From Bishop Folda: The Year of St. Joseph

Walking with Moms in Need a great opportunity to live the “Five Finger Gospel”

March for Life: young people voice their support for those who can’t

Year of St. Joseph
What lessons the “silent saint” has for fathers and families
APRIL 6TH, 2021 AT 7:00 PM CST PRESENTED ON ZOOM

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On Dec. 8, 2020, Pope Francis surprised the world and gave us a special gift by declaring a Year of St. Joseph, a time to grow in our love and devotion for the foster father of Jesus and the spouse of Mary. Our Holy Father often speaks of his own personal devotion to St. Joseph, and he called this Year of St. Joseph to mark the 150th anniversary since Pope Pius IX declared Joseph to be the Patron of the Universal Catholic Church. Even now there is much we can learn from Joseph.

Aside from Mary, no one was closer to Jesus during his years on earth than Joseph. God entrusted Mary and Jesus into his care, and he cherished them as a loving husband and father. But his was no ordinary family. This humble man was called to be the guardian and protector of the Son of God and his Immaculate Mother, the Holy Family. From the moment that he said yes to the angel’s message, Joseph has held an essential place in the life of the Church. He continues to watch over and protect the family of God, and because we are all members of Christ as his mystical Body, I have no doubt that Joseph looks on each of us with a father’s love. He has the same care and tenderness toward the Church that he had for Jesus and Mary, because we as a Church are a continuation, a spiritual extension of Jesus and his mother in the world. Just as Joseph protected and provided for Jesus and Mary, he now protects and provides for us, wanting only to bring us closer to Jesus, whom he loved as a son.

Joseph is the quiet man of the New Testament. No words of Joseph are recorded in the Scriptures, but his silence speaks volumes and conveys a sense of awe before the presence of God. In his stillness he is able to listen intently and hear the voice of God. Luke tells us that Mary pondered the events of our Lord’s birth in her heart, but I think it’s safe to say that Joseph pondered these mysteries too. In this way, he is a model of contemplation. We can see Joseph looking with wonder on the Christ child in the manger of Bethlehem and in the home of Nazareth. He teaches us to gaze on the face of Jesus and to listen when he speaks to our hearts.

Joseph is also a model of discipleship. Like Mary, Joseph received the message of God that he was to be a father to Jesus, and he believed. He accepted God’s plan for him, and put aside whatever plans he already had. Joseph teaches us that God has a plan for each one of us, and we should always be willing to forego our own plans and ambitions so that God can bring his plan to completion within us. Each one of us is called to discipleship, a stance of listening, and learning, and following—going where Christ goes, and abiding with him.

In a special way, Joseph is a patron for all husbands and fathers. He took Mary as his wife, even after hearing the stunning news of her pregnancy. He accepted and raised Jesus as his own son, guarding and preserving him from harm. Joseph gave the fullness of his love to Mary and Jesus, caring for them as a family and creating a home for them. To quote Pope Francis, “Joseph found happiness not in mere self-sacrifice but in self-gift.” The men of our time can learn much from Joseph, who faced extraordinary challenges but put the needs of his loved ones ahead of his own.

Joseph was known to be a carpenter, a man who worked for a living to support his family and his household. He demonstrates the dignity of those who work, who participate in the unfolding of God’s plan for creation and for the redemption of the world. He no doubt lived a humble and hidden life in Nazareth, and could have easily remained anonymous to the world. But as Pope Francis tells us again, “St. Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation.” Whatever our occupation might be, we can dedicate it to God and allow him to work through us to sanctify the world.

Joseph was certainly a man of faith and courage. He put his trust in God and allowed himself to become part of the great plan for our salvation. Especially at the time of Jesus’ birth, Joseph faced the dangers of travel, homelessness, and exile in Egypt. He shows all followers of Jesus that, come what may, we must be docile to God’s grace in the events that unfold through us.

