

Catching Fire

Jesus' Father has a habit of choosing to work through the most inauspicious people and circumstances. Looking at God's lack of highly qualified agents, one might suspect that the Creator is downright poor. Perhaps that is why so many people attempt to change God's message to conform to their own plans; the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob just isn't ambitious or vengeful enough to cut the ice in a competitive world.

Moses is a case in point. Michelangelo sculpted him as a muscular giant, seated like a sage with the tablets in hand, gazing into the beyond. The Book of Exodus tells us he was a runaway criminal who relied on his father-in-law for a job as a shepherd. Instead of appearing to him via angels or awesome heavenly visions, God got Moses' attention by setting a flame in a bush near a mountain that bore the name "desolate" or Horeb.

When Moses went to take a look at the strange bush, God started a simple theology lesson: "I am the God Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob." Then God told Moses what it is like to be God: "Have witnessed the affliction of my people ... have heard their cry ... I know well what they are suffering." Luring Moses in closer than ever, God revealed a divine plan: "I have come down to rescue them ... and lead them ... and lead them into a good and spacious land."

Today's Lectionary selection skips over the part of the story in which Moses protested that he couldn't carry out that plan in God's name. Moses claimed incompetence: "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?" But his protests were in vain. God just told him to take off his sandals and recognize that the earth beneath his feet was holier than he could have imagined.

Moses scored a point in their interchange when he explained, in so many words, that he needed a good calling card with which to approach the Israelites: "Would you please reveal a name that I can

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use to convince them?" Moses' tiny bit of willingness to serve opened the path for God to enter into a relationship with him that would leave Moses burning with more passion than the fiery bush with which God first lured him.

Perhaps what captured Moses for good was God's revelation of a name that seemed to be both a riddle and a promise: "I will be who I am/I am who will be." God's name seemed to mean everything at once. That name explains that God claimed to be the author and owner of the verb "to be." This name disclosed that God is involved in everything and is the essence of integrity. That, combined with God's history with the patriarchs and attention to Israel's suffering, told Moses and everyone who comes after him what God is really like.

The God of Israel was different from other gods. The gods of Egypt, Rome, Greece and contemporary political/economic systems enslave people and demand blood to appease them. The God of Israel reveals that the one true divinity watches over people and listens to their cries to the point of suffering with them. This God did not often seek servants among the powerful because they are too sure of themselves, too quick to dominate. The God of Israel chooses servants from among the lowly, people who are innately prepared to share divine compassion for suffering and dominated creatures. Because these servants know their disabilities, they learn to rely on grace more than on themselves.

God lured Moses with the burning bush and told him the divine name so that he might get caught up in the mystery of who God is. The more Moses knew of God, the more deeply he became caught up in a lifetime cycle of loving God and God's people and of sharing the joys and sorrows of both, becoming as on fire as the bush that first got his attention – and freeing his people in the bargain.

God continues to act among us, seeking people willing to wonder, to fall in love, and then to act. Whether we are drawn to God through the name that is an ever-mysterious form of the verb "to be," or through the wonders of creation, God tries to attract us with a universe full of burning bushes and a multitude of names. God's attention-getting behavior aims at bringing us into a Moses-like cycle of loving God in and through creation, sharing people's joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties until not only we, but all the world is on fire with the unquenchable love of God. Though we may claim incompetence, that happens to be the first quality God is seeking. When we admit that much, God can do the rest.

By Mary M. McGlone. From the March 8, 2019 issue of The National Catholic Reporter.



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Lenten Observances

- Lent is the liturgical season which runs from Ash Wednesday until the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday.
- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of *total* fast and abstinence from meat.
- All the Fridays of Lent are days of Abstinence from meat.
- The **Law of Abstinence** from meat binds persons from the completion of their 14th year from the day after their 14th birthday, throughout life.
- The Law of Abstinence forbids the use of meat, but not eggs, milk or products or condiments made of animal fat. Permissible are soups flavored with meat, meat gravy and sauces.
- The **Law of Fasting** binds persons from the completion of their 18th year to the beginning of their 60th year, i.e., from the day after their 59th birthday.
- The Law of Fasting allows only one full meal a day, but does not prohibit taking some food in the morning and evening, observing as far as quantity and quality are concerned approved local custom. The order of meals is optional; i.e. the full meal may be taken in the evening instead of at midday. Also: (1) the quantity of food taken at the two lighter meals should not exceed the quantity taken at the full meal. (2) the drinking of ordinary liquids does not break the fast.
- In keeping with the spirit and meaning of the Lenten fast, Catholics are encouraged to observe the Good Friday fast through Holy Saturday and until after the celebration of the Easter Vigil.

