



News of the Diocese of Baker

April 9, 2017  
Volume 8 • Number 6

# THE DIOCESAN CHRONICLE

## *In Memoriam*

Virginia Lois Mohr

July 3, 1938 - January 11, 2017



Virginia Lois Mohr, long-time employee of the Diocese of Baker, died on Wednesday, January 11, 2017, of complications from Parkinson's disease.

Virginia was born July 3, 1938, in Omaha, NE, to Arthur Roy and Velva (Barker) Huntington. The family moved to Hillsboro, OR, in January of 1943, where Virginia grew up and graduated from Hillsboro Union High School. In 1955, she married James Kirkbride and they had three children: Anna Lee (nee Barbara Ann), Randy Allen, and Beth Anne Kirkbride. In 1978, she married Michael Mohr. David Michael and Michelle Renee Mohr were born out of this union.

Virginia was co-owner of Sisters Health Food Store in Columbia Falls with her sister, Loretta. In 1987, she came to work at the Diocese of Baker and worked as secretary for Religious Education. In 1989, Virginia became the Receptionist and it was during this time that Virginia occasionally cooked hot lunches for Bishop Connolly and the staff. In 2005, Virginia became the Tribunal Secretary until her retirement in July of 2013. "I love my job," she said, "it has been the best 25 years of my life."

Virginia loved holidays, reunions, and similar occasions that brought family together because she got to see her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren. She pursued different activities during her life, including bowling, square dancing, and cooking for family and friends, but her favorite activity was sewing, which included embroidery and quilting, and teaching others, especially her grandchildren. She was a member of the Mt. Bachelor Quilters' Guild for many years and contributed the St. Francis block for the 2005 City of Bend Centennial Quilt. For many years, she was a regular participant in hand quilting demonstrations given by guild members at the Sisters Oregon Quilt Show.

A memorial service was held March 11th at St. Thomas Catholic Church in Redmond. A private interment of her ashes will occur in the spring at St. Edwards Catholic Church in Sisters, Oregon. Memorial donations may be made in Virginia's name to the Partners in Care (Hospice) of Bend-La Pine.

## Matthew (Matty) Cunningham Our Miracle Child

On March 9th, Matthew Cunningham (aged 22 months) drowned in a pond near the Cunningham residence in Baker City. When his mother, Elsa, pulled him from the pond he was not breathing and had turned blue. Elsa immediately began chest compressions while his father, Matt, gave mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. Nearby, Matty's siblings knelt in prayer begging God for help, while Jonathan, the oldest sibling, called 911.



Emergency help arrived within minutes and immediately took charge of the situation and ran with Matty to the waiting ambulance. Sheriff Travis Ash was recruited to drive the ambulance so the EMS could focus on the child. When they arrived at St. Alphonsus Hospital in Baker City, the staff there gave a heroic effort, increasing Matty's chance of survival.

Acquaintances, as well as strangers, stood in prayer in the parking lot. They felt sure that at the end of the day Elsa and Matt would be planning their son's funeral.

As Matty was flown to Boise and then moved to St. Luke's Children's Hospital the prognosis didn't get any brighter. The initial blood work in Baker City told the story of a dead child, and most likely permanent damage if he did live.

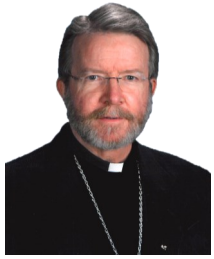
Along the way, person after person and physician after physician prayed with the Cunninghams, and over little Matty. This doesn't happen in a secular world, but again, God allows small miracles to form the foundation of one large miracle.

Amazingly, after a couple of days of forced sedation, Matty opened his eyes and looked around puzzled. Within minutes it was apparent that he knew us all, and even began to speak in his same fashion as before, calling us by name.

Matty is now back home after mere days, and doing not just remarkably well; he is perfect and unharmed. Know that God allowed this for a reason, and that reason may be that each of us would begin to believe in Him more fully. God is so good, so kind, and so loving. Miracles do happen!



written by Ann Kniesel, Baker City



## Thoughts Along the Way

Bishop Liam Cary

### The Challenge of Child Protection

It only took an instant, he told me thirty years later. In his sixteenth year, Bob's world turned upside down.