"...as Pope Francis tells us again, ‘St. Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation.’ Whatever our occupation might be, we can dedicate it to God and allow him to work through us to sanctify the world." —Bishop John Folda
March 19 is the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In union with Pope Francis and joined by all the priests of our diocese, I will consecrate the Diocese of Fargo to St. Joseph on that day, asking him to intercede and protect us as we journey through this life toward the eternal life to come. I invite all of you to join in this consecration as well. Look to St. Joseph as a foster father, a companion on the journey, a guide and protector. Entrust your cares and worries, as well as your prayers to him, and he will join them to his own. “Hail, guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man. Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life. Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen.”

March 19 • 12 p.m.
Solemnity of St. Joseph Mass, St. Joseph, Devils Lake

March 19 • 6 p.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Mark, Bottineau

March 20 • 10 a.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Ann, Belcourt

March 20 • 7 p.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Alphonsus, Langdon

March 21 • 1 p.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Mary, Grand Forks

March 24 • 3 p.m.
St. JPII Schools Board Meeting, Pastoral Center, Fargo

March 25 • 6:15 p.m.
Shanley First Nighter, Fargo

March 26 • 6 p.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Catherine, Valley City

March 27 • 10 a.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. James Basilica, Jamestown

March 28 • 10 a.m.
Palm Sunday Mass, Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

March 30 • 11 a.m.
Chrism Mass, Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

April 1 • 7 p.m.
Mass of the Lord’s Supper, Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

April 2–5
Pastoral Center closed, Fargo

April 2 • 10 a.m.
Stations of the Cross at Red River Women’s Clinic, Fargo

April 2 • 3 p.m.
Good Friday Service, Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

April 3 • 8:30 p.m.
Easter Vigil in the Holy Night, Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

April 4 • 10 a.m.
Easter Sunday Mass, Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

April 9 • 6 p.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Cecilia, Velva

Apr. 10 • 10 a.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Therese, Rugby

Apr. 11 • 1 p.m.
Confirmation and First Eucharist, Sacred Heart, Carrington
Most everyone is familiar with the story of St. Patrick, who’s feast we celebrate each year on March 17. But did you know St. Patrick had a sister who is also a saint celebrated in March?

It is written that Patrick may have had two brothers, six sisters, and 20 nephews working with him in Ireland. His most famous sister is St. Darerca. Not much has been written about her, but she is widely known as the “mother of saints” because most of her children from her two marriages—17 sons and two daughters—entered religious life. Many of them were later recognized as saints, and some became bishops in Ireland.

St. Darerca is the patroness of Valentia Island, the westernmost point of County Kerry in Ireland. An exact year of her death is not known, but she died sometime in the 5th century.

**Feast day:** March 22  
**Patron:** Valentia Island  
**Death:** 5th century

O Jesus, our great High Priest, hear my humble prayers on behalf of your priests. Give them a deep faith, a bright and firm hope and a burning love, which will ever increase throughout their priestly life. In their loneliness, comfort them. In their sorrows, strengthen them. In their frustrations, remind them that through suffering the soul is purified. Show them that they are needed by the Church; they are needed by souls; they are needed for the work of redemption. Amen.

**Prayer Intention of Pope Francis**

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**

Let us pray that we may experience the sacrament of reconciliation with renewed depth, to taste the infinite mercy of God.

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**DIOCESE OF FARGO OFFICIAL APPOINTMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

I hereby appoint the
Rev. Fred Alexander, SOLT, as Parochial Vicar of St. Ann’s Church, Belcourt; St. Anthony, Alcide; and St. Michael, Dunseith, effective March 1, 2021, and continuing ad nutum episcopi.

Hilary A. Bitz, formerly a priest of the Diocese of Fargo (ordained May 26, 1962), was dismissed from the clerical state on November 19, 2020 due to schism.

**Historical information from Catholic Online.**
Since the obligation to attend Sunday Mass has been relaxed during the pandemic, why should I bother going?

