

# New Earth

September 2020 | Vol. 41 | No. 8

The Magazine of the Catholic Diocese of Fargo



## No greater love

Bishop Folda ordains Fathers  
Durkin, Grossman, and Seitz

PLUS

From Bishop Folda:  
Voting as a Catholic

Worried? Fearful? It's time for  
bold and persistent prayer

St. Michael's Church, Pingree  
to celebrate final Mass Sept. 26



---

## ANNOUNCING AN UPCOMING RETROUVAILLE **WEEKEND FOR COUPLES**

---

**OCTOBER 2-4, 2020**

FARGO, ND

---

### **Not willing to let go of your marriage?**

**Many couples continue to struggle in a marriage, but are not willing to give up on each other. There is hope.**

Retrouvaille is a program designed to help struggling marriages regain their health. It helps a husband and a wife rediscover or re-awaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together. The program is highly successful in saving hurting marriages, even bringing reconciliation to couples who have already separated or divorced. Retrouvaille is a peer ministry of volunteer couples that can help you learn the tools of healthy communication, build intimacy and heal, just as they have done in their own marriages.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL (701) 356-7962 OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

**HELPOURMARRIAGE.COM**

## ON THE COVER:

Seminarians lead the procession out of the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo following the Mass of the ordination of Fathers Eric Seitz, Riley Durkin, and Jered Grossman on Aug. 8. (Rebecca Raber)

## TABLE OF CONTENTS



### FROM BISHOP FOLDA

4 Voting as a Catholic

### ASK A PRIEST

9 Aren't statues of saints idols?

### AROUND THE DIOCESE

10 Worried? Fearful? It's time for bold and persistent prayer

### COVER STORY

16 No greater love: Bishop Folda ordains Fathers Durkin, Grossman, and Seitz

### NEXT GEN

20 Stunning sidewalk art continues to inspire

### FAITH AND CULTURE

22 Learning to be joyful and prayerful from our children

### US/WORLD NEWS

33 Back to Mass: South Dakota diocese lifts Sunday dispensation

### SIDEWALK STORIES

35 There's a time to be silent and a time to shout

NEW EARTH

(ISSN# 10676406)

Our mission is to serve Catholic parishes in Eastern N.D. as the official monthly publication of the Diocese of Fargo.

#### Publisher

Most Rev. John T. Folda  
Bishop of Fargo

#### Editor

Paul Braun

#### Assistant editor

Kristina Lahr

#### Designer

Stephanie Drietz - Drietz Designs

#### Subscriptions

Parish contributions make it possible for each registered Catholic household in the diocese to receive 11 issues per year. For those outside the diocese wanting to receive New Earth, an annual \$9/year donation is requested.

#### Postmaster

Send address changes or subscription requests to:  
New Earth

5201 Bishops Blvd S., Suite A  
Fargo, ND 58104

#### Contact Information

To contact the New Earth staff:  
news@fargodiocese.org  
(701) 356-7900

Deadline to submit articles, story ideas, advertisements, and announcements for the October issue is Sept. 16, 2020. All submissions are subject to editing and placement.

New Earth is published by the Catholic Diocese of Fargo, a nonprofit North Dakota corporation, 5201 Bishops Blvd. S, Suite A Fargo, ND 58104. (701) 356-7900.

Periodical Postage Paid at Fargo, ND and at additional mailing offices.

Member of the Catholic Press Association

# Voting as a Catholic



**E**lection season is well underway, and the political campaigns are in full swing to get our votes. This year is different than most because of the coronavirus pandemic and the civil unrest that has roiled our nation for the last three months, so the election will have a different feel as well. But one thing that has not changed is our Catholic faith. Voting is a weighty responsibility for a citizen of this nation, but even more importantly, voting is a moral

act. By voting, we put into action what we believe in, and our faith should shape those decisions.

The Church is wary of identifying herself with any one political faction, so we don't endorse particular candidates or parties. They might be partially in harmony with our Catholic faith, but none are entirely aligned with what the Church believes. This does not prevent us, however, from taking a position on public policy and even specific legislation. There are some who say the Church should stay out of politics, but the Church has a voice and a role to play in promoting the common good and addressing the needs of our society. Formed by divine Revelation, the Church as the Body of Christ in the world has every reason to weigh in on important issues that will profoundly influence the well-being, even the life or death, of millions of people.

In their latest edition of "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship," the bishops of the United States reiterated their long-held position that the right to life is the preeminent issue of our time, and therefore should be considered by every Catholic as they prepare to vote in this year's election. In a conversation with a group of American bishops last January, Pope Francis reaffirmed his agreement with this same strong belief. Without protection of the right to life of every person, all other rights fall. This means that direct attacks on innocent human life, like abortion or euthanasia, may never be approved. This is non-negotiable. And in the arena of public policy, we should work actively to protect this most fundamental right.

Religious freedom is often called the "first freedom," because it was given pride of place in the Bill of Rights by the founders of our nation. They recognized the importance of protecting the right to practice one's faith openly, without fear of government interference or intimidation. Note well that we are not talking about a so-called "freedom of worship," which can easily be privatized by those who deny any place for religion in the public square. More and more do we see efforts to curtail religious freedom, or to subordinate that right to other "rights" that are not even mentioned in the U.S. Constitution. Some have even claimed that religious liberty is merely a front for bigotry. If we

as believers want to be assured of the freedom of religion, then we must cast our votes in such a way that that freedom will be protected and strengthened. Our elected officials must see and understand that religious freedom is essential to who we are as a people, and we expect them to respect and protect it.

Another issue of paramount importance is support for marriage and the family. Recent court decisions and government regulations have gravely undermined the traditional understanding of marriage in our society, but we still have a responsibility to work for the defense of marriage and family rights in our public activity, especially in the way we vote. Many public officials are eager to enact a total redefinition of marriage and family in all aspects of public life. Laws and regulations are being pushed forward throughout our country that would marginalize the traditional understanding of marriage and family, and would penalize those who hold to these beliefs. There is a growing and concerted effort to mandate the acceptance of false gender ideologies, regardless of our Catholic beliefs about human nature and the logic of science and the natural law. As active members of this society, and as voters, we should not cave in to these threats but should actively work to strengthen the place of marriage and family as designed by God in the public life of our nation.

Following the teaching and example of Jesus, the Church has always advocated for the poor and the downtrodden, the elderly and the sick, the child and the immigrant, people of every race and nation. How we treat the most vulnerable in our society is key to understanding the place of faith in our decision-making. We are also called to care for creation as the common home of all humanity. These are issues of justice and care for the common good, and our Catholic belief in the inherent dignity of every human person requires that we respond to those in need. There are many possible ways to address these needs, and there is room for prudential judgment in determining which public policy strategies will best serve the most vulnerable among us. But our faith does not allow us to ignore them. Jesus tells us: "Whatever you did for the least of my brethren, you did it for me."

For a more thorough consideration of election issues, I would suggest that you refer to the website of the North Dakota Catholic Conference ([ndcatholic.org](http://ndcatholic.org)), and click on "Your Faith, Your Vote," the conference's voter education website. This resource offers questions to ask as we prepare to vote, and helps us understand the key public policy issues before us. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has also reissued its voting resource, called "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship." This resource, which is available at [uscbb.org](http://uscbb.org), also helps to inform us as we prepare to cast our votes in November. It is important that we vote with an informed conscience, and not just based on whim or the talking points of different political campaigns. As Catholics, we have a rich body of social teaching to draw on as we make decisions that will set the course for our communities and our nation. Let us also pray to the Holy Spirit for the gift of wisdom, that we might discern and choose wisely when we enter the voting booth.

Following the teaching and example of Jesus, the Church has always advocated for the poor and the downtrodden, the elderly and the sick, the child and the immigrant, people of every race and nation. How we treat the most vulnerable in our society is key to understanding the place of faith in our decision-making. -Bishop John Folda

## BISHOP FOLDA'S CALENDAR

**Sept. 10 • 10 a.m.**

Diocesan School Principals  
and Pastors Zoom Meeting,  
Pastoral Center, Fargo

**Sept. 13 • 1:30 p.m.**

Confirmation and First Communion,  
Holy Cross, West Fargo

**Sept. 13 • 4:30 p.m.**

Confirmation and First Communion,  
Holy Cross, West Fargo

**Sept. 15 • Noon**

Catholic Charities Board Meeting,  
Pastoral Center, Fargo

**Sept. 15 • 6:30 p.m.**

Men of the Cross, Lindenwood Park, Fargo

**Sept. 18 • 4 p.m.**

St. JPII Schools Block Party,  
Bishop's Field, Shanley, Fargo

**Sept. 19 • 6 p.m.**

Deacon Hall of Fame Banquet,  
Sts. Anne and Joachim, Fargo

**Sept. 20 • 5 p.m.**

Mass for Equestrian Order of the Holy  
Sepulchre, Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

**Sept. 21 • 11 a.m.**

Shanley Scramble,  
Moorhead Country Club, Moorhead, Minn.

**Sept. 23 • 3:30 p.m.**

St. JPII Schools Board of Directors Meeting,  
Pastoral Center, Fargo

**Sept. 26 • 4:30 p.m.**

Closing Mass, St. Michael Church, Pingree

**Oct. 1**

Ordination and Installation of  
Most Rev. Michel Mulloy, Duluth, Minn.

**Oct. 4 • Noon**

Mass for Walk with Christ for Life,  
Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

**Oct. 4 • 1 p.m.**

Walk with Christ for Life,  
Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

**Oct. 6 • 5:30 p.m.**

Operation Andrew Dinner,  
St. Joseph Church, Devils Lake

**Oct. 7 • 9 a.m.**

First Mass and Blessing of new school  
chapel, St. John's Academy, Jamestown

**Oct. 8 • 5:30 p.m.**

Operation Andrew Dinner,  
Bishop's Residence, Fargo



## Diocese of Fargo Official Appointments/Announcements

*Most Rev. John T. Folda, Bishop of Fargo, has made the following appointments, announcements and/or decrees.*

Deacon Keith Due is appointed permanent deacon of St. Brigid's Church, Cavalier, and St. Patrick Church, Crystal, North Dakota effective July 8, 2020 and continuing *ad nutum episcopi*.

Deacon Raymond Grim is granted retirement from active ministry effective August 1, 2020.

Rev. Luke Meyer has been appointed Dean of Deanery III, Diocese of Fargo, ND for a term of five years beginning August 1, 2020.

Rev. Brian Moen has been appointed Dean of Deanery IV, Diocese of Fargo, ND for a term of five years beginning August 1, 2020.

Rev. Michael Slovak, S.O.L.T has been appointed pastor of St. Anne's Parish, Belcourt, ND; St. Anthony's Parish, Alcide, ND; and St. Michael the Archangel's Parish, Dunseith, ND; all for a six-year term beginning August 23, 2020.

### DECREE

## Uniting the parishes of St. Michael, Pingree and St. Margaret Mary, Buchanan

*In Nomine Domini. Amen.*

**W**hereas the Parishes of St. Michael in Pingree, ND and St. Margaret Mary in Buchanan, ND are subject to the Bishop of Fargo;

Whereas the diocesan bishop can alter parishes if he has heard the presbyteral council (c. 515 §2);

Whereas I have heard those whose rights could be injured, namely Msgr. Jeffrey Wald, Pastor; the parish council and finance councils of the respective parishes, and the members of the same by means of meetings of those bodies held on 10 September 2019 and 22 September 2019 (c. 50);

Whereas I have provided the presbyteral council sufficient information to judge the appropriateness and legitimacy of uniting the Parishes of St. Michael and St. Margaret Mary;

Whereas consultation regarding this matter occurred with the presbyteral council on 1 October 2019 according to the norms of canons 127 and 166.

Whereas just causes suggest that the Parish of St. Michael be united to the Parish of St. Margaret Mary, namely, that St. Michael's has a very small membership, and is unable to sustain itself financially. The parishes presently coordinate pastoral ministry, therefore the disruption would be relatively minimal.

Whereas I have determined that the good of souls requires it;

**Therefore**, the requirements of law having been fulfilled, I decree that the Parish of St. Michael in Pingree, ND, with all its rights, obligations, and privileges, is hereby united to and amalgamated with the parish of St. Margaret Mary in Buchanan, ND.

On account of this extinctive-union and amalgamation, this newly amalgamated parish is to be known as the Parish of St. Margaret Mary, effective **30 September 2020**. It comprises the territory of the former Parish of St. Michael in addition to the current territory of the Parish of St. Margaret Mary. The Parish of St. Margaret Mary remains in Deanery VII.

The temporal goods and patrimonial rights proper to St. Michael's are allocated to the Parish of St. Margaret Mary, and the intentions of the founders and donors must be respected (cf. c. 121). All the parish and sacramental records of the extinct Parish of St. Michael are to be properly preserved and safeguarded by the Parish of St. Margaret Mary.