Growing up in a Catholic home where the parish priest was a familiar guest at the family table, he absorbed his parents' admiration for their charismatic pastor, whose fund-raising skills and organizational prowess kept their huge California parish humming with activity. Bob and his friends could often be found on the parish grounds working on some project Father had asked them to do. It was the early 1960s.

One afternoon, standing in the kitchen of the rectory with the pastor, Bob was astounded to see the priest make a sexually suggestive gesture to him. The next moment another priest walked in, and nothing more came of the pastor's alarming advance.

But Bob left the rectory forever changed. He had seen with his own eyes that this major figure in his life was not the man everyone thought him to be. Underneath the sure-footed, successful exterior lurked some darkly menacing inner man Bob never wanted to get close to again.

Being solicited to sin by a priest shook Bob's faith to the core, but he had no one to turn to for help. In the early 1960s public awareness of sexual abuse of minors was still thirty years in the future, and for young men reeling with confusion in the wake of such a sudden and shocking surprise no guidance was at hand.

Though Bob had done nothing wrong, he felt alone and ashamed and wanted no one to know why. Then he learned that his pastor had made similar advances to some of his friends. But aside from them who else would believe what he had seen? He had no witness and no evidence to back up his story. If he told it to anyone, it would be his word against Father's; and Father could explain Bob's story away by saying he took a priest's harmless glance to be something it wasn't. Knowing the reverence in which his parents held their pastor, Bob had to think they would likely prefer the priest's alternative explanation to his own if ever he could muster the courage to bring the darkness to light. So would a teacher, another priest, a newspaper reporter, on hearing testimony only his friends could corroborate. And they were all bound by the same strictures of secrecy as he.

So Bob and his friends and thousands like them buried the tragedy of priestly sexual abuse for decades, powerless to break out of its deafening hold.

Then, with the dawning of a new century, explosive press coverage burst the dam of secrecy and unlocked the

prison cells of silence. For the first time victims had a way to give voice to the soul-searing betrayal men they had trusted put them through. At last Bob and his friends could begin to heal the scarred memories that had cruelly misconfigured their lives.

In the past twenty years we have learned that the prospect of public disclosure is the single most effective deterrent to the sexual abuse of children and youth. This is why throughout the country, from the parish level up, the Church has sought to create an environment that is unfriendly to abusers because it is friendly to disclosure of the dark secrets that Bob and his friends had to carry alone.

With each passing year reports of child abuse in the Church have decreased. We can preserve this great gain in protective awareness only if we maintain the vigilance that brought it about.

## Pensamientos Del Camino

Obispo Liam Cary

### El Desafío de la Protección de Niños

Solo tomó un instante, me dijo él treinta años después. En su año decimosexto el mundo de Bob se volteó al revés.

Creciendo en un hogar Católico donde el párroco era un visitante familiar en la mesa de la familia, él absorbía la admiración de sus padres por el carismático párroco, cuyas habilidades de recaudación de fondos y destreza de organización mantenían a su enorme parroquia de California ocupada con actividades. Bob y sus amigos se encontraban a menudo en los terrenos de la parroquia trabajando en algún proyecto que el Padre les había pedido hacer. Era a principio de los años sesenta.

Una tarde, parado en la cocina de la rectoría con el párroco, Bob se asombró al ver que el sacerdote le hacía un gesto sexualmente sugestivo. Al instante siguiente entró otro sacerdote, y nada más vino del alarmante avance del párroco.

Pero Bob se fue de la rectoría cambiado para siempre. El había visto con sus propios ojos que esta figura importante en su vida no era el hombre que todos pensaban que era. Debajo del exuberante y exitoso exterior se ocultaba interiormente un hombre oscuro y amenazador, a quien Bob nunca quería acercarse de nuevo.

El ser solicitado a pecar por un sacerdote sacudió la fe de Bob hasta el fondo, pero no tenía a quien recurrir para pedir ayuda. A principios de los años sesenta, la conciencia pública del abuso sexual de menores era todavía treinta años en el futuro, y para los jóvenes que se tambaleaban confundidos por una sorpresa tan repentina

y aterradora, no había ninguna guía disponible.