Now that’s an honest question! Straight forward. To the point. It strikes at the heart of one’s motivation for attending Mass, or for that matter, engaging in any religious activity. Why bother if I don’t have to?

Before I attempt an answer, I want to make clear I’m not addressing those who are avoiding Mass due to authentic health concerns, but rather only those who would otherwise attend if the obligation were not relaxed. And that group likely includes many, perhaps even most Catholics. I’ve seen any number of parishioners at graduate open houses, varsity basketball games, and restaurants who are conspicuously absent from Sunday Mass. But why should they go to Mass if they don’t have to?

The question quickly unveils one’s motivation for going in the first place. There are two broad rationales for worship: duty and charity (love). The former is the starting point for any choice, and it’s not to be disparaged. In fact, most of our daily choices are made out of duty. We show up for work and perform our job description due to the employment contract we signed. It makes life more fulfilling if we enjoy the work, but whether or not we do, we’re issued the paycheck. That’s duty. And what parent hasn’t changed diapers exclusively because of their natural obligation as mother or father? Nobody is edified by dirty diapers, but we change them anyway! There’s no shame in that.

Acting out of duty is a worthy starting point, but duty will never sustain a meaningful relationship. A husband who buys flowers for his wife out of obligation to his marital covenant is hardly worthy of a thank you kiss. Such is the case of our relationship to God. Attending Mass simply because of an obligation puts a Catholic in the same company of the loveless husband. In short order, even the flowers will stop coming.

There’s something instructive here for parents. Attending Mass should not be promoted simply as a rule of the family. Parents who take this approach are preparing their teenagers to enjoy very restful Sunday mornings as university freshmen. Rather than using the teenage years to develop routine and obedience in matters of faith, it would be wiser to foster understanding and love of the faith. Admittedly, that’s no easy task, but my point is that duty is not sustainable for matters of the faith.

It ought to be the pursuit of every Catholic not simply to serve God but to love him. Love needs no obligation. Love is spontaneous. It spills over onto other areas and changes our lives. The Catholic who loves God seeks him out regardless of whether there’s a scheduled date each week. They want to see him, talk with him, dine with him.

And that last encounter—dining with him—is what separates the Catholic’s motivation for worship from his protestant neighbor’s. There is no substitute in Catholic worship for the reception of the Eucharist. Despite all the merit of spiritual communion received while streaming Mass, the grace of the sacraments has always been conveyed through the tangible encounter between minister and disciple, in physical signs and symbols. Actual reception of the consecrated host offers the surest means of the graces of Jesus Christ’s meritorious suffering and death. For this reason, the Second Vatican Council boldly asserts the Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian life.” No one reaches the summit virtually.

So why bother going to Mass? Love of the Eucharist is the worthiest motivation. Everything else is periphery. The architecture of the sanctuary, the talent of the choir, the clarity of the homilist, the piety of the altar boys are all elements that can elevate the experience of the liturgy, but the experience is not what makes Mass worthwhile. Experience is a quality that concerns the realm of entertainment and leisure. Grace and sacrificial offering concern the realm of liturgy.

The Eucharist received at the humble Mass celebrated on the hood of a jeep in the middle of the Korean War, as captured in the iconic photograph of Servant of God Father Emil Kapaun, is the same Eucharist received from the high altar in St. Peter’s Basilica at Easter Mass. What unites these two Masses is the grace of the Eucharist.

This is why Catholics don’t use the language of “going to church” on Sunday. More properly, we are “going to Mass.” We can go to the church for any number of reasons, but we go to Mass to receive the Eucharist, to participate in the sacrificial offering of Jesus Christ, to be fully incorporated into his mystical body.

If that’s the case, I’d go to Sunday Mass whether or not my dad, my pastor, my bishop, the pope, or even Jesus Christ himself told me it was an obligation. I’d bother with the Eucharist every day of my life.