This decree is to be published by means of the diocesan periodical, *New Earth*. It may be challenged within the peremptory time limit of ten days from the legitimate notification of the decree and in accordance with the norm of law (cf. c. 1734).

I take this opportunity to give thanks to God for the 115 years that St. Michael's has witnessed to the truth of the gospel in faith, hope, and love, and the blessings that this community has received through the gift of God in the sacraments and Mass which have nourished them for the past century.

†Most Rev. John T. Folda  
*Bishop of Fargo*

Given this 5th day of August, 2020  
At the Pastoral Center of the Diocese of Fargo

Mr. Timothy M. Olson, JCL  
*Chancellor*



## Prayer Intention of Pope Francis

### Respect for the Planet’s Resources

We pray that the planet’s resources will not be plundered but shared in a just and respectful manner.



Quotable

## St. Robert Bellarmine

Feast day Sept. 17

“The school of Christ is the school of love. In the last day, when the general examination takes place... Love will be the whole syllabus.”

### DECREE

## Relegating St. Michael’s Church to profane but not sordid use

*In Nomine Domini. Amen.*

**W**hereas St. Michael’s Church, Pingree, ND is a church subject to the Bishop of Fargo;

Whereas sacred places lose their dedication or blessing if they have been turned over permanently to profane use by the decree of the competent ordinary (cf. c. 1212);

Whereas the competent superior can relegate a church to profane but not sordid use provided that he has heard the presbyteral council, received the consent of those who legitimately claim rights for themselves in the church, and provided that the good of souls suffers no detriment thereby (cf. c. 1222 §2);

Whereas grave causes suggest that this church no longer be used for divine worship, namely, the necessary resources to maintain the edifice in a suitable manner are gravely lacking.

Whereas I have provided the presbyteral council sufficient information to judge the appropriateness and legitimacy of the relegation of this church to profane but not sordid use;

Whereas consultation regarding this matter occurred with the presbyteral council on 14 July 2020, according to the norms of canons 127 and 166;

Whereas the pastor and people of the parish territory in which the church is located were heard on 22 September 2019;

Whereas I have received the consent of those whose rights might be

legitimately harmed, namely, the pastor of the parishes concerned;

Whereas I have ensured that the altar, sacred objects, and religious artifacts have been safeguarded;

Whereas I have made appropriate provision to assure that good of souls will not suffer any detriment as a result of this relegation;

**Therefore**, the requirements of law having been fulfilled (cf. c. 1222 §2) I hereby relegate the Church of St. Michael, located at 518 Bentley Ave, Pingree, ND 58401 to profane but not sordid use, effective **30 September 2020**. At that time it loses its blessing, dedication, and consecration, and may no longer be used for divine worship.

This decree is to be published by means of the diocesan periodical, *New Earth*. It may be challenged within the peremptory time limit of ten days from the legitimate notification of the decree and in accordance with the norm of law (cf. c. 1734).

†Most Rev. John T. Folda  
Bishop of Fargo

Given at the Chancery  
This 5th day of August, 2020.

Mr. Timothy Olson, JCL  
Chancellor

# Saint of the month

## Saints Cosmas and Damian

By Kristina Lahr



**Feast day:** Sept. 26

**Patron:** pharmacy and medicine

**Birth:** 3rd Century **Death:** 3rd Century

**Y**ou may have heard the names Cosmas and Damian during the Eucharistic prayer at Mass. The priest calls to mind all members of the Church, including the saints in heaven, and acknowledges that we are all united as we worship God. Cosmas and Damian and the other saints named in this prayer, gave special witness to the faith in their lives. Some were involved in establishing local Christian communities throughout the world.

Like many saints in the early centuries, little is known about them, but their witness to the faith was so strong that people passed their story onto others throughout the years. According to some stories, Cosmas and Damian were twin brothers born in Arabia and went to Syria to become physicians. They brought their belief in Christ to all their patients and didn't charge any fees for their services.

When the governor of Celicia heard about Cosmas and Damian, he summoned them before him. They proclaimed they were Christians, so the governor had them tortured and beheaded. As a result, devotion to these brothers grew and many were healed through their intercession.



### Prayer for Priests

Gracious and loving God, we thank you for the gift of our priests.

Through them, we experience your presence in the sacraments.

Help our priests to be strong in their vocation.

Set their souls on fire with love for your people. Grant them the wisdom, understanding, and strength they need to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

Inspire them with the vision of your Kingdom.

Give them the words they need to spread the Gospel.

Allow them to experience joy in their ministry.

Help them to become instruments of your divine grace.

We ask this through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns as our Eternal Priest.

Amen.

# Aren't statues of saints idols?



## ASK A PRIEST

Monsignor Brian Donahue  
*Pastor of St. Philip's Church, Hankinson,  
 and St. Anthony's Church, Fairmont*

One of my uncles was traveling by boat after WWII with his fellow soldiers. The long journey allowed the soldiers time to rest and share their life philosophies with one another. My uncle told me that one day he and his buddy were discussing religion when his friend proposed the topic of idol worship. The claim was that Catholics worship idols because of their statues and paintings of saints. His friend believed Catholics ought to get rid of such idols. My uncle nodded his head, not in agreement but as if to contemplate the statement of his friend. He then asked his friend if he had any photos of his loved ones and if he could see them. Enthusiastically his friend brings out his photo of his wife and children and hands them to my uncle. With photos in hand, my uncle asks for permission to tear up these photos since they are just idols. You can imagine the response from his friend.

Many believe that praying with saints or angels is a type of idolatry, as if we are stealing power and authority from Jesus, the Son of God. But Jesus Christ enjoys sharing his power and authority. In the Gospel of Matthew, “[Jesus] summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits to

drive them out and to cure every disease and every illness” (Matt. 10:1). Later he says, “Amen, I say to you that you who have followed me, in the new age, when the Son of Man is seated on his throne of glory, will yourselves sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matt. 19:28).

**We regularly offer to pray for each other, or we ask others to pray for us. As Jesus says, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).**

—Monsignor Donahue

I wonder if a person who is not open to praying with the saints really believes in eternal life and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When a person passes on from this life, they have the potential to be an even stronger prayer partner once they enter eternal life in Christ. We regularly offer to pray for each other, or we ask others to pray for us. As Jesus says, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them” (Matt. 18:20).

The reality is that we are always in communion with our brothers and sisters whether here on earth or in eternal life. So let us join them in prayer for ourselves and our sisters and brothers throughout the world.

*Editor's note: If you have a question to suggest for consideration in a future column, send to [news@fargodiocese.org](mailto:news@fargodiocese.org).*

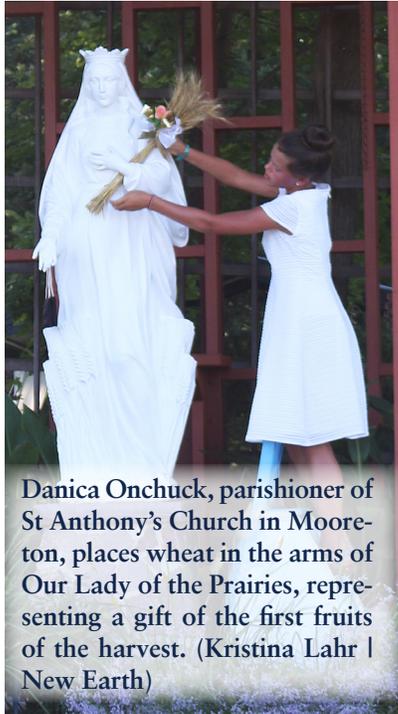
## Monsignor Brian Donahue honored with Quilt of Valor



Monsignor Brian Donahue received the Quilt of Valor on Aug. 6 at the Pastoral Center in Fargo. Cathy Adams nominated Monsignor Donahue for the honor for his service to the United States both in active duty in Germany and Iraq and his service to the North Dakota Army National Guard and at the United States Military Academy West Point. Monsignor Donahue served as a chaplain for the Military Archdiocese from 1987 to 2008. (Kristina Lahr | New Earth)

# Worried? Fearful? It's time for bold and persistent prayer

By Kristina Lahr



Danica Onchuck, parishioner of St Anthony's Church in Mooreton, places wheat in the arms of Our Lady of the Prairies, representing a gift of the first fruits of the harvest. (Kristina Lahr | New Earth)

Faithful gathered at the Carmel of Mary Monastery near Wahpeton on Aug. 16 for the 64th Annual Pilgrimage to Our Lady of the Prairies. Pilgrims prayed all the mysteries of the Rosary for the end of the pandemic, peace in the world, a bountiful harvest, and the Carmelite sisters who pray for each of us in the Fargo Diocese each day. The day also included speaker Father Kurtis Gunwall, Reconciliation, and Mass celebrated by Bishop Folda.

The day's Gospel was from Matthew 15:21-28 where Jesus goes to the pagan region of Tyre and Sidon, and a Canaanite woman there calls out to him saying,

"Have pity on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is tormented by a demon." Initially, Jesus doesn't respond to her.

"By his silence, he was testing to see if she really had faith or if her plea was just another act of superstition," Bishop Folda said in his homily. "But she persists with her pleading and Jesus even kind of brushes her off and seems on the surface to insult. 'It's not right take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs,' he says. That would have been a common attitude of the Israelites for the Gentiles. They would have dismissed them as Gentile dogs. But the woman doesn't give up. 'Even the dogs,' she says, 'eat the scraps that fall from the table of their masters.' Once again, Jesus was testing this woman's faith. She was pleading for her daughter out of compassion, and her faith was real. She recognized in Jesus the one who could overcome evil that affected her daughter. She called him Lord and Son of David, something many of the Jews refused to do. And Jesus clearly was amazed at her faith. 'O woman great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.'"

The woman's faith in Jesus grew out of the persistence of her

prayer. It was faith in Jesus's love and mercy that she continued to plead for his help even when he tested her.

"We're living in challenging times," Bishop Folda said. "Prayer is needed now more than

ever. Bold and persistent prayer. The pandemic that overshadows our nation and world has turned things upside down and has brought suffering to millions of people. Our country is tormented by the demons of violence and upheaval. We live in a pagan culture that has forgotten the salvation that Jesus won for us and chases after all kinds of false gods and a hedonistic way of life. The conditions faced by our farmers and all who work the land are as challenging as ever. It would be easy to give up and walk away, give up on faith. It would be easy to lash out at God and blame him for our troubles. But my friends, what is needed is faith, a humble and persistent faith."

Father Kurtis Gunwall, pastor of St. Anthony's, Mooreton and Sts. Peter and Paul, Mantador, spoke of the importance of Mary in our lives and how drawing close to her draws us closer to Jesus, especially in difficult times.

"Mary is our model because she stayed close to Christ and she pondered the working of God and the words of her son her entire life. She suffered with him. She remained close and knew that a sword would one day pierce her own heart. She teaches us to remain close, carry the crosses Jesus allows to us to share in, and be willing to suffer with him for the salvation of souls."

Pilgrims pray the rosary through the woods surrounding the Carmel of Mary Monastery near Wahpeton on Aug. 16. (Kristina Lahr | New Earth)

# Real Presence Radio hosts Incredible Parish Challenge

By Lori Kalgard

*Director of Marketing & Events for Real Presence Radio*

**RPR**  
**NETWORK**

Real Presence Radio  
*Your Family of Faith and Hope*

The Real Presence Radio (RPR) network serves almost 1,000 parishes throughout 10 dioceses. These parishes support RPR by publishing information about fundraising events, sharing the RPR mission through parish talks, and displaying RPR parish stands and marketing materials. RPR is returning their kindness by including parishes in the Incredible Parish Challenge during the upcoming Fall Live Drive Oct. 6–9.

During the Drive, participating parishes have the opportunity

for a 20-minute on-air interview where the priest or a parish representative will showcase incredible happenings unique to their parishes. Donors who call in during the Live Drive can pledge their support to RPR, mention their parish name, and their donation will be attributed to that parish in the challenge. One \$1,000 prize will go to the parish that raises the most money for RPR. A second prize \$1,000 prize will go to the parish that has the most call-in pledges. The second-place prize in both categories will be a \$500 public awareness campaign that can be used within the next year.

Tune in to Real Presence Radio Oct. 6–9 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to hear more about these incredible parishes, inspirational stories of faith and hope, and your chance to win daily drawings including books, gift cards, RPR gear, and more!