Aunque Bob no había hecho nada malo, él se sentía solo y avergonzado y no quería que nadie supiera el porqué. Entonces se dio cuenta que su párroco había hecho avances similares a algunos de sus amigos. Pero aparte de ellos ¿Quién más podía creer lo que él había visto? No tenía testigos ni evidencias para respaldar su historia. Si se la decía a alguien, sería su palabra contra la del Padre; y el Padre podía desmentir la historia de Bob diciendo que él nada más interpretó una mirada inofensiva de un sacerdote como algo que no era. Sabiendo la reverencia que sus padres sentían por su párroco, Bob tenía que pensar que ellos probablemente preferirían la explicación alternativa del sacerdote a la suya, si alguna día su hijo pudiera traer la oscuridad a la luz. Así también habrían reaccionado un maestro, un sacerdote, o un reportero de periódico, al escuchar el testimonio que solamente sus amigos podían corroborar. Y todos ellos estaban atados por las mismas estructuras de secretismo que él.

Así que durante décadas Bob y sus amigos, y miles como ellos, enterraron la tragedia del abuso sexual por

parte de sacerdotes, sin poder salir de su abrazo ensordecedor.

Entonces, con el amanecer de un nuevo siglo, la cobertura explosiva de la prensa estalló la presa del secreto y abrió las celdas de la prisión del silencio. Por primera vez las víctimas tenían la posibilidad de dar voz a la traición de parte de aquellos sacerdotes en quienes habían confiado. Por fin Bob y sus amigos podían comenzar a sanar los recuerdos cicatrizados que habían mal configurado sus vidas.

En los últimos veinte años hemos aprendido que la probabilidad de la divulgación pública es el medio de disuasión más eficaz contra el abuso sexual de niños y jóvenes. Es por eso que en todo el país, desde el nivel parroquial hacia arriba, la Iglesia ha buscado crear un ambiente que es poco acogedor a los abusadores porque es acogedor a la revelación de los oscuros secretos que Bob y sus amigos tenían que llevar solos.

Con cada año que pasa, reportes del abuso de niños en la Iglesia han disminuido. Podemos preservar este gran logro de la conciencia protectora sólo si mantenemos la vigilancia que lo trajo a la luz.



Bishop Cary's January 1, 2013, *Pastoral Letter to Priests, School Principles and Directors of Religious Education* clearly states our commitment to 100% compliance with the USCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. All church employees regardless of their role and all volunteers working with children/youth are required to be compliant with this Charter.<sup>1</sup>

#### Safe Environment Audit Results 2013–2016<sup>2</sup>

Ministry Year (July 1-June 30)	2013 2014	2014 2015	2015 2016
<i>Criminal Background Checks</i>	95%	99%	98%
<i>Adult Safe-Environment Training</i>	78%	97%	96%
<i>Code of Conduct &amp; Internet Policies</i>	73%	93%	92%
<i>Family &amp; Youth Training</i>	67%	67%	65%

Information on the Diocese of Baker Protection of God's Children Charter is available on our website: [www.dioceseofbaker.org/protection\\_of\\_children.htm](http://www.dioceseofbaker.org/protection_of_children.htm).

If the status of the Protection of God's Children in your parish is unclear, please ask your Pastor.

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Cary's letter and details for diocesan Protection of God's Children training and resources are **available in English and Spanish** online at: [www.dioceseofbaker.org/protection\\_of\\_children.htm](http://www.dioceseofbaker.org/protection_of_children.htm).

<sup>2</sup> Every diocese in the U.S. undergoes an annual audit by a third party national organization.