Editor’s note: If you have a question to suggest for consideration in a future column, send to news@fargodiocese.org.
Over the next eight issues of *New Earth*, I’m going to present a catechesis on the Sacraments of the Church. In this month’s edition, we will look at what constitutes a sacrament, and in following issues, examine each of the seven sacraments.

A proper understanding of the sacraments is indispensable for the faithful since the sacraments are both necessary for salvation and essential helps for spiritual growth. So what is a sacrament? The classic definition from the *Baltimore Catechism* states that a sacrament is “an outward sign, instituted by Christ, to give grace.” We see in this definition three elements.

First, the outward sign. We use signs all the time in daily life, helping us communicate invisible realities and ideas. Language is a sign, an exterior expression of our thoughts. Traffic signs keep order on the road. The sacraments are special signs. They point to something that we fail to grasp with our senses, that is, grace. Every sacrament offers a special grace, and the visible part of the sacrament points to the kind of invisible grace received. For example, pouring of water is the outward sign of Baptism and is a fitting sign since Baptism washes us from sin.

This outward aspect of the sacraments also fits our human nature. God knows that we aren’t pure spiritual beings like angels. He doesn’t give us truth directly to our minds. We learn by data entering through our five bodily senses. Therefore, God, as a wise teacher, uses these outward signs to communicate to us according to how we, as humans, naturally learn and grow. The outward sign of the sacraments also makes the sacraments, and our participation in them, public. This gives us the opportunity to give witness to our faith in Jesus. For example, in matrimony, the spouses pledge their love and fidelity to each other in front of witnesses. Without an outward ceremony, the sacraments would become privatized, making us isolated from the Body of Christ and human society.

God also uses these outward signs to teach us humility. We remember that our first parents sinned through pride by eating the apple. We continue to offend God by focusing our sensual appetites on the things of this world. So God instructs us to subject ourselves to these humble sensible objects in order to purify our senses and use them as he intends. St. Paul says, “But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that he may confound the strong” (1 Cor. 1:27). God uses ordinary humble matter to unleash divine power upon us.

The second aspect of the sacraments is that they are instituted by Christ. Only God can give these material signs the power to produce grace in our soul. Because Jesus institutes them, the sacraments always have power to do what they are intended to do. A stop sign doesn’t literally make you stop the car; but in Baptism, the pouring of water and the recitation of the formula washes away sin. It happens automatically, you could say, because Jesus is the author of the sacraments, and all that exists is subject to him.

Which leads us to our final point: Jesus instituted the sacraments to give us sanctifying grace. This grace is our created share in God’s uncreated life. Jesus said that he came that we might have abundant life (cf. John 10:10). When we receive a sacrament, the life of God flows into our souls, casting out sin and darkness, solidifying our union with him. Sanctifying grace makes us holy, as God is holy; it gives us strength to persevere through our trials; it gives us the foretaste of life everlasting. We should become gluttons for grace!

But just because Jesus offers grace through the sacraments, doesn’t mean that we always receive it in the degree he wants. He offers the gift, but we can put up obstacles to grace. These could include being guilty of unconfessed mortal sin, lacking faith that the sacraments do what Jesus intends them to do, lacking in forgiveness, or not accepting all that Christ teaches through the Church. We must carefully examine ourselves before we receive the sacraments and try to have great fervor and devotion for them, so that we can receive all the spiritual fruits that Jesus wants to give us.

We see through the sacraments how Jesus makes use of the physical world that is our natural home, to raise us to supernatural life. If we make good use of these Sacred Signs, we will be full of the abundant life he came to bring us.
St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta was fond of living and preaching a very simple Gospel. When people would ask her to explain the Gospel, she would hold out her hand (or take theirs) and speak the following words—one word for each of the five fingers—"You. Did. It. To. Me." She would go on to say that you have two hands and two feet. Use them to do God’s work. This is a subtle but profound reminder that we will be judged by how we treat the least of our brothers and sisters—those most in need. Those who love and serve everyone as Jesus did, he calls sheep. Those that do not, he calls goats (Matt. 25:31-46).