## Seminarians receive new ministries

By Kristina Lahr



Seminarians gathered at Sts. Anne and Joachim Church in Fargo on Aug. 7 for Vespers and Mass after a week of fraternity before returning to seminary. Seth Skjervheim was admitted to candidacy. Becoming a “candidate” for the priesthood is an expression of internal confidence that the Lord is leading a call to the priesthood. Quinn Krebs and Andrew Meyer were installed as lectors, individuals specially tasked to proclaim scripture during the liturgy. Robert Foertsch, Matthew Kensok, and Joseph Lit-

tlefield were installed as acolytes, individuals specially tasked to distribute Holy Communion. Prior to the liturgical changes of the Second Vatican Council, only the priest proclaimed scripture at Mass or distributed Holy Communion. The Church however, retains the ministries of lector prior to entering Theology II and acolyte prior to entering Theology III for those preparing for the priesthood. (Photo by Father Kyle Metzger)

# St. Michael's Church, Pingree to celebrate final Mass Sept. 26

By Lynn Nieland

*Parishioner of St. Michael's Church, Pingree*



Outside of St. Michael's Church, Pingree. (submitted photo)



Parishioners of St. Michael's Church in Pingree gather with Bishop Folda during a parish visit in January 2018. (submitted photo)

Because of declining numbers and resources, the time has come to say goodbye to St. Michael's Church in Pingree. A final Mass will be celebrated Sept. 26 at 5 p.m. This Mass and the dinner that follows will be an opportunity for parishioners and friends to give thanks for those who have gone before them. Although the decision has been difficult, parishioners are thankful for their faith and commitment to the Church that has inspired many through the years.

St. Michael's Catholic Church was named after the patron saint of Michael J. Byrne, who was the section boss for the Northern Pacific Railroad. Mr. Byrne and his wife lived in the section house in Pingree, and they invited Father McFee from Jamestown to Pingree to celebrate the first Mass in the section house in the spring of 1896. Irish railroad workers drifted into the area, and it became customary to have regular Mass at the section house. Mrs. Byrne would serve dinner to the small group after the Mass.

In 1905, a 16 X 20 foot church was completed at the cost of \$600. The founders of the church were Michael J. Byrne, Peter, James, and John McCarthy, Peter Gaffney, Dan Kavanaugh, and Patrick Butler. The church and cross were painted a vivid green. The little green church on the prairie was appropriately opened on St. Patrick's Day, 1905, by Father Duffy. There were 30 families and 130 parishioners recorded when the parish was formed. The following year, Bishop Shanley blessed the church and placed it under the patronage of St. Michael. The church was enlarged in 1914 at a cost of \$600 and painted white. This structure stood until 1963. The rectory was completed in 1917 under the direction of Father Richard Galvin at an approximate cost of \$4,000. A remodeling project on the rectory was completed in 1961.

In 1957, discussions were held concerning the future of St.

Michael's. The consensus was that the parish should continue. It seemed out of the question to build a new church with 35 families, but a few generous donations made the decision easier. A building committee of Roger Nieland, Henry Linzbach, Ralph Kortendick, Adolph Neys, and Arnold Ginsbach led the planning of the new church building.

In 1963, plans for a new larger church became a reality. The old building was torn down and all reusable lumber was salvaged. Under the leadership of Father Sebastian Schramel O.S.B., the parishioners volunteered countless hours to plan and build the new church in one year. The project was completed in August of 1964. St. Michael's was dedicated on August 23, 1964 by Bishop Leo Dworschak. He praised the community for its accomplishment in building a church valued at \$65,000 for only \$35,000. On Sept. 29, 1968, Saint Michael's held a mortgage burning ceremony.

In 1965, the three parishes of Fried, Buchanan, and Pingree were put under the direction of one priest and a tri-parish council was formed. Each church also retained its own council. The tri-parish was dissolved in 1997.

Since 1982, the priests from St. James Basilica have served the parish. For a number of years, Mass was celebrated at St. Michael's of Pingree during the fall and winter months, and at St. Margaret's of Buchanan in the spring and summer months. In the fall of 2019, the parish and finance council voted to discontinue Mass at St. Michael's and petitioned Bishop Folda to begin the process of closing their church.

*Editor's note: If you wish to attend the final Mass and dinner at St. Michael's on Sept. 26, RSVP at St. James Basilica at (701) 252-0119.*

# Putt 4 a Purpose supports Diocese of Fargo seminarians and youth



Congratulations to the winners of the Putt 4 a Purpose annual golf tournament! The winning team was SMP Health System (left photo) which included Terry Welle, Aaron Alton, Chuck Sjostrom, and Mike Bruckbauer. The winning parish was St. Philip Neri, Napoleon (right photo) which included Father Neil Pfeifer (pastor), Jamison Fettig, Clarence Moch, Dave

Becker, Jr., and Woody Becker. Thirty-three teams golfed at this year's scramble at Rose Creek Golf Course in Fargo on Aug. 3. Proceeds from the event benefit seminarian education and youth programs throughout the Diocese of Fargo such as the March for Life, SEARCH, Catholic Youth Advisory Council (CYAC), and youth camps.

## Thank You to our **SPONSORS** for making the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Putt 4 a Purpose Golf Tournament **A SUCCESS!**



### Eagle Sponsors

- CapTrust
- CHI St. Alexius Health
- Diamond Hill Captial Mgmt.
- KC Council #1883, Jamestown
- Napoleon Livestock
- National Investment Services
- QED Embedded
- Same Day Mattress
- SMP Health System

### Par Sponsors

- Brown Advisory
- Catholic United Financial
- Edward Jones
- Graybar Electric
- Rose Management
- Rosewood on Broadway
- Villa Maria

### Other Major

- Brookstone Properties
- Catholic Mutual Group
- First International Bank
- Lunseth Plumbing & Heating
- MBA Architects
- MBN Engineering
- Zerr Berg Architects

### Hole Sponsors

- Hornbacher's
- JP II and Diocese of Fargo
- Catholic Schools
- New Earth Magazine
- Real Presence Radio

Thank you to all who sponsored the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Putt 4 a Purpose golf scramble held on August 3<sup>rd</sup>, at Rose Creek Golf Course in Fargo.

This year 132 people participated to raise funds to benefit seminarian education and youth programs throughout the Diocese of Fargo.

# A Portfolio of *Protection*



*Permanent Life Insurance*

*Term Life Insurance*

*Retirement Annuities*

*Long-Term Care Insurance*

*Disability Income Insurance*

- Our signature product. Insure your life for life.
- Affordable protection for temporary needs.
- Retirement income you can count on. Guaranteed.
- Protect your assets. Get quality care. Prepare for the future.
- Receive an income even when you are sick or can't work.

The Knights of Columbus offers a full-line of quality, flexible products backed by our highly-rated financial strength\* to help protect your Catholic family.

\* As of 01/2018, rated A+ Superior by A.M. Best

LIFE INSURANCE • DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE • LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE • RETIREMENT ANNUITIES



**Steve Bill**  
*FIC*

Fargo  
701-371-3377



**Wayne Cherney**  
*FIC, LUTCF*

Devils Lake  
701-662-4420  
701-739-8143  
1-800-906-6780



**Joel Herman**  
*FICF*

Wahpeton/  
Jamestown  
701-219-5847



**Sean Osowski**  
*FIC*

Grafton  
701-360-0770



**Jim Suda**  
*FICF*

Grand Forks  
701-430-0604

**The Dolan Agency**

**Pat Dolan**, *FICF*  
*General Agent*  
Fargo  
701-298-9922  
Patrick.dolan@kofc.org



# STORIES OF FAITH

## Prayer blankets a gift of love for ill and suffering

Originally printed in *Park River Press*

By Father Bert Miller



Sewers from St. Mary's Church in Park River, Diane Schmitz (far left) and Rita Beneda (far right), and sewers from St. Luke's Church in Veseleyville, Dawn Jarolimek (left) and Bunny Peterka (right) gather to view some of the prayer blankets made by various members of the two sewing groups. (submitted photo)

COVID-19 cases are rising in our country and community. We are concerned, scared, and overwhelmed. Many are praying for the elderly, the young, and those in the middle. Some who have been sick in the past with various diagnoses (cancer, heart disease, etc.) have sought something comforting from those praying for them. They ask for a reminder of how awesome is the work of the prayers.

When Diane Schmitz, parishioner of St. Mary's Church in Park River, had cancer a few years ago, she was given a "prayer blanket" from a relative. It reminded her of the prayers of her friends, family, and hometown community in St. Joseph in Red Lake Falls, Minn.

That prayer blanket symbolized for Diane the love of God as the Holy Spirit surrounded her and encouraged her until hope could return to her heart. The prayer blanket is a gift of love and prayers.

During Advent in 2019, Diane and a team of women at St. Mary's Church in Park River and St. Luke's Church in Veseleyville began sewing prayer blankets for the sick in our area and for relatives far away.

Recently, Walsh County neighbors/friends of any faith or no faith were invited to stop by either church to pick up a prayer blanket to give to a sick person. An insert in the blanket gives more information about the ministry. Also, there is a sign-in notebook to provide the name of the person who will receive the prayer blanket—so someone does not get 10 blankets and so the churches of St. Mary's and St. Luke's can add the recipient's name to their weekly prayer lists.

However, sometimes people prefer getting items like the prayer blanket from their own church. This is great! If other churches would prefer to have prayer blankets available in their churches or make their own, Diane said the St. Mary's crew would be delighted to provide a sample prayer blanket and the enclosed flyer to help them get started with their own sewing and

distribution plan.

Readers can contact Diane through Father Miller's office in Park River (701) 284-6165 or bert.miller@fargodiocese.org.

# Hurley's

Religious Goods Inc

Serving our faith community Since 1951

## Religious Gifts for all Occasions



- Baptism - Communion - Confirmation
- Weddings - Art Work - Statues - Jewelry
- Crucifixes - Candles - Books - Church Supplies
- Nativity Sets - Concrete Statues - Rosaries
- Children and Baby Gifts - Greeting Cards

Melissa & Doug

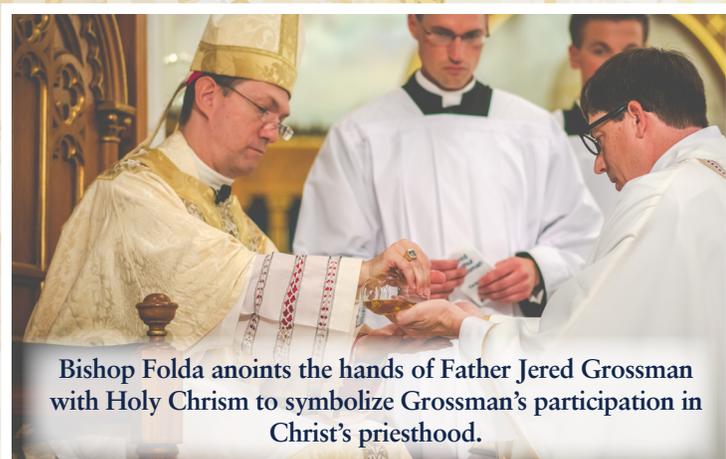
Big Selection of  
Melissa and Doug  
Toys & Puzzles

1417 S University Dr - Fargo ND 58103  
1-800-437-4338 - info@hurleysrg.com

# No greater love

Bishop Folda ordains Fathers  
Durkin, Grossman, and Seitz

Article by Kristina Lahr  
Photos by Rebecca Raber



Bishop Folda anoints the hands of Father Jered Grossman with Holy Chrism to symbolize Grossman's participation in Christ's priesthood.

Fathers Riley Durkin, Jered Grossman, and Eric Seitz were ordained to the priesthood on Aug. 8 at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo. While the ordination was delayed two months due to COVID-19, and social distancing guidelines made a formal reception impossible, it was no less a joy-filled day for the diocese and the universal Church.

In his homily, Bishop Folda encouraged the new priests to follow the examples of St. Junipero Serra, Blessed Stanley Rother, and Father Michael McGivney in their resolve to be missionaries, martyrs, and faithful in their ordinary workings of a parish.

"Each of these holy men has something to teach us, but most importantly, they remain images of Christ in the world as priests, prophets, and shepherds," he said. "Like them, you will offer our Lord's sacrifice in the Mass and feed the faithful with his Body and Blood. Understand what you do, and imitate what you celebrate. You will forgive sins in his name and reconcile sinners to the God who loves them. Like these holy priests, you

Durkin, Grossman, and Seitz lay prostrate before the altar while they and the congregation pray for the saints' intercession.