Things Considered Anthony Kote-Wital

Deacon **Anthony Kote-Witah** returned from a meeting with the Capuchin Provincial Council last week wherein the details of his Call to Orders and future ministry path were discussed.

Deacon Anthony has been called to the Priesthood and will be ordained in ceremonies conducted at St. Clare of Montefalco Parish in Chicago on the Saturday after Easter, April 27th at 2 P.M. Three friars will be ordained transitional deacons at the same Mass: two Caps and one OFM. The ordaining bishop will be Most Rev. Paul Schmitz, Bishop of the Diocese of Bluefields, Nicaragua.

Anthony will celebrate his first Mass of Thanksgiving at St. Ambrose Parish, Chicago on Sunday, April 28th. This is a parish where he ministered while a student at Catholic Theological Union and it has a large number of parishioners from the African Diaspora.

Yes, you read that correctly. It's St. Clare of Montefalco and St. Ambrose Parishes ... in Illinois.

We will be organizing a contingent of Michigan Ambrosians who will attend both events. We will offer limited van transportation to Chicago and back. For those who choose, we will also reserve a block of hotel rooms in Downtown Chicago for those from our parish who wish to participate in the ceremonies as a group. If this is something you and your family wish to join in, then leave your contact information with us at the rectory. It will be a great show of support for us to arrive in Illinois at our sister parish.

If you cannot make the trip, Deacon Anthony will offer a mass of Thanksgiving *here* at St. Ambrose on the following Sunday, May 5th at 11:15 a.m. This will be followed by a lunch in the ARK for our parishioners and the family and guests of Deacon Anthony.

What a rare privilege has come to our parish that we have been able

to participate in four ordinations in as many years — three have come to us through our friends at the Capuchin Order: Frs. Tom Nguyen; Robert Wotypka and Anthony Kote-Witah. The fourth was a diocesan man, an actual "son of the parish," Fr. John Maksym.

I don't know of any other parish in the Archdiocese that has been able to participate directly in the formation and celebration of so many future priests in such a short period of time.

That tells me that God is somehow or other sending a focused invitation to the young men of our parish right now. I am convinced that there are several young men in the parish today who are sensing the call to Sacred Orders. For reasons known only to God himself, they have been influenced by the lives of these four – very different – men who have been ordained right before them. If God has called such a diverse group of individuals, they cannot assume that it's so strange that God is calling them.

If you, or someone you think needs to explore a call to priesthood, then you need to talk about it with me, or my pastoral minster, Chuck Dropiewski. God is patient, but God is not put off forever. The vocational path of all of our interns gives ample witness to that.

This Wednesday at Sacred Heart Seminary there is a night of prayer, testimony and inspiration alongside Eucharistic adoration. "Cultivating the Call" is a regional vocation gathering for those who work closest with our future vocations and for anyone who encounters those with a potential vocation – parent, teacher, priest, DRE, catechist, youth minister, etc.

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As I walked from table to table and talked with our guests at last Friday's Lenten Buffet, I was struck by the fact of how many had traveled a considerable distance to join us. There were visitors from Canada and Ohio and all points in the Metro area. Our Lenten Buffet has broad and strong appeal far beyond our parish. Word of mouth and positive comments on social media seem to be the driving force behind people wanting and willing to travel to St. Ambrose for what is seen as a great culinary and community experience.

It's been our contention for the past fifteen years that what we do on the Fridays of Lent is rarely duplicated. We started out by providing a beautiful place where diners feel welcome – where there is incredible interaction between strangers – and the food is well worth the price of admission. Add to that some good beverages and desserts and you have a winning formula.

This past Friday seems to witness to that as we exceeded 300 diners. While we have served that number in the past, we've never hit that high a number so early in Lent. Reservation requests for 20 persons have come into our office for next week. Not to jinx things, but could we finally be on the path to some sort of economic profit in addition to a sociological one?

