in order to grow and deepen,” says Deacon Washek. “I think people tend to only want the happy stuff, the easy stuff. But a true spiritual life is hard work, and it takes courage.”

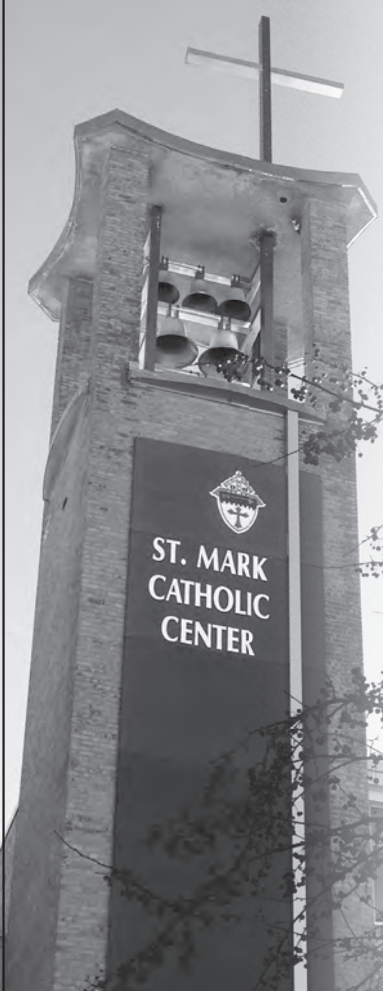


Congratulations, Deacon Bill!
All Saints Parish, Waterford


The people of God at the Church of the Beloved Disciple in Grove City offer heartfelt prayers and congratulations to Fr. Zab Amar, Fr. John Beal and Fr. Raymond Hahn. We are grateful for your ministry among us in former years.



Church of the Beloved Disciple

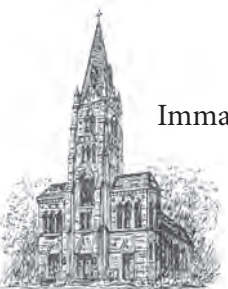


Congratulations, Sr. Mary Andrew Himes, RSM, on the occasion of your 60th anniversary, and Fr. Nick Rouch on the occasion of your 25th anniversary!





~ St. Mark Seminary ~

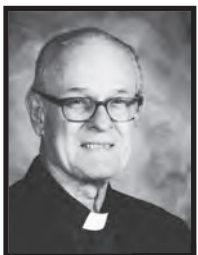

25
years




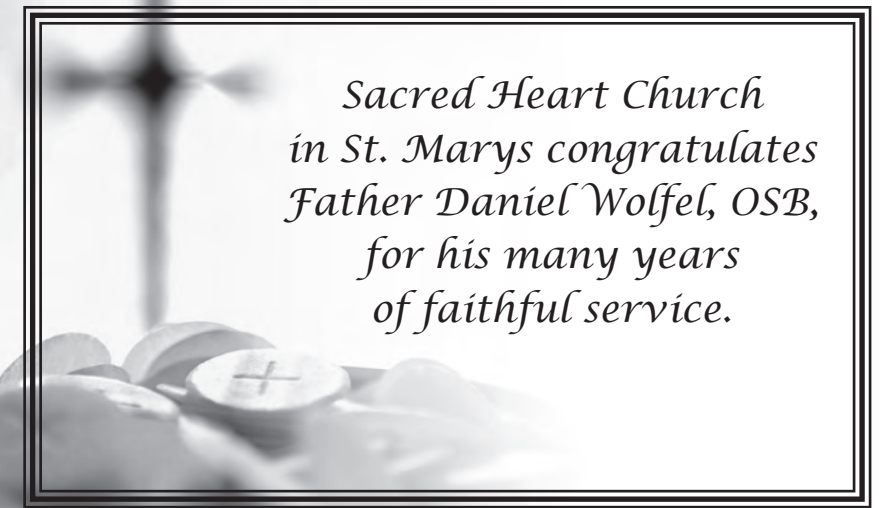
The families and friends of Immaculate Conception and St. Dominic wish **FR. EDWARD LOHSE** a very happy silver jubilee celebration of his priestly ordination.