Pope Francis has repeatedly taught that we need to reach out to the margins of society and show those in need the love of Christ and give them help and hope as we walk with them on their journey. One demographic that often finds themselves marginalized is pregnant women in need. In *Evangelium Vitae* (EV), St. John Paul II praises the “brave mothers who devote themselves to their own family without reserve,” who are “ready to make any effort, to face any sacrifice” to pass on the best of themselves to their child but unfortunately, “these heroic women do not always find support in the modern world around them” (EV 86).

In order to give these women the support they need and deserve, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has introduced an exciting initiative that will enable parishes to live the Five Finger Gospel. It is called *Walking with Moms in Need* (WWMIN)—*A Year of Service*. This “Year of Service” was originally set to launch in the Fargo Diocese in March of 2020 to coincide with the 25th anniversary of *Evangelium Vitae*, but COVID-19 concerns caused Bishop Folda to postpone it until this year. It will now begin on March 19 and will mark three important events related to this initiative. The Solemnity of St. Joseph is March 19, and in this Year of St. Joseph we especially remember how he walked with Mary and trusted in God even though their difficult situation appeared scandalous to their community. March 25 is the anniversary of Pope St. John Paul II’s landmark encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life). It is also the Solemnity of the Annunciation, which began Mary’s pregnancy as an unmarried mother who was in need.

The WWMIN initiative has five phases. Prayer for these mothers in need and those who will provide vital resources is an essential part of all five phases. Phase 1 (March 2021) involves announcing the year of service, identifying a point person and building a core team of individuals in those parishes to support the year of service.

During Phase 2 (May 2021), the parish will begin its parish inventory process. This is one of the most important aspects of WWMIN. Each parish will identify a wide variety of assets such as pregnancy-related resources, food, housing, counseling, employment, childcare, and education as well as the help specifically available from the local parish. The goal is to have a list of services and resources readily available to better assist these moms in need. Catholic Charities North Dakota, who is partnering with the Diocese of Fargo on this effort, will provide an initial list of resources available statewide to the parishes and offer ongoing help through their “Pregnancy, Parenting, and Adoption Services” program.

In Phase 3 (Sept. 2021), the inventory results will be shared, plans will be created on the parish’s response, and a date will be set for a parish-wide meeting. Phase 4 (January 2022) is where the parish will announce its plan at the parish-wide meeting, commit to an active response, and begin implementing their plan to serve moms in need. Phase 5 (March 2022) completes the first year of service and includes a parish-wide celebration of the church’s effort as marking the Feast of St. Joseph, the Annunciation, and the anniversary of *Evangelium Vitae*. The parish then continues to implement its plan of praying for and actively serving mothers in need.

My 3-year-old son loves to give grandma and his cousins “high 5s” when he sees them. Many times after doing so he says (in his less-than-perfect English) “I’m so excited!” There is good reason to be “so excited” about the Walking with Moms in Need initiative because five fingers can do so much. They can summarize the Gospel, help those in need, count the phases of the WWMIN initiative, and give encouragement and a joyful greeting to the people we meet.

Let’s choose to get out of our comfort zone and use our five fingers to live the Gospel through service and see Christ in all those we meet—especially those most in need. “You. Did. It. To. Me.” Let’s be sheep, not goats.
Early in the Lenten season each year, a ceremony takes place at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo for those in the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) process seeking full communion with the Catholic Church.

This combined celebration includes the Rite of Election of Catechumens and the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates. The celebration is about more than giving catechumens (unbaptized who will receive Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist at the Easter Vigil) and candidates (baptized who will receive Confirmation and/or First Eucharist at the Easter Vigil) a chance to meet the bishop. For both catechumens and candidates, this day signifies a transition in their preparation to receive the sacraments.