Some of the credit needs to go to Chef Reva Constantine of the Great Lakes Culinary Center and her team who joined us this year. I can see why last year she was voted "Best Chef" in Hour Detroit's 2018 Best of Detroit Readers' Choice competition. Right from the start Chef Reva understood that we had a legacy to preserve and she and her team have done the utmost in honoring the past talents of Chef Paul Hohendorf and Chef Fred Whaley.

Right from the start, some fifteen years ago, these chefs of the ARK set out to make our event a buffet with lots of choices and (so far) unlimited passes at the table. The reality is that with a higher cost of food, we make no profit on food sales from our Fish Dinners even at \$17.95. Seen from the point of view as a business, we should not be operating our Lenten Buffets at the price point we are now. Yet, intuition tells me that we are onto something here. Unlike most parishes where Lenten Fish Fries are considered a fund-raising activity, ours may be something different. Maybe it's more of an evangelical activity? And how do you measure that?

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The economic boost from the Christmas collection is depleted (mostly to catch up with last fall's bills) and we are again struggling to make current bills. See what you can do to help the Lenten weekend collections – and plan on giving St. Ambrose a nice Easter present – please.

Rose Mass

The 20th annual Rose Mass for Catholic Health Care workers will be held next Sunday, March 31st in the chapel of Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit at 10:00 a.m. with Archbishop Vigneron as the main celebrant.

Mass will be followed by a light brunch and the Rose Lecture offered by Cherie Sammis, D. Bioethics, RN, NP. beginning at 11:30 a.m. Sammis is the Director of Ethics Integration from Ascension/Providence Rochester—accredited by the Michigan State Medical Society. This education activity meets the criteria for a maximum of (1.0) ANA PRA Category/Credity TM.

The topic for this year's lecture is "Responding to the Opiod Crisis in the Catholic Moral Tradition." For information, contact David Grobbel at grobbel. david@aod.org or (313) 237-5894.

There is no charge for this program, and registration does *not* need to be made in advance. Sacred Heart Seminary is located at 2701 Chicago Boulevard in Detroit. Secure parking is accessed off of Linwood Avenue.

Post Abortion Healing

Rachel's Vineyard is a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion. Weekend retreats offer you a supportive, confidential and non-judgmental environment where women and men can express, release and reconcile painful post-abortive emotions to begin the process of restoration, renewal and healing.

Rachel's Vineyard can help you find your inner voice. It can help you experience God's love and compassion on a profound level. It creates a place where men and women can share, often for the first time, their deepest feelings about abortion. You are allowed to dismantle troubling secrets in an environment of emotional and spiritual safety.

Do not continue to live in shame, fear or numbness. Call the toll-free national hotlines: Rachel's Vineyard: 877 HOPE 4 ME (877-467-3463) or the National Hotline for Abortion Recovery: 866-482-LIFE (866-482-5433).

Faith Formation Station

Lord, you have blessed us with good things: food, clothing, a home, kind family and friends, and Your love. We know that there are others in the world with less, who suffer needs; we want to be your partner in helping them.

This Lent, we pledge ourselves to fill our folders with alms so that your blessings may extend to all who are open to Your love.

Bless our collection folders and the offerings they will receive. May our sacrifice of such a little be multiplied in blessings for those helped. May we feel the peace and joy of those who act in Jesus, through whom we pray and give. Amen.

WHY DO CATHOLICS GIVE ALMS? Lent is a time when we focus on getting ready to renew our baptismal promises and reflect on the dying and rising of Christ that made our salvation possible. The three Catholic observances we follow during Lent are prayer, fasting, and giving alms. Almsgiving means giving money or necessities to people who need them. The Lenten call to almsgiving means making the needs of other people our own. Sharing our material goods is often just the beginning of real Christian giving. We are also called to share our time and talents helping people in need.

HOW CAN I GIVE ALMS? St. Ambrose Religious Education Program is collecting alms in daily donation quarter folders. Children are invited to place a quarter each day during Lent in the folder. Families might make this giving part of evening meals and say a prayer for someone in need as they place quarters in the folder. Children might offer to do good deeds to earn the quarters they offer. Encourage children to share their time and talents with others by volunteering as a family in the parish and out in the community. Volunteering can be as simple as arriving to Mass early and greeting people as they arrive or making and sending cards to lonely relatives or residents in a nursing home.

