

## Read all about it!

# New book features Catholic history in Pa.

Pennsylvania was granted statehood 227 years ago, but the Catholic community that grew out of it has made an indelible mark on history.

Kimberly Lytle, director of curriculum for the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Erie, has taken it upon herself to educate people about the rich history of Catholicism in the Keystone State. She researched the topic for five months, completing a self-published book, *The Catholic Community of Pennsylvania: Past and Present*, in 2014.

“I’ve just found that there is a gap out there for teachers on how to teach Catholic history,” says Lytle, who is a former teacher and principal in Catholic schools.

The book was researched and written by Lytle and her two grown children, Sara and Todd. It features the state’s first Catholic missionaries and the history of each of its 13 Catholic dioceses. The story of how Catholic roots took hold and grew in the commonwealth is taught in 31 different lessons, paired with 70 pages of handouts.

The volume maintains a playful, but educational format. Lytle uncovered some interesting trivia: the largest collection of Catholic relics, other than the Vatican’s, is located at St. Anthony’s Chapel in Pittsburgh.

“It’s a total blast for me,” Lytle says with the obvious enthusiasm of a first-time author. “It just has become a passion and the more I find out about who we are, the more I want to tell our story.”

The book already has been used in about 40 different schools and homeschools. Among its most useful qualities is that it includes small- and large-group activities, personal reflections, service project ideas and many other exercises, including puzzles and games, which Lytle says will actively engage young students.

Currently, there are two versions of the book: one is a student workbook, the other a teacher manual. Lytle has kept the books affordable, with student copies selling for just \$5.

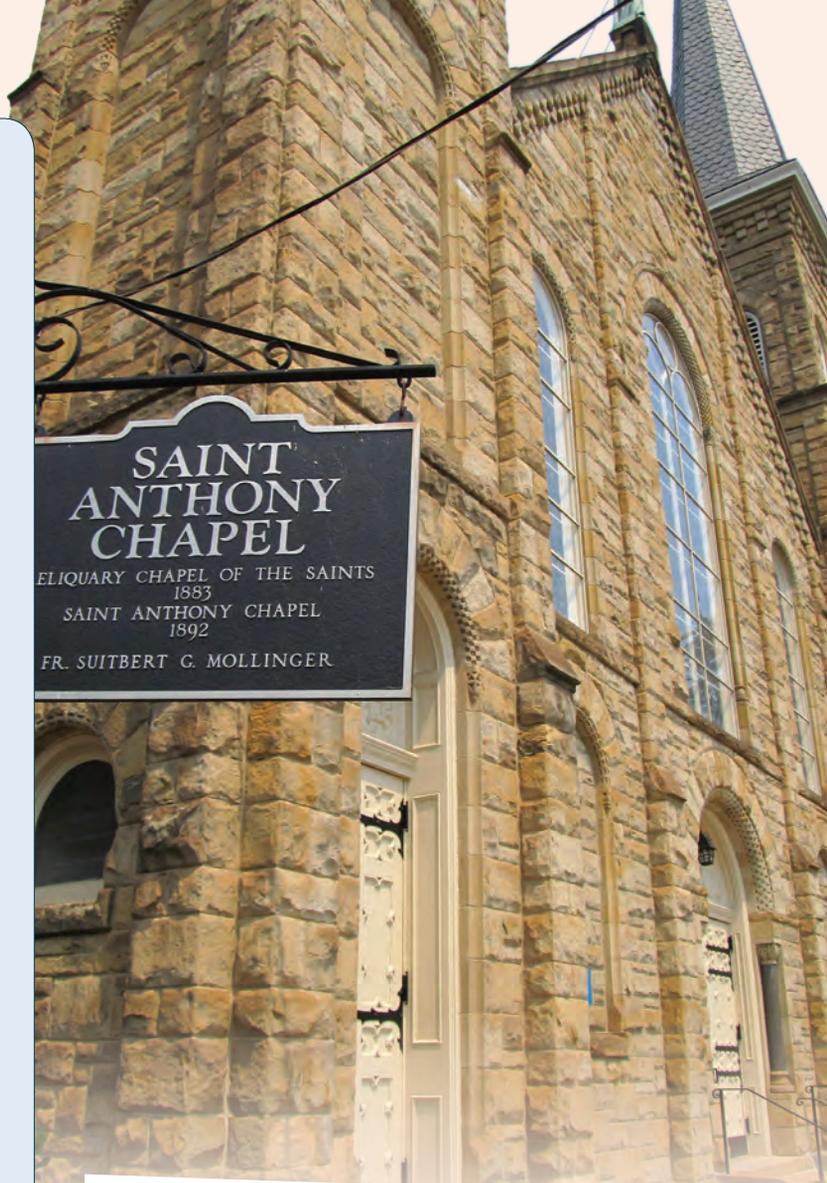
For Lytle, mixing Catholic history and education is a natural fit. It’s her passion.

“There’s a phrase I like that sums it up: ‘They lived well, loved well and sacrificed well and through their example, we now live, love and sacrifice,’ Lytle says. “It’s their lives that will give you energy to do it.”

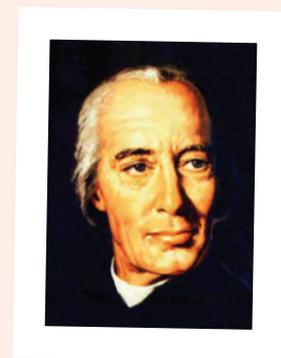
Check out the book at [www.teachcatholichistory.com](http://www.teachcatholichistory.com).

As this book catches on, Lytle already has started production on a new series about Catholic history in the United States. The first installment will be released this month.

– Brian Kightlinger



St. Katharine Drexel founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament. Today, the sisters say they are called to share the Gospel message with the poor, especially among the Black and Native American peoples, and to challenge the deeply rooted injustice in the world.



Servant of God Prince Gallitzin left his claim to nobility, becoming a missionary priest. He started a Catholic colony in Loretto, Pa.

St. Anthony’s Chapel, Pittsburgh, holds more than 5,000 Catholic relics. The church dates back to the 1860s.