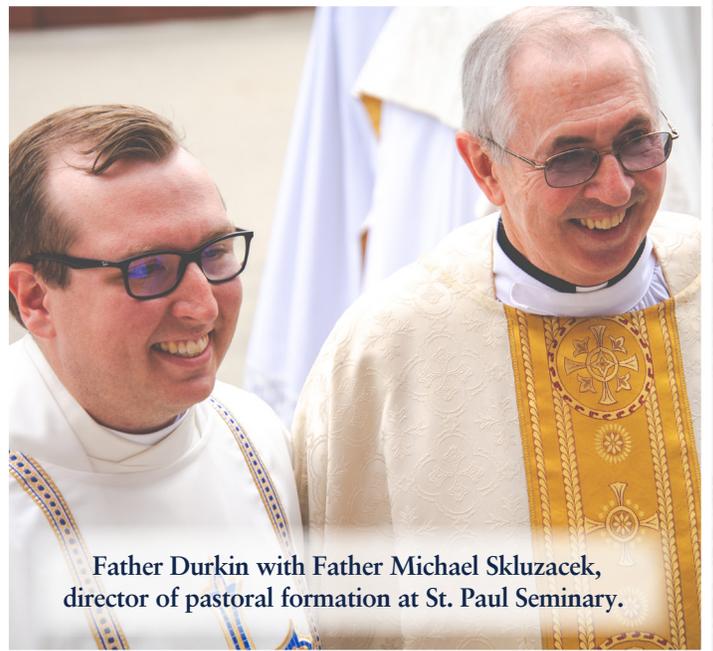
will proclaim the fullness of the Gospel and form the People of God in the truth that Jesus reveals, a truth that our world often rebels against. Meditate on this Word, and as the liturgy tells us, believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach."

Upon being ordained, these three men began their ministry as parochial vicars: Father Jered Grossman at St. Michael's, Grand Forks, Father Eric Seitz at St. John's, Wahpeton, and Father Riley Durkin at Holy Cross, West Fargo.

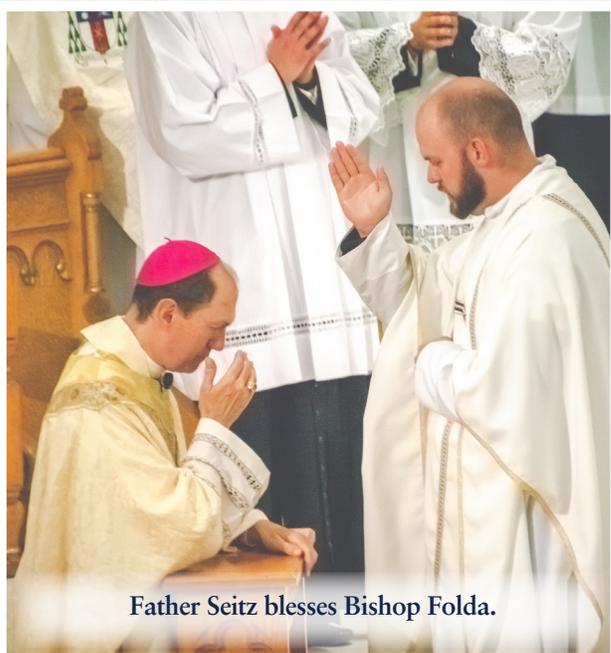
"My dear sons," said Bishop Folda, "you have been called by our Lord to be his priests in an interesting time. The challenges are many, the opportunities are endless, and the grace of God is unfailing. Place all of your trust in him, and keep before your eyes Christ the Good Shepherd and High Priest, who came not to be served but to serve, who came to seek out and save what was lost."



Riley Durkin, Jered Grossman, and Eric Seitz are called forward as candidates for priesthood.



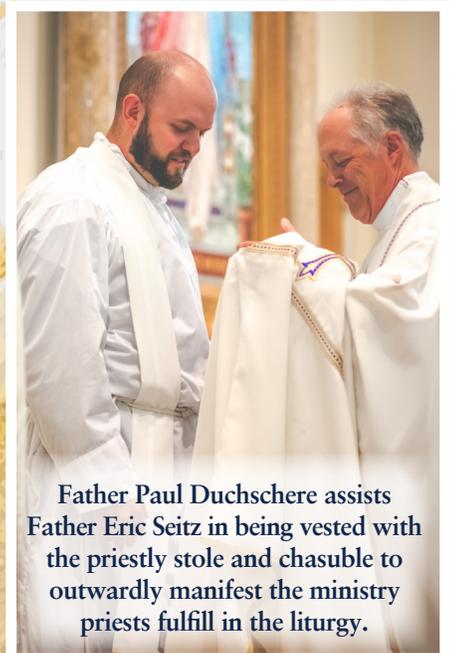
Father Durkin with Father Michael Skluzacek, director of pastoral formation at St. Paul Seminary.



Father Seitz blesses Bishop Folda.



Father Riley Durkin's parents Kevin and Lisa Durkin bring the gifts to the sanctuary.



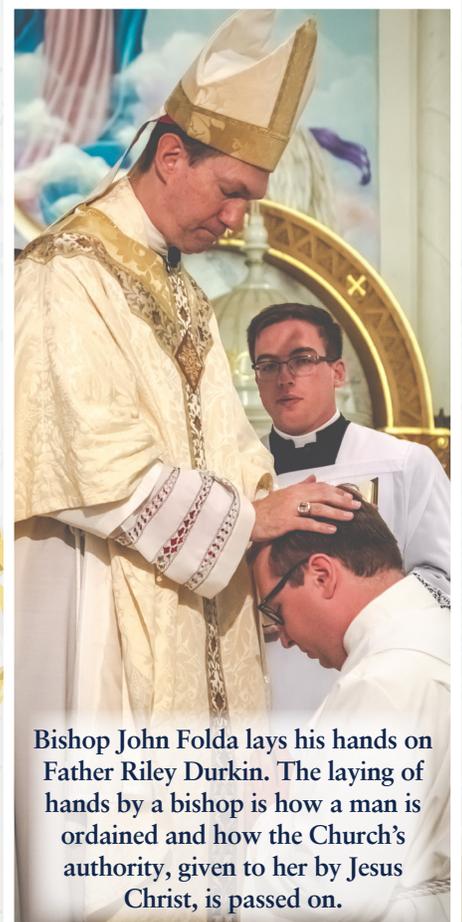
Father Paul Duchscherer assists Father Eric Seitz in being vested with the priestly stole and chasuble to outwardly manifest the ministry priests fulfill in the liturgy.



Fathers Kyle Metzger, Troy Simonsen, and Patrick Parks lay hands on those to be ordained to signify incorporation into the Presbyterate.



Father Grossman prays part of the Eucharistic Prayer.



Bishop John Folda lays his hands on Father Riley Durkin. The laying of hands by a bishop is how a man is ordained and how the Church's authority, given to her by Jesus Christ, is passed on.



**SAINT PAUL  
SEMINARY**

The Seminaries of Saint Paul

**Congratulations, Father Riley Durkin!**

[semssp.org](http://semssp.org)



**SAINT PAUL  
SEMINARY**

The Seminaries of Saint Paul

**Congratulations, Father Eric Seitz!**

[semssp.org](http://semssp.org)

# Stunning sidewalk art continues to inspire



**M**aria Loh of Fargo was at it again with her sidewalk art in July, this time with a stunning recreation of the famous Byzantine icon Our Lady of Perpetual Help. Created in 1499, the original icon now hangs in the Church of St. Alphonsus in Rome. The Redemptorist religious order was given custody and responsibility of the icon in 1867 by Pope Pius IX. Copies of the icon may be found in Redemptorist parishes all around the world, and most recently on a Fargo sidewalk, thanks to the talents of the resident chalk artist. (submitted photo)



[www.smphs.org](http://www.smphs.org)

*Caring for you*



**SMP Health System**

## Serving North Dakota

- Bottineau - St. Andrew's Health Center
- Enderlin - Maryhill Manor
- Fargo - Rosewood on Broadway & Villa Maria
- Harvey - St. Aloisius Medical Center
- Jamestown - Ave Maria Village
- Rolla - Presentation Medical Center
- Valley City - Sheyenne Care Center

# TATTERED PAGES

A review of Catholic books, movies, music

## New machinery for harvesting peace

### TATTERED PAGES

Father Michael Hickin

Pastor of St. Alphonsus Church, Langdon; St. Michael's Church, Wales; St. Edward's Church, Nekoma

Bishop Robert Barron wrote this summer about Gospel non-violence. The article draws at length from Martin Luther King Jr. At one point, the civil rights leader references two Catholic 'big guns':

"One may well ask: 'How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?' The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws." But then King contrasts this with obedience to an unjust law: "Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that 'an unjust law is no law at all.'" And in clarifying the difference, he turns to Aquinas: "Now, what is the difference between the two? How does one determine whether a law is just or unjust? A just law is a manmade code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas: An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law." (*Martin Luther King and the Religious Motivation for Social Change*, Word on Fire, July 14, 2020.)

Whoever would like to dig into this subject further, you have a wonderful compendium in *Choosing Peace: The Catholic Church Returns to Gospel Nonviolence*, edited by Marie Dennis. The book lays out reflections upon and proceedings from a conference in Rome in April 2016 (during the Year of Mercy), entitled "Nonviolence and Just Peace: Contributing to the Catholic Understanding of and Commitment to Nonviolence."

The current civil unrest in our nation and around the world, from Georgia to Oregon, Hong Kong to Minsk, has swollen to jaw-dropping proportions. The globe is seething. Fargo too has been touched. Our souls are all touched. While *Choosing Peace* does not address this situation, it certainly grounds the Catholic soul in the truths at play today.

Wisdom from across the ages and stories from around the world make this compilation of resources an easily accessible tool for a crash course in peace. We need it if we're going to work for Jesus, the ultimate peacemaker.

In one passage, Pope Francis cites Pope Benedict XVI, "For

Christians, nonviolence is... a person's way of being, the attitude of one who is *so convinced of God's love and power* that he or she is not afraid to tackle evil with the weapons of love and truth alone."

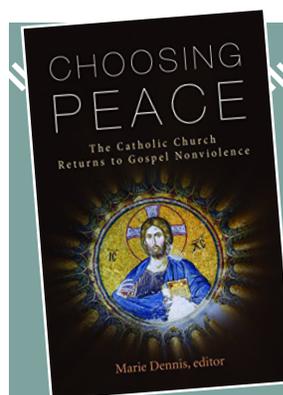
Here are two examples of the weaponry of love and truth.

First, I learned more about civil disobedience. Creating disorder isn't an end in itself. When peacebuilders go to jail for not paying a particular tax or for occupying someone else's property, they're calling for a conversation that the establishment refuses to have. One of the conference presenters plainly stated, "We must absolutely put ourselves in a mindset to create conflict. We have to create the conditions that allow for dialogue." Gandhi, Dorothy Day, MLK all knew that speaking up for the downtrodden was easily ignored, so they learned how to put the poor in a position of negotiation.

Second, I learned about "just peace." For centuries, Catholics have been familiar with "just war" theories, but the time is coming to set them aside in favor of new principles that flow from the nonviolence of Jesus himself. Christ did not invite his disciples into a utopia, but introduced a courageous approach to a new reality. The conference reflected long and hard on the practicalities of what it would mean to drop the "just war" tradition in favor of the Gospel. Their recommendations do not derive from mere theories. Survivors of civil wars and violent strife in places like Mozambique, the Philippines, Columbia, etc. have brought their practical wisdom to the table to map out a path for "just peace."

In a letter to Cardinal Peter Turkson, who participated in the conference as head of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (now the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development), Pope Francis reminded us that imitating the Father's mercy becomes "political" because individuals stand in solidarity with local and global communities.

Residents of the Peace Garden State will find in *Choosing Peace* essential nutrients and the latest model "machinery" for the harvest ahead.



"Choosing Peace:  
The Catholic Church  
Returns to Gospel  
Nonviolence"

edited by Marie Dennis.  
Originally published 2018



## Learning to be joyful and prayerful from our children

### CATHOLIC CULTURE IN THE HOME

Sarah Williamson

*Parishioner of St. Michael's Church, Grand Forks*



Sofia Calvaletti, co-founder of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, said, “for children, prayer is like breathing, it comes very naturally.” Really? Have you tried praying with my kids?

We often view prayer as formal prayers said with specific words in a specific way. While that’s an important form of prayer, it’s not the only form of prayer. Prayer is also an act of listening, making ourselves open to hear what God is saying to us, and being receptive to him and the gifts he desires to give us.

When I think of prayer in this way, I can see what Calvaletti meant. Children are not like adults. They do not have a to-do list for the day. They aren’t stressing about money or worried about what was said the day before. They have an uncanny ability to be present, to be in the moment, and to receive and enjoy life as it is right now.

Some days when I’m busy in the kitchen—trying to clean-up and maybe finally get the dishes done—my infant son David has had enough. The screaming starts. But I’m almost done with dishes, one more sink-full! No luck, he’s upset.

Okay, what is it? Diaper? Thirsty? Bored? It’s none of those things. We go outside and I set him down on the sidewalk. Now he’s happy.

The thought occurs to me: what if I just slip in and sweep while keeping an eye on him from the doorway? I try this. The crying starts again, so I finally stop and sit down with him. That’s all he needed. He doesn’t want to be held or played with. He only needs me to stop doing other stuff for a moment.