WHERE DO I TURN IN MY COIN FOLDER? Quarter folders can be placed in the collection baskets at Church on Easter Sunday or brought to Religious Education on April 28th.

WHERE WILL MY QUARTER DONATIONS GO? *Kay Lasante*, which means "House of Health" in Haitian Creole, is a Haitian-operated health clinic and community outreach project serving Port au Prince, Haiti. *Kay Lasante* was founded by St. Claire Parish in Haiti, the House of Grace Catholic Worker in Philadelphia, and Bishop Thomas Gumbleton of Detroit. Bishop Gumbleton is a friend of St. Ambrose Parish who celebrates mass with us. All funds collected will be gifted to his charity and presented to him by our religious education students. You can find more information on the missionary project at www.kaylasante.org.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REMINDERS:

Volunteer Information Session – March 24th 9:50 a.m. at Merit: Anyone who is curious about being more involved in our religious education program is invited to attend. If you think you might want to be a catechist or a classroom assistant but want to know more about the program first, this is the meeting for you.

Save April 13th for a Super Saturday – Holy Week for Families is our special offering held on that day from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. in the ARK

GPPSS Spring Break: There is Mass but no class on the following Sundays: March 31st and April 7th. Classes resume April 14th on Palm Sunday. See the upcoming email reminders regarding our special Palm Sunday Procession.

Journey of Hope

Calm is wonderful! It cultivates peace in our inner sanctuary — our interior heart, on this Journey of hope. Calm creates an atmosphere where we invite God to dwell during prayer. This activity is to be alone with the Savior. Calm leads us to the Divine Well were we drink to refresh our new life. The philosophy of our culture regarding quiet seems to focus on the opposite: noise. Noise is antagonistic to stillness of heart because in whichever direction we turn, there is always too much noise. Often we switch on the TV, and we are overrun with noise and emptiness. Truly, we are frequently blasted with noise, crowds, media, including the unremitting rumble of machines and cellphones. We need to use the opportunity the church offers us (prayer and fasting) fittingly. We need Calm as a prevailing remedy to restore our peaceable uniqueness.

Calm serves as a divine medicine, which makes us competent to accomplish the purpose of God in our life. We need to unplug our cellphone or email sometimes in order to reduce distraction. But, how could one embrace this beautiful gift of quiet? We are invited to take our meditative and contemplative prayers seriously. Secondly we are invited to create a virtuous relationship of reading and praying with your Bible. Since distraction is the number one enemy to prayer and concentration, we need to tune down or silence cellphone and radio especially while driving. Many people, as soon as they get home, grasp their TV remote. On the other hand, Calm could be very tough as well as challenging. It is a bit-by-bit practice.

The quiet of self-reflection is very essential for our spiritual growth on this journey of hope. It should be clear that Calm is not just a practice because we want it for its own sake. No! Rather, it strengthens our prayer lifestyle to build our relationship with our Savior. Calm is what Saints handed down to us to emulate. Obviously, Calm is the treasure of our unwavering hope. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be" (Mt 6:21). There is a great treasure in Calm because it carries great prospective. Jesus awoke, rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm (Mk4:39). Likewise, the psalmist encourages us to "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps 46:11). Parents can recall how they often tell their children, "Be at peace, silence, or sit still and be quiet!" Similarly, this is what God is also expecting of us in this beautiful season of retreat.

Conversely, Calm could be fruitless sometimes when we allow distraction to invade our purposeful thought. And so, let our stillness not bear ineffective fruit but encouraging fruit that expresses our thoughtful desires. When we embrace Calm, we are allowed to focus and be attentive to what is essential in our faith. May Calm become our wellspring of hopeful desire that draws us closer to God and our neighbors.