Congratulations, Fr. Daniel Wolfel
on your *60th Anniversary* to the priesthood.
Your devotion is *inspiring*.


- Queen of the World St. Marys

Sacred Heart Church in St. Marys congratulates Father Daniel Wolfel, OSB, for his many years of faithful service.

Fr. Joseph Czarkowski, Sr. Perpetua Dickant, SSJ, Sr. Margaret Frank, SSJ, and Sr. Betty Ruza, SSJ...

*Your service to the Diocese of Erie has been a bright light that guides us all!
Thank you and congratulations!*



St. Leo Magnus, Ridgway

Congratulations and many blessings to our jubilarians!

Sr. Mary Matthew Baltus, RSM • 70 years

Sr. Mary Andrew Himes, RSM • 60 years

Sr. JoAnne Courneen, RSM • 50 years

Sr. Michele Marie Schroeck, RSM • 25 years



MERCYHURST
Preparatory School



Northwest Pennsylvania's
International Baccalaureate
World School

A Sponsored Ministry of the Sisters of Mercy



Congratulations,

Msgr. Tom McSweeney!

We've grown accustomed to your face!
We have loved every minute of the 11 years
during which we were blessed
with our "honorary Polish" Irish pastor.
Best wishes for a joy-filled,
fruitful and well-deserved retirement!

Na Zdrowie!

The Parishioners of Holy Trinity Parish, Erie



FOR EVERY BABY BORN,
EVERY HEART HEALED,
EVERY CAPABILITY RESTORED,
EVERY AILMENT CURED,
EVERY PASSING MADE LESS PAINFUL,
EVERY SPIRIT UPLIFTED,
EVERY LIFE SAVED,
WE RECOGNIZE, WITH RESPECT AND REVERENCE
THOSE WHO MADE IT ALL POSSIBLE...
OUR FOUNDERS,
**THE SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH
OF NORTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA**

CONGRATULATIONS

SR. ANASTASIA VALIMONT, SSJ, 75 YEARS
SR. PERPETUA DICKANT, SSJ, 60 YEARS
SR. MARY HELEN FORNEY, SSJ, 60 YEARS
SR. CARMEL ROJEK, SSJ, 50 YEARS



**Saint Vincent
Hospital**





Congratulations

From The Board of Trustees, Alumni, Faculty, Staff and Students of Gannon University, Our Sincere Congratulations for Your Faithful Commitment to the Gospel.

75 Years

Sr. Anastasia Valimont, SSJ '50VMC

60 Years

Sr. Perpetua Dickant, SSJ '72VMC

Sr. Mary Helen Forney, SSJ '65VMC

Sr. Margaret Frank, SSJ '65VMC

Sr. Josette Gocella, SSJ '63VMC

Sr. Mary Andrew Himes, RSM

Sr. Betty Ruza, SSJ '63VMC

Sr. Bernadette Sullivan, OSB '32VMC

50 Years

Rev. Thomas Richard Egan, M.M.

Sr. M. Helen Herbstritt, OSB '73VMC

Sr. Joyce Lowrey, SSJ '73VMC

Sr. Mary Miller, OSB '67VMC

Rev. George Strohmeyer '60

Sr. Marian Wehler, OSB '75VMC

40 Years

Rev. Joseph R. Czarkowski '69

25 Years

Rev. Edward Lohse '84

Rev. Lawrence Richards '83

Rev. Nicholas J. Rouch '83

Permanent Deacons, 10 years

Deacon Jerome T. Sobrowski '98

Deacon Stephen J. Washek '90



Believe in the possibilities.



We thank the Lord
for your ministry, Fr. Zab.

*In walking with us,
we affirm that
we are instruments of God's mercy
for one another.
With joy, we celebrate your
anniversary with you.
May the Blessed Mother inspire
and guide you, always.*

*St. Basil the Great
Coalport*