David begins watching an ant crawling on the sidewalk with amazement. He gets up on his hands and knees, following it closely. It disappears into the grass. He sits down and looks around. Seeing another one, he repeats his actions. It’s a moment for me to be still. I wonder, what is God saying to me right now in this situation? Here is David enjoying God’s creation, receiving it with wonder and joy. Is this a form of prayer? Is this what God wants me to do right now? I sit back and watch my son. How amazing—this child is crawling, pointing, smiling, sitting, and almost standing. What a gift it is for me to sit in wonder. Here is a moment of being. Here is a moment of prayer.

Prayer with children is much more about receiving than doing. As a first-time mom, I’ve struggled with the shift from my own time and space every morning for quiet prayer to being up at 5 a.m. some mornings with a screaming little one. Over time, I’ve found a habit of daily prayer that works for both me and David.

After breakfast, David and I go to our prayer table, a corner desk covered by a simple, sewn cotton tablecloth that matches the color of the liturgical season. The table has a Bible, candle, crucifix, Marian icon, and holy water bottle. First we ring a bell. David always smiles at this. Then we light a candle and sing a song or two. After singing, we bless ourselves with the holy water. At first David always tried to drink it. Now he holds out his finger to get the water and tries to either bless me, himself, or—if he’s really thirsty—his tongue.

I then kneel and make the sign of the cross before the crucifix, saying, “Jesus, help me to love like you today.” We give Jesus a kiss. Once again, David always smiles at this. While his kisses are messy, they are no less affectionate! We finish by blowing the candle out and watching the smoke rise.

Prayer with David is short and simple. I never force David to join or pay attention. If he wants to crawl away and play, that’s fine, but he rarely does. At the sound of the bell, he moves towards the prayer corner excitedly. He often dances to the songs we sing and eagerly waits to touch the holy water bottle. He smiles when I lift the crucifix and offer it to him to touch or kiss.

Our prayer time consists of concrete actions that he can receive through his senses. I know he is taking in all we do, even on days when it seems like he’s not paying attention. Each day I am renewed and fed with this simple prayer. Here is a moment of being with my son and enjoying God’s love for us together. Here I receive. The Good Shepherd feeds me too.

# Rediscovering the reality of the Eucharist



## THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

George Weigel

*Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.*

Thinking out loud about a return to “Sunday normal,” a veteran pastor recently told me that he thought it would take one year for each month of lockdown/quarantine/shelter-at-home for Mass attendance to return to where it was in February 2020. I said I hoped that people’s hunger for the Eucharist would bring them back more quickly, once they concluded that it was reasonably safe, for themselves and others, to do so. But whether “Sunday normal” returns this year or next year, the “Sunday normal” of February 2020 isn’t something for which we should easily settle. Because “Sunday normal” isn’t what it should be. This extended moment of Eucharistic fasting may be a providential moment to do something about that.

Why isn’t pre-pandemic “Sunday normal” the norm to which we should aspire? Because too few Catholics take the Sunday Eucharist seriously enough to participate in it weekly. And because too few Catholics understand just what the Eucharist is.

“Never let a good crisis go to waste” is a maxim that applies beyond politics. Applied to the Church, it suggests that this in-between time is a privileged time to re-catechize (or in some cases, catechize) the Church in the U.S. on the full, amazing, supernatural meaning of the Eucharist. If bishops and pastors turn their homiletic attention to that over the next weeks and months, re-enforcing with e-mailed catechetical materials what they say from the pulpit to those in church and those participating through live-streaming, crisis may be transformed into opportunity, such that the new “Sunday normal” is something better than the old.

A good way to jolt a diocese or a parish into paying attention on this subject is to cite a marvelous passage from a 1955 letter of Flannery O’Connor’s, describing a New York dinner party at which the aspiring young writer was introduced to the already-successful author Mary McCarthy:

“I was once...taken by some friends to have dinner with Mary McCarthy and her husband, Mr. Broadwater...She departed the Church at the age of 15 and is a Big Intellectual. We went at eight and at one, I hadn’t opened my mouth once, there being nothing for me in such company to say.... Well, toward morning the conversation turned to the Eucharist, which I, being the Catholic, was obviously supposed to defend. Mrs. Broadwater said when she was a child and received the Host, she thought of it as the Holy Ghost, He being the ‘most portable’ person of the

Trinity; now she thought of it as a symbol and implied that it was a pretty good one. I then said, in a very shaky voice, ‘Well, if it’s a symbol, to hell with it.’ That was all the defense I was capable of, but I realize now that this is all I will ever be able to say about it, except that it is the center of existence for me; all the rest of life is expendable.”

How many Catholics today could make such a dramatic declaration that the Eucharist is what the Lord Jesus said it is: his very body and blood, through which we enter into communion with the Second Person of the Trinity? How many Catholics would be shaken by what an evangelical Protestant once said to a Catholic friend: “If I really believed, like you say you do, that Christ himself is in that tabernacle, I’d be crawling up the aisle on my hands and knees.” How many Catholics would be able to explain to that evangelical brother that, while the Eucharist is indeed what Christ said of it and to believe that is to be awe-struck, the Lord Jesus also invites us at Mass to a personal intimacy with him in which awe is transformed into love?

Modern Catholic theology has done important work on the meaning of symbols, which are not just signs conveying a message (“Stop that car *here*.”). Rather, symbols are more complex realities that, in various ways, embody what they communicate—like a wedding ring or a national flag. The dumbing down of the theology of symbols has, however, led to the unhappy situation in which perhaps a majority of Catholics do not believe that the Eucharist is what the Lord Jesus said he was giving us: himself, fully and unambiguously.

Believing that, Catholics would attend Sunday Mass in droves. Teaching the truth of the Eucharist is thus a task for this moment, turning plague time into a time of renewed faith in the wonder of what we are offered in holy communion.



## HOLY FAMILY BOOKSTORE

For Baptisms, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, weddings, and special occasion gifts and books.

Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
1336 25th Ave. S., Fargo 58103 (south of K-Mart)  
(701) 241-7842

# What about those already socially distanced?



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES OF NORTH DAKOTA

Chad Proski

*Director of Development and Community  
Relations for Catholic Charities North Dakota.*

**T**he new coronavirus has affected all of us by now, in big ways and small. It forced our schools to go to online distance-learning formats. Many districts are still determining the structure for classes this coming year, with parents struggling to arrange childcare. It has forced many businesses to close temporarily or even permanently. Others still have reduced hours due to cleaning requirements, and offer new pick up options for customers. It closed down churches across the nation. Thankfully Catholic parishes in North Dakota re-opened, but a dispensation remains in place as the faithful slowly return.

**Let's continue the conversation about how we can help each other, especially the most socially isolated, and stay connected with others during this challenging time.** —Chad Proski

It's one thing to voluntarily keep your distance from others due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We can understand how vigilantly washing and sanitizing our hands, keeping six feet apart from others, wearing masks, and quarantining if you have symptoms or were exposed to the coronavirus, could help limit its spread and even save lives. Even as much of this remains optional, or is not fully enforced, many of us try our best to comply because we care not just about ourselves but because we also care about others. None of us want to be a carrier without knowing it, and then have someone with a serious underlying health condition become sick because of us.

It's another thing entirely to already be socially isolated, and then face a pandemic. The Catholic faith teaches that we are social beings made for union with God and each other. Thus we can't forget those who are alone and suffering greatly during this time. Many have family, friends, and coworkers to rely on, but what about those who have no one close to them? Have you experienced the pain of not being able to visit loved ones in the nursing home and known how much they miss you? Some elderly have been at home for months now, but at least they have a place to stay. Those who are homeless may have no place to

go while shelters and public spaces are shut down. Many good people have lost their jobs, and too many promising graduates are still unable to find work. With dreams dashed and hopes dying quickly, wouldn't it be understandable if some lose their way while waiting for things to change?

Death and dying is another awful situation with loved ones not allowed into hospitals until the final moments, if at all. Burying the dead is one of the works of mercy, but for a long time funerals have been limited or postponed in many places. Another work of mercy is visiting the imprisoned, but many of these too are closed. What about joyful events such as weddings, anniversaries, and graduations? It's encouraging how creative people are with drive-by parades of cars, but those celebrating have had many loved ones unable to join them on their special day due to travel restrictions and health risks. For these and many other reasons, we encourage you to reach out to the sick and all those who have been hurt in deep ways by the ongoing pandemic.

At Catholic Charities North Dakota, we have remained open throughout the pandemic even as some of our staff continues to work from home. Our offices require appointments by visitors to help ensure everyone's safety, but we have not abandoned those in need during these trying times. We have embraced technology, adding video calls with clients when we can't visit them in the hospital or community living facilities. We started offering new telehealth counseling sessions to those suffering increased anxiety or depression during this time. We have more than doubled the amount of charity care assistance provided in the last few months to individuals across North Dakota from funds from Catholic Charities USA grants, parishes, and individual contributions. We have also had some very challenging cases with pregnant mothers during this time.

More parts of our lives will be affected by COVID-19 before it's over. Unfortunately, we had to delay our Bismarck Caritas Award Luncheon this year that was scheduled for May. It will probably be postponed until next year. We are also moving back our Catholic Charities Sunday celebration from the last weekend of September to Oct. 24–25. Your donations help us remain the hands and feet of Christ in our communities. We hope and pray that you will join us in seeing the good your support has helped us do over the past year and learn about a new program we launched along with the expansion of existing ones!

In the meantime, we are reaching out to clients, supporters, and community members to see how they are doing. Please let us know how you and your local community are doing, and if there's anything we can do for you or someone you know in need. We are working on making COVID-19 care packages available. Let's continue the conversation about how we can help each other, especially the most socially isolated, and stay connected with others during this challenging time. We invite you to call us anytime at (701) 235-4457.

# Five rules to navigate the election season



## CATHOLIC ACTION

Christopher Dodson

*Executive director of the North Dakota Catholic Conference, which acts on behalf of the Catholic bishops of N.D. to respond to public policy issues of concern to the Catholic Church.*

Another election season is upon us. There exist five “rules” or facts that we should keep in mind between now and the election.

**Rule One:** The Catholic Church does not support or oppose political candidates or political parties.

Remember that, share it with your friends, affix it to your refrigerator, email it to yourself.

Between now and the election we will hear and read claims that the Catholic Church supports or opposes a candidate or party. In fact, it is against federal law for the Church to take a position on a candidate or political party. The Church is not interested in partisan politics. Instead, the Church seeks to bring attention and clarity to the moral and human dimensions of the issues.

The dioceses of North Dakota go further than the law by directing that materials that mention specific candidates or political parties in any manner may not be distributed at or by any parish or diocesan entity, even if the materials do not explicitly support or oppose a candidate.

**Rule Two:** Talking about issues is not the same as endorsing or opposing a candidate or party.

The Church, including its leaders, have an obligation to talk about the issues. Pope Benedict XVI wrote: “The Church cannot and must not take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice” (*Deus Caritas Est*, no. 28).

In our candidate and party-centric world, merely speaking on issues is perceived as code for talking about candidates and parties. In truth, this is backwards. The Church’s social doctrine stems from transcendent and universal truths. It was there before any candidate or party took a position on the issues. If a candidate or party falls on the wrong side of Catholic doctrine, that is of their doing, not the Church’s. The Church will not and cannot change just because politicians want her to follow their lead.

**Rule Three:** Don’t believe everything you hear.

Every election cycle we hear about priests or deacons who supported or opposed a candidate or party in his homily. Investigation usually shows that the claim is not true. Usually

the priest actually talked only about issues.

Social media poses difficult problems. Already posts are circulating stating that Catholics must vote in a particular way. Some of those posts come from organizations claiming to be “Catholic.” In truth, those posts are not officially Catholic. Remember, Catholic organizations cannot legally oppose or support a candidate or party (see Rule One.).

**Rule Four:** People make mistakes.

Admittedly, priests, deacons, or Catholic representatives have on rare occasions said something they should not have said about candidates or parties. If you think this has happened, make sure you have all the information and contact the diocese. In charity, remember that the statement does not represent the position of the Church.

**Rule Five:** In the United States we vote for individuals, not parties.

Unlike most western nations, the United States is not a parliamentary system. In those countries, people vote for a “government” represented by a party. The party has a platform which it will implement while in government. The parties rarely allow elected officials to stray from the party program.

In the United States, including the individual states, we vote for individuals who happen to belong to a party or maybe no party at all.

Proofs of this political practice abound. Not all Republicans are pro-life and not all Democrats are pro-abortion rights. Not every Democrat supports greater restrictions on guns and not every Republican opposes limiting gun ownership. Republicans in some states are very pro-school choice while in other states, like North Dakota, Republicans have been resistant to the idea. Within the North Dakota House of Representatives, Republicans can be divided into three or more distinct voting groups.