Dn. Anthony Kote-Witah, OFM Cap

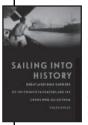
Heart of a Priest

A major relic of France's St. John Vianney, who is held up as the ideal for Catholic priests, will visit the Archdiocese of Detroit this month as part of a national relic pilgrimage hosted by the Knights of Columbus. The saint's incorrupt heart, contained in a special casing and visible to the faithful, will be available for public veneration at two locations:

- St. John Vianney Parish, 54045 Schoenherr Road in Shelby Township Saturday, March 30th from 2-8 p.m. with Mass at 5 p.m.
- Sacred Heart Major Seminary, 2701 Chicago Boulevard in Detroit Sunday, March 31st from 11:30 a.m.-5 p.m.

The tour has been dubbed "Heart of a Priest," which refers to the physical heart of John Vianney that has resisted decay for more than 150 years, as well as to the good character all priests are called to embrace. To learn more about the relic pilgrimage, please visit kofc.org/vianney.

Marcellina's Book Club



The Great Lakes create a vast transportation network that supports a massive shipping industry. In Sailing into History: Great Lakes Bulk Carriers of the Twentieth Century and the Crews Who Sailed Them, Frank Boles

relates seamanship, cargo, competition, cooperation, technology, engineering, business, unions, government decisions, and international agreements in a story of unrivaled interest.

We are in the process of connecting with the author to see when he can pay our book club a visit. That date will be announced here. In the meantime, pick up a copy of the book and get a headstart in reading this important work which was one of this year's twenty Notable Book Honorees by the State Library of Michigan.

The Beehive

is the parish weekly bulletin of the St. Ambrose Catholic Community Detroit/Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan

Pastor: Rev. Timothy R. Pelc
Assistant: Dn. Anthony Kote-Witah, OFM, Cap
Pastoral Minister: Charles Dropiewski
Religious Education: Kelly Anne Woolums
Minister of Music: Dr. Norah Duncan IV
Office Manager: Peggy O'Connor

Sacramental Celebrations

Masses: On the Lord's Day –
Saturday Vigil - 4:00 p.m.
Sunday - 8:30 and 11:15 a.m.
Baptism: Arrangements for both adults and infants to be made by contacting the rectory.
Penance: As announced and by appointment.
Marriage: Couples should contact the rectory

office a minimum of six months in advance of the proposed date to make arrangements.

Funeral: Normally celebrated within one week

after the deceased's passing.

Directory

Parish Office: 15020 Hampton Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan 48230 Tel: (313) 822-2814 Fax: (313) 822-9838 Email address: stambrose@comcast.net Religious Education: (313) 332-5633 Pastoral Ministry: (313) 332-5631 Ark Scheduling: (313) 822-2814 Parish Website: stambrosechurch.net

Liturgy Schedule for the Coming Week

Monday, March 25

The Annunciation of the Lord

8:30 a.m. - Morning prayer

Tuesday, March 26

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Mary Marzec Adeline Urbanski, Johannes Meingast

Wednesday, March 27

8:30 a.m. - Morning prayer

Thursday, March 28

6:00 p.m. - Confessions

7:00 p.m.. - Attilio & Zaira Maio

Friday, March 29

8:30 a.m. - Mass - Dolores Lavins

7:00 p.m. - Stations of the Cross

Saturday, March 30

1:30 p.m. - Wedding - Melissa Vogel & Joseph Chirco

3:00 p.m. - Confessions

4:00 p.m. - For All People

Sunday, March 41

Fourth Sunday in Lent

8:30 a.m. - For All People 11:15 a.m. - For All People



Scriptures for the Fourth Week of Lent

Monday, March 25

- Is 7: 10-12; 8: 10
- Heb 10: 4-10
- Lk 1: 26-38

Tuesday, March 26

- Dn 3: 25, 34-43
- Ps 25: 4bc-5ab, 6-7bc, 8-9
- Mt 18: 21-35

Wednesday, March 27

- Dt 4: 1, 5-9
- Ps 147: 12-13, 15-16, 19-20
- Mt 5: 17-19

Thursday, March 28

- Jer 7: 23-28
- Ps 95: 1-2, 6-9
- Lk 11: 14-23

Friday, March 29

- Hos 14: 2-10
- Ps 81: 6c-11b, 14, 17
- Mk 12: 28-34

Saturday, March 30

- Hos 6: 1-6
- Ps 51: 3-4, 18-21b
- Lk 18: 9-14

Sunday, March 31

- Jos 5: 9a, 10-12
- 2 Cor 5 17-21
- Lk 15: 1-3, 11-32

The Fourth Sunday of Lent March 30th and March 31st

4:00 p.m. - Celebrant: Bp Gumbleton Lector: Pat Ticknor Eucharistic Ministers: Della Cimini, Karen McShane, Matthew Strong Altar Servers: Andrew, Joseph, & Bethany Strong