The reason for the Rite of Election specifically is given to us in the introduction to the rite itself: “Thus the Church makes its ‘election,’ that is, the choice and admission of those catechumens who have the dispositions that make them fit to take part, at the next major celebration, in the sacraments of initiation” (119).

“From an RCIA standpoint, they’ve been going through this process of the systematic presentation of the faith and at the Rite of the Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, it’s the decision saying, ‘I want to become Catholic,’” said Brad Gray, Director of Marriage and Family Life for the Diocese of Fargo and RCIA instructor at the Cathedral of St. Mary.

“It’s a decision on their end, and it’s a decision of the Church that they are ready to go forward. Meeting the Bishop is an outward sign that the Church formally recognizes their desire for full communion in the Catholic Church,” said Mary Hanbury, Director of Catechesis for the Diocese of Fargo and RCIA instructor at the Cathedral of St. Mary.

During Lent, which focuses on the need for ongoing conversion, the elect and candidates join with Catholics throughout the world in seeking to deepen their faith, grow in holiness, and strengthen their relationships with God and neighbor. Their final time of preparation can be an inspiration for Catholics who, though routine, may lose sight of what they receive at Mass.

“Every single reception of the Holy Communion is enough to make us a saint,” said Gray. “The reason we don’t is because we only receive so much as we’re disposed to receive. This is a time when catechumens communicate to Catholics how we should be preparing to receive the Eucharist. Because we receive the Eucharist every week or every day, there can be a tendency for us, spiritually speaking, to forget the significance, the grandness, of the Eucharist.”

Every Baptized person, even those baptized as infants, was “elected” by God for Baptism. It is a gift that God has chosen us. Let us continue to pray for all those preparing to receive the sacraments at the Easter Vigil on April 3.
Father Bernard (Ben) Bachmeier, formerly of the Diocese of Fargo, passed away Feb. 15 in San Diego, Calif. He was 82 years old.

Father Ben was one of 12 children and grew up in Towner. He attended public schools there before attending the University of North Dakota. He served as editor of The Dakota Student newspaper and graduated with a degree in journalism in 1961.

Father Ben entered the seminary at Loyola University in Chicago in 1963, then attended St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minn. He was ordained in 1968 in his home church of St. Cecilia in Towner. He served as associate pastor at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo until 1972. While serving in Fargo he was named editor of the diocesan newspaper, Catholic Action News.

Father Ben was named associate pastor at St. Alphonsus Church in Langdon and served in that position for a year before being named pastor of St. Francis Church in Marion and Assumption Church in Dickey. In 1979, he became pastor of Holy Family Church in Grand Forks, supervising the construction of the parish’s first church building. In 1991, he was named pastor of St. Patrick’s Church in Enderlin. He served there until 1992, when he received permission to become a full-time chaplain at Scripps Mercy Hospital in San Diego. He served there for 15 years before retiring and residing in San Diego.

Father Ben was proceeded in death by his parents and 11 siblings. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on March 1 at Holy Family Church in Grand Forks with burial at Calvary Cemetery South.
On March 19, we celebrate the feast of who many have called the “silent saint.” St. Joseph, spouse of Mary, foster-father of Jesus, and the head of the Holy Family, has been called the “silent saint” because the Gospel does not record one spoken verse for St. Joseph. But his “silence” still speaks volumes in the examples of his piety, along with his obedience and trust in God.

Imagine being in St. Joseph’s place. He’s just been told the woman he is espoused to is pregnant, and the child was not his. Joseph, according to the Gospel, “since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly.” (Matt. 1:19).

Yet God had a different plan for Joseph, and in a dream assured Joseph that he should take Mary for his wife. “For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” (Matt. 1:20-21). Joseph, ever obedient to God, courageously and willingly took on the role as legal and spiritual protector, provider, and teacher for the infant and adolescent Messiah.