Nevertheless, when it comes time to vote, we lump all Democrats into one group and all Republicans into another group. Worse, we assume that all of them believe everything that was thrown into a party platform statement adopted long before, or we assume that every candidate agrees with their party’s presidential nominee.

This has consequences for how we vote as Catholics. For one thing, it is not informed voting. Find out where the candidate really stands and do not make assumptions. Between now and the election, the North Dakota Catholic Conference will provide questions for you to ask the candidates. Make use of them. Second, drawing assumptions about candidates based on parties plays into a tribalism and division that is not good for American politics.

The North Dakota Catholic Conference has developed a website to help Catholics discern their vote. It will be periodically updated between now and the election. You can find it at [www.yourfaithyourvote.org](http://www.yourfaithyourvote.org).

# Draw closer to St. Joseph for peace and humility



## SEMINARIAN LIFE

Jasper Keller

*College IV seminarian studying at St. Gregory the Great Seminary; Seward, NE*

St. Joseph has played a very important and very hidden part in my spiritual life for a long time. When I was confirmed in 3rd grade, I remember choosing him as my patron saint only because his name started with the same letter as mine, and John the Baptist was already picked (truly a well thought out decision!). Yet growing up I was always struck by that sudden choice, a sudden presence in that important moment of my life. I eventually realized, however, that he was the one to choose me, not the other way around.

**St. Joseph had the grace of contemplation in the midst of the noise, precisely because he knew to seek silence in order to grow more intimate with the tiny whisper of God speaking in his heart.**

— Jasper Keller

Yet whenever I strove to draw closer to him, I would run into a brick wall. There's so little material in the Gospels about him. He doesn't speak a single word! How am I supposed to get close to someone I know so little about? I also found that the classic portrayal of Joseph as a middle-aged man with a carpenter's square was hard for me to relate to.

About a month ago, I found *Consecration to St. Joseph: The Wonders of Our Spiritual Father* by Father Donald Calloway, MIC. In this book, Father Calloway wonderfully guides the reader through a 33-Day Preparation for Consecration to St. Joseph with short daily meditations, as well as rather in-depth texts on most every aspect of who St. Joseph is and why Our Lord longs for us to draw near to him. I would like to share some reflection on the profound gift that God has given me during this time.

First, I have gained a renewed appreciation for the power and essence of St. Joseph's fatherhood. Joseph was not Jesus' biological father, but he was his moral and spiritual father, something far more exalted. To the Child Jesus's humanity, which was in need of nourishment, moral instruction, example, and secure emotional attachment, St. Joseph was the earthly icon of God the Father; he provided all of that to Christ perfectly. What a high station and honor! St. Joseph was the man Jesus ran to when he was scared, frightened, or sad, and even more, he was always received,

known, and comforted! In this way, Joseph instilled in Christ the knowledge of the boundless love of the Father—it was Joseph who gave to Christ's human nature his unshakable identity as Son of the Father.

This is made even more potent through an altered understanding of Joseph as a young man, a vivacious man with spirit and joy, who loved young Mary not with the doting of a grandfather, but with the chaste and burning fire of youth! How much strength he must have needed to defend, provide for, and aid Mary and Jesus on their pilgrim Exile in Egypt, and to lift great stone and lumber as a worker in Nazareth!

As a son of David and the father of the Holy Family, God made Joseph king over his own greatest treasures: his spouse and his son. He did this for a reason. Joseph stopped at nothing to guard them and give them refuge. No heinous villain would have dared plunder those under the charge of Joseph. Clearly, there is great power and courage here.

Yet in all this, Joseph remained a quiet and humble man, working as a mere laborer for the son of God and his mother. How mysterious a life, and how well Joseph knew the wonders he had been given, spending day after day, month after month, year after year silently pondering and contemplating the presence of God incarnate and the greatest creature ever dreamed! How different this is from our busy, noisy, and anxious lives. St. Joseph had the grace of contemplation in the midst of the noise, precisely because he knew to seek silence in order to grow more intimate with the tiny whisper of God speaking in his heart. What a different world ours would be, if we obtained the grace of imitating St. Joseph. I pray that all of us may gain such a gift.

*Editor's Note: Seminarian Life is a column written by current Diocese of Fargo seminarians. Please continue to pray for them.*



**BOULGER**  
FUNERAL HOME • CREATION SERVICES

**LARRY BOULGER**  
Owner / Licensed  
Funeral Director

701-247-6441  
123 10th St. S. - Fargo

[boulgerfuneralhome.com](http://boulgerfuneralhome.com)



HISTORIC  
**NORMAN**  
FUNERAL HOME

est. 1882

"The Community's Choice Since 1882"

Grand Forks, ND | [normanfuneral.com](http://normanfuneral.com) | 701.746.4337

**WANT TO ADVERTISE  
IN NEW EARTH?**

Contact Kristina Lahr  
(701) 356-7900  
[newearthads@fargodiocese.org](mailto:newearthads@fargodiocese.org)

# How to donate to your Church for 100+ years



## STEWARDSHIP

Steve Schons

*Director of stewardship and development  
for the Diocese of Fargo.*

**W**ould you like to make a gift to your Church 100 years from now? You can, and here's how: Simply add up your annual gifts for the year and multiply by 20. Then, make an estate gift for this amount (through your will or other device) and designate it to your "Church Endowment Fund." That's all there is to it.

The endowment will provide an annual gift to your Church at roughly the same dollar value you are giving now. Long after you're gone—even 100 years from now—your Church will continue to receive "your" annual gift.

Since the principal is kept intact, the endowment never dries up. It's like an artesian well. Giving to your Church goes on and on and on.

Here's an example of how this works: Mary gives her Church \$500 every year. She may give it in smaller chunks or as one annual gift. She realizes that her Church depends on her giving and wonders how her Church will fare when she's no longer alive to send the \$500.

Mary talks to our director of planned giving and learns about our Endow Your Giving program. She then instructs her attorney to add a codicil to her will, providing a \$10,000 bequest to her Church Endowment Fund.

The initial income from her endowment gift will be \$500 (assuming a 5% return), and income will grow as the endowment appreciates over time. She is pleased because she knows that money from the endowment fund will be given to the annual fund every year—just as if she was sending a check herself to her Church.

The idea of an endowment fund may captivate you to the point you will want to establish a larger fund—bearing your name—for either a restricted or unrestricted purpose. This can be done now, or through an estate gift when you're gone.

If you would like to learn more about endowment funds or establishing an endowment fund in your name, please contact me at (701) 356-7926.

**Why move now?**

*Riverview offers fun activities, healthy meals and customized care plans in a safe, uplifting and supportive environment. It's why home is here!*

*For more information, call our trusted advisors, Maren or Katie today at 701.237.4700.*

*\*Hurry! Limited inventory available.*

**Act now!  
Special rates  
starting at  
\$1,500.\***

**Independent Living  
Assisted Living**

**5300 12th Street South  
Fargo, North Dakota**

**homeishere.org**

**CHI Living Communities**

# St. Paul: a saint for our times



## SISTER'S PERSPECTIVE

Sister Mary Katherine Malmros, SOLT

*Teacher at St. Ann's Catholic School in Belcourt and Director of Religious Education at St. Michael the Archangel in Dunseith.*

As the coronavirus continues to impact our lives, I find myself thinking of a man who underwent far greater trials than I ever will, yet never lost his faith in God: St. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. Now *there* was a man steeped in suffering, having experienced...

"...imprisonments. countless beatings... often near death. Five times I have received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I have been beaten with rods; once I was stoned. Three times I have been shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people... in toil and hardship... in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure..." (2 Cor. 11:23–27).

And yet it is this same St. Paul who assures us with unwavering serenity:

"We know that in everything God works for good with those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

In *everything*, you say? Even in the coronavirus health crisis? What good could God possibly draw from this present suffering? Before I share my thoughts on that score, let me try to tackle what we might call The Big Question of COVID-19: As of this writing, over 154,000 have died of the coronavirus in the US alone; thousands have lost their jobs; our children have had to adapt to new ways of schooling at very short notice. This is evil—yet God is good. Where is God in all this?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) quotes another of my favorite saints, St. Augustine of Hippo, in words reminiscent of Rom. 8:28: "...almighty God... because he is supremely good, would never allow any evil whatsoever to exist in his works if he were not so all-powerful and good as to cause good to emerge from evil itself" (311).

So yes, God can in fact draw good out of the evil of COVID-19 and all its resultant sufferings, and this is exactly his will, his desire for us. We have only to turn to him with deeper trust and obedience.

As I look around, I think I can already see a kind of first fruits of a great harvest of good, which our faithful God wills to bring about from this crisis for "those who love Him, who are called

according to His purpose."

First, I think I see signs of a deeper conversion among my brothers and sisters—and, please God, within myself. Sadly, for some Catholics the temporary ban on public Masses represented a kind of colossal "non-event of the year," not even registering on their radar, since they weren't regularly attending Sunday Mass in the first place. For others, the temporary "Eucharistic fast" they underwent seems to have increased their hunger for the Bread of Angels and their longing for the day when they could once more receive Holy Communion. This is what happened here in Dunseith. When St. Michael the Archangel reopened, the number of daily communicants surpassed that of pre-COVID-19 days.

Secondly, I believe I can see something of the spiritual maturation that only comes through patient, trusting acceptance of the sufferings that God permits in our lives. At St. Ann's Catholic School in Belcourt where I teach, our Confirmation and First Eucharist students completed both their preparation and retreat by March 12. Confirmation was scheduled for March 22, but it wasn't until June 20 that they finally received the sacraments. For three months my valiant kids continued studying at home in a far less than ideal situation which none of us could have envisioned. They persevered with their sacramental preparation, helped by family members and my weekly Zoom conferences. When I saw them again on June 20 (the Immaculate Heart of Mary), I could sense a deeper maturity and greater understanding of and desire for the final two Sacraments of Initiation.

Finally, I see with the eyes of faith great good coming out of all the recent appeals to the powerful intercession of the Mother of Christ, beginning with the Holy Father, Pope Francis. Specifically, I see tremendous blessings arising from the May 1 re-consecration of the United States to Mary under the title of the Immaculate Conception. At the same time Bishop Folda consecrated the Diocese of Fargo to Our Lady, and pastors of individual parishes followed suit, including our own Father Michael Slovak here at St. Michael's. The televised ceremony itself was brief and a bit poignant in its stark social distancing setting; but in the invisible spiritual realm, what tremendous shifting was taking place, what channels of grace were being opened?

"If God is for us, who is against us? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are conquerors through him who loved us. For I am assured that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come...nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rm. 8:31b, 35, 37–39).

St. Paul, pray for us; St. Augustine of Hippo, pray for us; Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, pray for us. Amen.

# A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

*These news items, compiled by Danielle Thomas, were found in New Earth and its predecessor, Catholic Action News.*

## 75 years ago — 1945

War, Victory, Peace. Sept. 2 marks the official end of WWII. “Much will depend on what (those) will do with the hate that still fires the hearts of revengeful men. Hate must be put into chains at once; it must not be permitted to roam about where treaties of peace are being drafted. As Christians and Americans we are charged with the duty of praying and working with all our effort that a just, generous, and lasting peace will come to the nations of the earth. It must be our daily prayer that God will dispose us to be humble, unselfish, and magnanimous toward all in the spirit of the Prince of Peace. Only in Him and through Him can we have genuine peace.” Aloisius J. Muench, Bishop of Fargo

## 50 years ago — 1970

The United States Catholic Conference and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) have joined forces to create the first computer bank in the history of campus ministry activities. The computer bank will form the basis of a permanent

storage house of information on the programs, physical facilities, and persons working in campus ministry—serving the spiritual needs of young Catholics attending secular colleges and universities. It will be the largest collection of information about Catholics in higher education ever assembled under Catholic auspices. One immediate fruit of this labor will be a more comprehensive computerized directory of Catholic campus ministry which will replace the former and inadequate Newman Apostolate Directory.

## 20 years ago — 2000

Hundreds of guests came to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Manor St. Joseph in Edgeley. Sister Mary Rosa and Sister Carmelita came from France in 1936 to help with maternity, the ill, and especially the elderly of the area. They soon outgrew their small cottage and purchased the Manor in 1939. They moved all patients over to the new space in 1940 and continued ministering there. Over the years, the need for even more space necessitated an addition to the Manor which was then dedicated in 1959. Currently, the Manor houses 32 patients and two sisters.