8:30 a.m. – Sunday – Celebrant: Fr. Bede Lector: Norman Cure Eucharistic Ministers: Colleen Drummond, Christopher Harrison, Bob Jogan, Colleen Jogan, Steve Linne, Joellyn Valgoi, Chris Walsh Altar Servers: Nicholas, Margaret, & Meredith Kramer

11:15 a.m. - Celebrant: Fr. Pelc Lector: Leslie Leitch
Eucharistic Ministers: Thomas Bennert, Pat & Michael Moceri,
Sue & Roger Playwin, Darryl Swiatkowski, Patty Yaden
Altar Servers: Ava Boley, Liam O'Byrne

Your Envelope Speaks . . . the Inside Story

"He said to the gardener, 'For three years now I have come in search of fruit on this fig tree but have found none.'" (Luke 13:7)

We can all be like the barren fig tree at times. Do you cling to what you have, or do you generously share with others? How will you respond when God asks you what you have done with all the gifts He has given you? Remember, not only are we called to be generous, we are called to develop and nurture our gifts and return with increase.

Our Sick

Please pray for those who are seriously ill or who are hospitalized: Pat Blake, Karen Culver, Ann Sullivan Kay, Donald Miriani, Bonnie McKenna, Jeanne Noto, David Schumacker, Matthew Elias, George Bucec, Emilie Kasper, Anna Noto Billings, Vilma Rivers, Vilma Marone, Eileen O'Brien, Martha Luna, Dina Engels, Liz Linne, Donna Barnes, Betty Greenia, Alexandra Cullen, Charmaine Kaptur, Frank Gregory, Alex Billiu, Gladys Bogos, Wayne Wallrich and Lupe Davila.

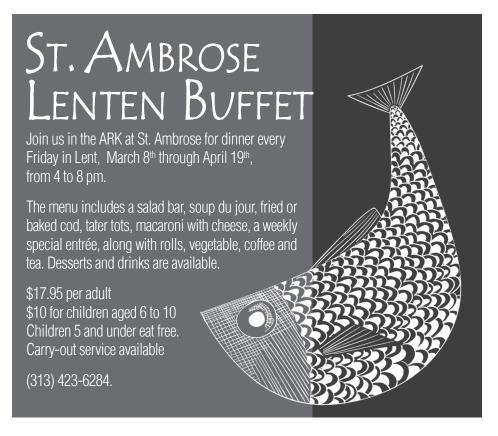
Lenten Prayer at St. Ambrose

On the Thursdays of Lent, our morning Mass shifts to a 7 p.m. time slot in order to give more people an opportunity to attend the liturgy during the weekdays of Lent — leading up to Holy Thursday.

Preceding Thursday night Masses (at 6 p.m.), as well as preceding Saturday afternoon Masses (at 3 p.m.), confessions will be heard.

This year Lent once again includes Friday night Stations of the Cross at 7:00 p.m. and our popular Fish Dinners which run from 4 to 8 p.m. Try this at least once this Lent: come for an early dinner and stay for Stations of the Cross. Or, come to Stations of the Cross and then enjoy a later dinner.

Good food and grace abounds! Sample a serving of both.



Marriage Coaching
Couples who are experiencing struggles and challenges in their marriage can receive help through the Archdiocese of Detroit-sponsored Marriage Coaching Ministry. The Marriage Coaching program is a couple-to-couple mentoring program designed to assist couples to live out God's plan for their marriage.

Trained Coaching Couples will give the support and practical tools needed to help couples to restore and realize the fullness they desire and is intended for their Catholic marriage. The Marriage Coaching program consists of seven main coaching sessions and is strictly confidential and at no cost.

To learn more and get the help you need for your marriage call 313-237-4680, visit www.aod.org/marriagecoaching or email familyministry@aod. org. All inquiries are strictly confidential. Sponsored by the Archdiocese of Detroit, Office for Marriage and Family.