#### CONTACTS FOR REPORTING ABUSE

All allegations or incidents of sexual abuse by clergy or laity to anyone under the age of 18 years of age should be reported immediately to the civil authorities:

**911 or Oregon Department of Human Services  
(1-855-503-7233)**

After reporting any abuse involving a minor to civil authorities, please contact our diocesan

**Safe Environment Coordinator, Barry Metzentine.  
(541-388-4004)**

For victim assistance services (e.g. counseling or medical services pertaining to abuse), please contact our Diocesan **Victim Assistance Coordinator, Angelina Montoya, MD. (541-678-5652)**

For allegations against a priest, deacon, seminarian, or adult lay staff of misconduct to an adult (18 years or older), please contact our **Vicar General, Very Rev. Richard O. Fischer, V.G. (541-891-9015).**

If criminal behavior is involved (e.g. rape, attempted rape, assault, and stalking), immediately report it to the police (**911**) and then the Vicar General. If in doubt about whether a behavior is criminal, call the police.

If you wish to know more about the Diocese of Baker's Protection of Children policies please contact Barry Metzentine (541-388-4004).



---

## PARISH NEWS: Sacred Heart, Klamath Falls

On February 11th and 12th, Sacred Heart Parish hosted a ministry fair at our parish hall in order to raise awareness about the various ministries in our parish, and to promote participation in them. The fair was hosted by Barb Maiss, Sacred Heart Parish Council president and Marty Weissinger, Sacred Heart Parish Council elect member who are both long standing members of our community and our church.

Many important ministries and organizations were present, including: the OIT Newman Club, Prayer Chain, Natural Family Planning, Hispanic Ministries, Adult Faith Formation, Vocation Awareness, Sacred Heart Altar Society, Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters, Religious Education, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Right to Life, Outreach, various liturgical committees and more.

The fair was well attended; even Barry Metzentine, Evangelization & Catechesis Director of the Diocese of Baker made an appearance!



---

## Priestly Ordination Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following as they celebrate their ordination anniversaries in April.

Rev. Lawrence Bower, Retired	April 06, 1988
Rev. Anil Kumar Marri, St. John, Condon	April 14, 2004
Rev. Shiju Thuruthiyil, OSH, St. Pius X, Klamath Falls	April 23, 2008
Rev. Papa Rao Pasala, St. Patrick, Heppner	April 24, 1997
Rev. Abraham Manthuruthil, SDB, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Chiloquin	April 29, 1990

*We are most grateful for the years of service of all our priests and bishop. Please keep them in your daily prayers.*

---

## St. Vincent DePaul Annual Fundraiser

MAY FLOWERS, an annual event held by St. Vincent de Paul Social Services, will be held on Friday, May 19th from 12:00-3:00 p.m. The event will consist of an Open House hosted by St. Vincent de Paul at their facility located at 950 SE Third Street in Bend. A light lunch and tours of the food pantry, facilities, and the affordable housing units will be provided. Their goal is to thank their community partners for all they do to enhance the lives of those living with lower incomes.

### MISSION & GOALS FOR 2017

- ♦ Food - We will serve 11,134 adults and 7,306 children providing food boxes to 600 families per month.
- ♦ Utilities - Help 120 households to pay their gas, electric, and water bills.
- ♦ Propane - We will give those living in campers and tents propane for heating and cooking.
- ♦ Prescriptions - We will provide in aid to people in need of critical medical prescriptions.
- ♦ Clothing & Blankets - We will distribute hundreds of coats, hats, gloves, blankets, and tents to help keep people warm in the winter months.
- ♦ Affordable Housing - We will provide 14 warm, safe homes for up to 32 men, women, and children.



Please join us by supporting this event with your attendance or you may go to the SVdP website for on-line giving [www.stvincentdepaulbend.org](http://www.stvincentdepaulbend.org).

For more information, please contact: Lisa Burley, Board President or Stephanie Obad Schmor, Director, at 541-389-6643 or by email at [stvincbend@integra.net](mailto:stvincbend@integra.net)

---

## Bishop Cary's Schedule:

April 9-16	Holy Week and Easter St. Francis de Sales Cathedral, Baker City
April 17	7:00 PM Confirmation Mass St. Katherine, Enterprise
April 18	7:00 PM Confirmation Mass St. Patrick, Vale
April 19	7:00 PM Confirmation Mass Blessed Sacrament, Ontario
April 20	7:00 PM Confirmation Mass St. Francis de Sales Cathedral, Baker City
April 22	5:00 PM Mass, Oregon State Catholic Daughters St. Francis of Assisi, Bend