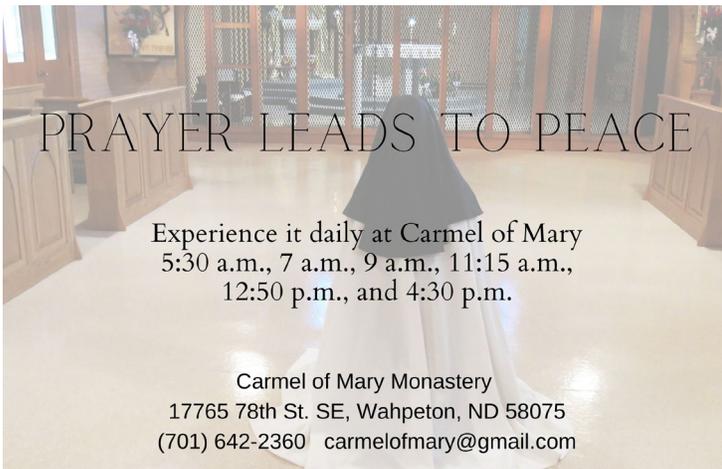
## Annual fall celebrations

The following is a list of fall dinners and festivals submitted to *New Earth*.

**Velva:** St. Cecilia Church will host a fall supper Sept. 24 from 4 to 7 p.m.

**Langdon:** St. Alphonsus Church will host a fall dinner Oct. 11 from 4 to 6:30 p.m. Take-out only. Turkey, ham and all the trimmings.

**West Fargo:** Holy Cross Church will host an Oktoberfest before and after each Sunday Mass in October and will include silent auction, raffle, 50/50, and chance baskets. Specific weekends include bingo, crafts, jewelry, cork pull, canned and baked goods, and kids’ activities. Swedish meatball dinner take-out only on Oct. 25 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.



PRAYER LEADS TO PEACE

Experience it daily at Carmel of Mary  
5:30 a.m., 7 a.m., 9 a.m., 11:15 a.m.,  
12:50 p.m., and 4:30 p.m.

Carmel of Mary Monastery  
17765 78th St. SE, Wahpeton, ND 58075  
(701) 642-2360 [carmelofmary@gmail.com](mailto:carmelofmary@gmail.com)



### EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

Providing exceptional faith-based education  
while inspiring excellence.

**3 yr old Little Deacons - 12th Grade**

For information or a tour

call 701-893-3271

[jp2schools.org](http://jp2schools.org)

HOLY SPIRIT ELEMENTARY | NATIVITY ELEMENTARY | TRINITY ELEMENTARY

SULLIVAN MIDDLE SCHOOL | SHANLEY HIGH SCHOOL



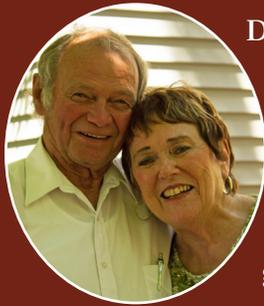
## Life's milestones



Deacon James and Sue Eggl, formerly of Sacred Heart Church in Cando, celebrated their 50th anniversary on July 18. They were joined by their 5 children and their families for Mass and Nuptial Blessing of their vows on July 19 at Holy Cross Church in West Fargo where Deacon Jim is assigned.



Judy and Rod Olin, parishioners at St. James Basilica in Jamestown, celebrated their 50th anniversary on Aug. 29. They were married at St. Martin's Church in Center and have 3 daughters and 4 grandchildren.



Dennis and Janice Kanwischer celebrated their 60th anniversary on Aug. 20. They were married at St. Augustine Church in Fessenden where they are still parishioners. They are blessed to have 2 children, 5 grandchildren, and 7 great-grandchildren.



Lorraine Bair (Grandma Bair), parishioner of St. Mathias Church in Windsor, will celebrate her 94th birthday on Sept. 16. Lorraine was married to Jim Bair for 57 years until he died in 2000. She has 2 sons and 1 daughter who passed away. She has 2 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren, and 3 great-great grandchildren.



Lorraine Metzger celebrated her 90th birthday on Sept. 6. She was married to Ray who died in 2018. They were parishioners of St. Mary's Church in Grand Forks, Nativity Church in Fargo, and Christ the King in Byron, Minn. where she now lives. They have 5 children, 13 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren.



Magdalena "Maggie" Scheet Sitter of Little Flower Church in Rugby celebrated her 90th birthday Aug. 20. She was married at Little Flower Church to Anton "Tony" N. Sitter for almost 58 years before he died in 2007. They have 5 children.



Delores Novak celebrated her 85th birthday Aug. 13. She was married to Cyril for 64 years until he passed away April 13. They were married at St. Mary's Church in Park River and have 7 children, 21 grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren.

**Share life's milestones** As a way to celebrate life and love, we encourage parishioners throughout the Diocese of Fargo to send a photo and news brief about golden anniversaries and anniversaries of 60 or more years or birthdays of 80 or more years to: New Earth, Diocese of Fargo, 5201 Bishops Blvd. S., Suite A, Fargo, ND 58104 or [news@fargodiocese.org](mailto:news@fargodiocese.org).

## Diocesan policy: Reporting child abuse

The Diocese of Fargo is committed to the protection of youth. Please report any incidents or suspected incidents of child abuse, including sexual abuse, to civil authorities. If the situation involves a member of the clergy or a religious order, a seminarian, or an employee of a Catholic school, parish, the diocesan offices or other Catholic entity within the diocese, we ask that you also report the incident or suspected incident to Msgr. Joseph Goering, vicar general, at (701) 356-7945 or the victim assistance coordinator, at (701) 356-7965 or by email at [victimassistance@fargodiocese.org](mailto:victimassistance@fargodiocese.org). To make a report of sexual abuse of a minor and related misconduct by bishops, go to [ReportBishopAbuse.org](http://ReportBishopAbuse.org) or call 1-800-276-1562.

# Events across the Diocese

## 40 Days for Life ND starts Sept. 23



Mark your calendars for the International 40 Days for Life campaign Sept. 23 through Nov. 1. You are called to be part of this important prayer effort to bring an end to abortion across our nation and world. 40 Days for Life ND will begin at 8 a.m. on Sept. 23 in front of the abortion facility, 512 1st Ave. No., Fargo. Our campaign will provide a peaceful, prayerful presence on the sidewalk 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Go to [www.40daysforlifend.com](http://www.40daysforlifend.com) to register and sign up for an hour of prayer or contact the Pregnancy Help Center at (701) 284-6601, or in Fargo (701) 356-7979 or [phc@polarcomm.com](mailto:phc@polarcomm.com). We are offering the option of people praying on the sidewalk or in your own homes or churches. Wherever you choose to pray, we ask that you sign up for your time slot. Your prayers are needed now more than ever!

## Delving into prayer to deepen our understanding and love



Join St. John's Church in Wahpeton Sept. 27 from 1 to 3 p.m. for an opportunity to slow down and spend the afternoon with your faith community growing in and strengthening your relationship with the Lord. The day is for men and women of all ages and will include adoration, Reconciliation, and guest speaker Father Kurtis Gunwall, pastor of St. Anthony in Mooreton and Sts. Peter and Paul in Mantador.

## Discover peace after abortion



Dakota Hope Clinic of Minot offers small group sessions for women and men who seek peace and healing after a past abortion experience. The seven-week session begins Sept. 28 from 6 to 8 p.m. Many keep their abortion experiences a secret and do not even realize that it has affected them in a negative way. When you join a Discover Peace group, you will find yourself surrounded by those who have been in similar situations and can understand and support you. It is possible to find relief and realize that by sharing, the power of the secret is diminished.

To see if this program may be right for you, call Dakota Hope at (701) 852-4675 and ask for Shelly, go to [www.dakotahope.org](http://www.dakotahope.org), or send a confidential text to (978) 705-3421. Location will be disclosed only to those who register. All services at Dakota Hope Clinic are 100% free and confidential.

## Blue Mass honors those serving in public safety

St. Anthony's Church in Fargo will be holding a Blue Mass for police officers, firefighters, correctional officers, 911 operators, EMS personnel, and others serving in public safety on Sept. 30

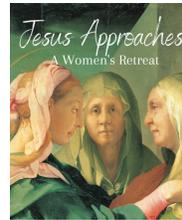
at 6:30 p.m. This Mass will also honor retired Fargo Police Chief David Todd. The Mass is held close to the Feast of the Archangels because St. Michael the Archangels is the patron saint of police officers. A light reception will follow.

## Walk with Christ for Life on Oct. 4



Bishop Folda invites the faithful of the diocese to join him in the annual Eucharistic procession, Walk with Christ for Life, on Respect Life Sunday, Oct. 4. It will begin with Holy Mass at noon, at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo. This will be followed by a prayerful, peaceful procession to the state's only abortion facility. A short prayer service will be held outside the abortion facility, and then those gathered will return to the Cathedral for Benediction.

## Jesus Approaches: A women's retreat



The Diocese of Fargo is hosting Jesus Approaches: A Women's Retreat at the Franciscan Retreat Center in Hankinson on Oct. 16–18, led by award winning author and writer Liz Kelly. The weekend will include conferences, time for prayer and rest, social time, Mass, Eucharistic Adoration, and the opportunity to go to confession. It will be a chance to step out of the routine and stress of daily life in order to encounter the Lord Jesus through prayer and inspiring talks. Social distancing guidelines will be followed. Space is limited. For more information and to register visit [www.fargodiocese.org/evangelization-retreats-workshops](http://www.fargodiocese.org/evangelization-retreats-workshops) or contact [ashley.njaa@fargodiocese.org](mailto:ashley.njaa@fargodiocese.org) or (701) 356-7908.

## Youth invited to March for Life



Youth in grades 9–12 from the Diocese of Fargo are invited to a pilgrimage to the annual March for Life in Washington D.C. in 2021. The trip will begin in Fargo on Jan. 25 and return Jan. 31. Father Greg Haman will be the spiritual director. In addition to participating in the March for Life and Mass for Life at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, youth will also see the sights in D.C., Emmitsburg, Md., and Gettysburg, Pa. The cost for the 7-day pilgrimage is \$800 and includes air and ground transportation, lodging, meals, and tour fees. Spaces go fast, so register today! Visit [www.fargodiocese.org/march-for-life](http://www.fargodiocese.org/march-for-life).

Get Connected with  
the Diocese of Fargo



# Inmate lived inspiring Catholic life behind bars, “serving God, not time”

By Ed Langlois | Catholic News Service



Hal Elkins smiles as he walks out of the Oregon State Penitentiary in 2018. He died of cancer nine months after being released. (CNS | courtesy Jeri Down-Jones)

In 1993, 39-year-old nuclear engineer Hal Elkins hit the bottle and fell into a jealous rage. He pocketed a gun and stumbled into a Salem restaurant. There, he shot his girlfriend, Kathryn Linn, and the man she was with, Marvin Eugene Mayer.

Linn died and Mayer was seriously hurt. A jury convicted Elkins and the judge imposed a 33-year sentence in Oregon State Penitentiary.

Within a decade, other inmates would be calling Elkins “the Bishop of OSP.” A bear of a man at 6-foot-2, he became a legendary lay Catholic leader, sacristan, altar server and chaplain's clerk. He would tell anyone he met that prison got his faith life moving from 0 to 100.

“His attitude in prison seemed to be that he was serving God, not time,” said Deacon Allen Vandecoevering, a longtime Oregon prison minister.

Elkins' sentence came to an end in 2018. On the outside he continued as a stellar Catholic, going to Mass as often as work would allow and attending faith formation sessions. Then, on June 26, 2019—nine months after his release—he died of liver cancer at age 66.

“He was enjoying life to the fullest and when he discovered that he had a terminal illness his faith was not shaken,” said Deacon Vandecoevering, who took Elkins Communion as he lay dying. “He wanted to live so badly, but he surrendered to God's will with beauty and grace.” The Eucharist was all Elkins wanted at the end.

“His life was an amazing example of what God will do for us when we turn from our sins and find forgiveness,” Deacon Vandecoevering told the *Catholic Sentinel*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Portland.

A graduate of North Salem High school, Elkins joined the Navy during the Vietnam War and gained expertise in nuclear power. He wed young, and that marriage eventually ended, leaving him devastated. It was in that emotional maelstrom that he committed murder.

“He regretted his crime,” said Laura Kazlas, head Catholic volunteer at Oregon State Penitentiary. “He did feel Christ's

forgiveness eventually. It was a long road for him to get there.”

In prison, Elkins carried what he called “the burden of a serious felony on one's conscience.” Amid that, he experienced a deep conversion and became a gentle Catholic leader, marshaling other convicts in the faith.

“He said being in prison had brought him closer and closer to Jesus,” said Kazlas. “He led almost a monastic life in his cell.”

Prison staff and volunteers noticed the change and entrusted Elkins with more and more. He tended to the prison altar, but also to the men. He'd tell Kazlas if an inmate was having trouble or needed a Bible or a rosary. Elkins made sure there were Spanish hymns at Mass since some Catholic inmates are native Spanish speakers.

“He took care of the men almost like a deacon or priest would,” Kazlas said. “He was very unselfish in the way he looked out for their well-being.”

If a new inmate or visitor came onto the cell block, it was Elkins who introduced himself and extended a warm welcome. He treated people like he was their loving big brother, Kazlas explained.

Elkins was generous, tithing at St. Joseph Parish in Salem even while behind bars and giving a donation to set up a prison ministry at the parish. He paid for a large crucifix in the prison chapel, but let other inmates help choose it.

He was a regular in the prison leather shop. Among his works was a briefcase for Catholic prison volunteer Dennis Lulay and a sign showing Jesus behind bars, a piece now hanging in the Archdiocese of Portland prison ministry office. Elkins also made leather key fobs for seminarians who did field education at the prison. Showing Elkins' sense of humor, the fobs read: “Stolen from Oregon State Penitentiary.”

John Hoffmeister, another Catholic volunteer, said Elkins' story proves the point that most inmates are people with good hearts who made grave mistakes. God loves them and calls on them no less, said Hoffmeister.

“He showed the men what being a Christian is about,” Hoffmeister said.

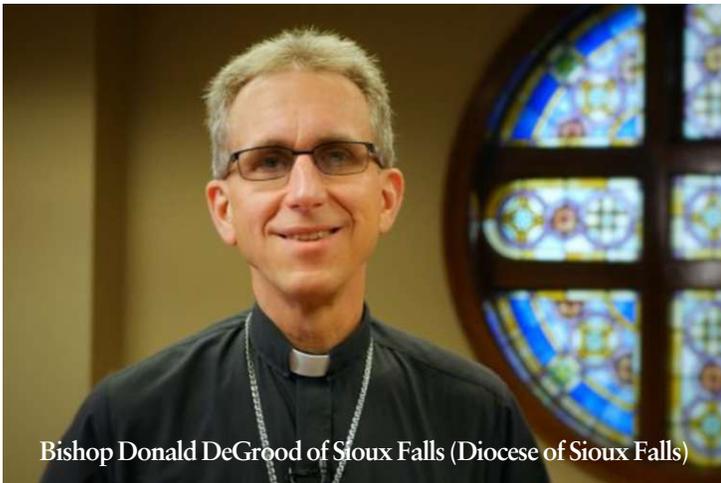
“It's a wonderful story of redemption,” said Portland Archbishop Alexander K. Sample, who met with Elkins during prison visits and later after the sentence was served. “A person can go down the wrong path in life and then have a profound change of heart and a conversion and become a very holy person.”

The archbishop, like most prison ministers, never asked what crimes Elkins had committed.

“God is merciful and loving and understanding with us and offers that opportunity for repentance and conversion,” the archbishop said. “I saw that in Hal.”

# Back to Mass: South Dakota diocese lifts Sunday dispensation

By Catholic News Agency



Bishop Donald DeGroot of Sioux Falls (Diocese of Sioux Falls)

Some Catholics in South Dakota are obligated to go to Sunday Mass, after the Diocese of Sioux Falls lifted the dispensation on Sunday Mass attendance Aug. 17.

Catholics in the diocese who are not in high-risk categories for contracting coronavirus will once more be bound by the Sunday obligation, making Sioux Falls the first diocese to lift the general dispensation brought in across U.S. dioceses in the wake of the pandemic.

“After receiving clarity through prayer, consultation with clergy and others, and in light of this data, effective on August 17, 2020, I am changing the dispensation to apply only to those at increased risk for severe illness and those responsible for their care,” said a statement from Bishop Donald DeGroot of Sioux Falls published on August 10.

“It is important for all in the diocese to know that this modification is made out of pastoral concern for the souls entrusted to my spiritual care,” he added.

DeGroot defined “those at increased risk for severe illness” as people who are over the age of 65, or anyone with cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, a compromised immune system due to an organ transplant, obesity, “serious heart conditions,” sickle cell disease, or type two diabetes mellitus.

The decision by the Sioux Falls bishop, whose territory includes the eastern half of the state, is believed to be the first of its kind. Even in dioceses where public Masses have resumed, there is still no obligation in place for everyone to attend Mass if they do not think it is safe to do so.

DeGroot said in the statement that he made the decision to reinstate the obligation in light of the relatively low impact the novel coronavirus has had on the state of South Dakota, especially as the predictions of overrun hospitals and deaths in the thousands failed to materialize.

“As I have been praying these last months, I have been monitoring COVID-19 infection rates and am grateful the projected severe harm to a large number of people in East River South Dakota has not occurred,” said DeGroot.

“The local data presently available is helpful. For example, as of August 10, of the 44 counties in our diocese, seven have no active cases, 22 have one to 10 active cases, and 15 have 11 or more active cases. Thanks be to God, the hospitals within our state have not suffered an overwhelming surge as was initially feared,” he added.

As of August 10, there were 63 people hospitalized statewide with COVID-19, a number that DeGroot said represented “3% of the total hospital bed capacity, 3% of intensive care unit bed capacity, and 5% of ventilator capacity for the state.”

In the statement, DeGroot said that a Catholic who is hesitant to return to Mass, despite not being at an increased risk of COVID-19 or caring for someone who is severely ill—must discern whether or not their fear is “morally justifiable” or “inordinate.”

“It is essential that these serious questions are discerned in prayer and that the decisions are made in good faith, based upon objective data,” said DeGroot. He listed the examples of “morally justified” fear that would merit skipping Mass to be “regular contact with a person with increased risk,” “recent, prolonged contact with a symptomatic person,” or someone who has “a significant emotional response from fear of contracting COVID-19.”

DeGroot also reminded his flock in the statement about the importance of social distancing and “good hygienic practices” to further stop the spread of COVID-19.

Public Masses resumed in the Diocese of Sioux Falls on May 15, approximately two months after they were suspended due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

On Aug. 11, there were a total of 146 South Dakotans who had died from COVID-19, and there were approximately 1,100 active cases of coronavirus statewide.

NAPOLEON  LIVESTOCK



SALE EVERY THURSDAY

1-800-932-8821

napoleonlivestock.com

North Dakota's Progressive Livestock Market

Ray Erbele 226-7288 George Bitz 226-6198

Paul Bitz 226-6199 Jim Bitz 226-6197

# Faith wobbles sometimes; what counts is calling for God's help, pope says

By Cindy Wooden | Catholic News Service

Everyone, including the pope, experiences trials that can shake his or her faith; the key to survival is to call out to the Lord for help, Pope Francis said.

"When we have strong feelings of doubt and fear and we seem to be sinking, (and) in life's difficult moments when everything becomes dark, we must not be ashamed to cry out like Peter, 'Lord, save me,'" the pope said Aug. 9, commenting on the day's Gospel story in his Angelus address.

In the passage, Matthew 14:22-33, Jesus walks on the water of the stormy lake, but the disciples think they are seeing a ghost. Jesus reassures them that it is he, but Peter wants proof. Jesus calls him to walk on the water as well, but Peter gets frightened and starts sinking.

Peter cries out, "Lord, save me," and Jesus takes him by the hand.

"This Gospel narrative is an invitation to abandon ourselves trustingly to God in every moment of our life, especially in times of trial and turmoil," Pope Francis said.

Like Peter, he said, believers must learn "to knock on God's heart, on Jesus' heart. 'Lord, save me' is a beautiful prayer. We can repeat it many times."

And believers also should reflect on how Jesus responded: immediately reaching out and taking Peter's hand, showing that God "never abandons us."

"Having faith means keeping your heart turned to God, to his love, to his fatherly tenderness amid the storm," the pope said.

"In dark moments, in sad moments, he is well aware that our faith is weak; all of us are people of little faith—all of us, myself included," the pope said. "Our faith is weak; our journey can be troubled, hindered by adverse forces," but the Lord is "present beside us lifting us back up after our falls, helping us grow in faith."



## Strengthen Families

We are Catholic men who work to place God and the Catholic faith at the center of our lives to strengthen the bonds within our parishes and build faith-filled families.

Find out more: [nd-kofc.org/join](http://nd-kofc.org/join)



**KNIGHTS  
OF COLUMBUS**

## Give a gift to help keep the TV Mass on the air



Your support is treasured by all those who are unable to join in our greatest form of prayer, the Mass. Watch Sundays:

10:30 a.m. – Fargo, WDAY, Ch 6 or Grand Forks, WDAZ, Ch 8.  
11:00 a.m. – Bismarck, KNDX, Ch 26 or Minot, KXND, Ch 24.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Or, A GIFT FOR:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Please list on the following DATE(S):

MAIL TO: Diocese of Fargo - TV Mass  
5201 Bishops Blvd. S, Suite A, Fargo, ND 58104



# Sidewalk Stories

By Roxane B. Salonen

## There's a time to be silent and a time to shout

With each passing year, I've become more and more a fan of silence. In silence, we can nourish and feed our souls. In silence, we can better hear the voice of God.

But silence in our age has become elusive, including on the sidewalk of our state's only abortion facility. When I first began praying there, the din wasn't such a problem. Most days, a lone escort would be there to help the women into the facility—rarely back out. As more life proponents showed up, the escort brigade grew too.

Back then, prayer was our most effective tool, as now. But our prayers are often muffled these days by the escorts' shouts. "Don't listen to her!" "Get out of the way!" "Quit blocking the sidewalk!" Most often, they are blocking us from reaching the women with resources.

I think of Cardinal Robert Sarah's brilliant book, *The Power of Silence: Against the Dictatorship of Noise*. The noise that manifests on the sidewalk each week qualifies as such. The "dictatorship of noise" prevents us from sharing the truth.

Often the barrage begins as soon as the woman approaches. The escorts would have her believe we are the problem. In truth, most of us would prefer a quiet conversation and a shield of prayer.

As Sarah says, "Someone who is close to God becomes powerful; he can conquer the evil that corrodes the world, and he is capable of integrating it into his prayer of intercession." We become closer to God through prayer and have seen its powerful effects. Prayer is always our best armor.

Further, he says that "silence and prayer are not a form of defection," but rather, "the strongest weapons against evil." He's right.

That said, we have only minutes to share our hopeful news, and though we would wish for a quieter entry point—some peaceful oasis where we could gracefully offer what we know is true and good—we don't usually have that opportunity. So, sometimes, to get through, we have to raise our voices a bit, to be heard at all.

Recently, Sarah's words showed up in my "Magnificat" as a reflection—a refreshing balm. Just days before, my sidewalk comrade and I were approached early in our arrival by a post-abortive woman who launched into a 30-minute verbal tirade against us.

It happened to be the Feast Day of Mary of Magdala, a woman

afflicted by demons, which Jesus cast out of Mary through his mercy. As this woman before us spewed her hate and accusations, the disquiet in her soul was palpable. One could see how easy it would be for a bad spirit to take up residence there.

Later that day, in the beautiful silence of the Adoration chapel, I prayed for her freedom. But earlier, out on the sidewalk, the interior confusion and wounds were so clear. When we realized a meaningful conversation would be impossible, I turned to my friend and asked if we could start a Divine Mercy Chaplet.

As we prayed, the woman seemed even more agitated, and began calling us names, saying we were mentally ill. It was alarming and shocking and sad. At one point, she accused us of "following" and "harassing" the women. If we were to stand by quietly and just pray, she could accept that, she said, but not our "abrasive" approach.

Later, I thought about the woman's admonishment in light of what actually happens inside the abortion facility. What if the building were burning—after all, it is in a sense—and all we did was quietly whisper, "There's a fire in there that will burn you. We'll be out here praying," or, if someone were on the ledge of the window threatening suicide, and all we offered was, "Hope it works out. We'll pray for you."?

Silence and prayer are certainly our best defenses against the Evil One's ploy at this corner of our city. Some days, these are all we can offer, and they are enough. But other times, we must try to "talk someone off the ledge," which might mean walking toward them to hand them resources and draw nearer, that they might meet the sincerity of our face, our eyes, our heart.

"Silence is not a form of passivity," Sarah says. "By remaining silent, man can avoid a greater evil. It is not earthly dereliction of duty to place your trust in heaven..."

These are rich words to ponder and process as we discern when to quiet down and pray, and when the Lord is calling us to advance and sound the alarm to help save a soul.

*Roxane B. Salonen, a wife and mother of five, is a local writer, and a speaker and radio host for Real Presence Radio. Roxane writes for The Forum newspaper and for CatholicMom.com. Reach her at roxanebsalonen@gmail.com.*

# NEW EARTH



Catholic Diocese of Fargo  
5201 Bishops Blvd, Ste. A  
Fargo, ND 58104



*Do you know  
where we are?*

The answer will be revealed  
in the October *New Earth*.



*Where in the diocese are we?*

Last month's photo is  
from St. Mary's Church  
in Grand Forks.