In honor and recognition of his devotion to God the Father, Jesus the Son of God, and to Mary, the Mother of God, Pope Francis declared that a Year of St. Joseph shall take place from Dec. 8, 2020 through Dec. 8, 2021. The date falls 150 years after Pope Pius IX proclaimed St. Joseph as the Patron of the Catholic Church.

In his Apostolic Letter Patris corde, Pope Francis stated, “Even through Joseph’s fears, God’s will, his history and his plan were at work. Joseph, then, teaches us that faith in God includes believing that he can work even through our fears, our frailties and our weaknesses. He also teaches us that amid the tempests of life, we must never be afraid to let the Lord steer our course. At times, we want to be in complete control, yet God always sees the bigger picture.”
Bishop Folda has encouraged parishes across the diocese to be consecrated to St. Joseph. In addition, a Consecration Mass, celebrated by Bishop Folda, will be held at St. Joseph’s Church in Devils Lake at noon on March 19. This is also an opportunity for you to consecrate yourself, your family, your child’s school, or your business/workplace to St. Joseph.

The consecration videos featuring a short reflection and the Litany of St. Joseph are available on the diocesan web page at fargodiocese.org. In addition, as part of the Year of St. Joseph, Pope Francis has authorized ways that all Catholics may gain special plenary indulgences during this holy year. The complete list and other resources may also be found on the diocesan web page at fargodiocese.org/st-joseph.

Father Chad Wilhelm of St. Joseph’s Church in Devils Lake has made devotion to the saint a weekly priority. Being the pastor of a church named after St. Joseph, he is encouraged that Pope Francis and Bishop Folda are devoting this year to the saint.

“I really think that, especially in the last 40 years, St. Joseph as part of being the good spirituality of people has been forgotten,” said Father Wilhelm. “I think that with the Pope calling for a year of consecration to St. Joseph, the universal Church is calling for devotion to St. Joseph. I feel he needs to be known and loved,
and to be asked for his strong intercession for family life.”

Father Wilhelm says St. Joseph is the perfect example to Catholic families and especially to fathers. He uses the name “Joseph” as an acronym on how fathers can remember the qualities of St. Joseph, so that they too can incorporate these qualities into their family life: Just, Obedient, Silent, Example, Parent, Husband.

“We need to discover where we as Catholics need to serve, and that we have an increase in our relationship with God and be open to that,” added Father Wilhelm. “It’s what St. Joseph did when he answered God’s call. He could have walked away from Mary and the responsibility God was calling him to, but he didn’t.”

Tim Mosser, Diocesan Respect Life Coordinator, deacon candidate, and a new father, can attest to how using the examples set forth by St. Joseph will help him grow as a husband and father as he and his wife, Veronica, watch their son, Romeo, grow.

“The name Joseph means ‘God increases,’ and he certainly used Joseph to invite all people to become part of God’s family through the work of the Holy Family,” said Mosser. “I frequently throw up an S.O.S to St. Joseph for his intercession in my prayer. The S.O.S. stands for three aspects of St. Joseph’s life that I strive to emulate—Silence, Obedience, and Sanctity. And just as the “Save Our Ship” S.O.S. of old was a cry for help in time of distress, so too, is my S.O.S. to St. Joseph, as I attempt to help my family navigate the sometimes stormy waters of this life as we travel to the safety of the Barque of Peter, the Church, and of heaven.”

Reflecting on the spiritual example St. Joseph sets for Catholic fathers and their families, Pope St. John Paul II wrote in his 1989 Apostolic Letter Redemptoris Pluries: “May St. Joseph become for all a singular master in the service of the saving mission of Christ that is incumbent on each and every one of us in the Church: To spouses, to parents, to those who live by the work of their hands or by any other work, to persons called to the contemplative life as well as to those called to the apostolate.”

Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man. Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life. Obtain for us grace, mercy and courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen.  Pope Francis – from Patris corde – 12/8/20

In honor of the Year of St. Joseph, if you know anyone named Joseph or Josephine, please send us their name and address so we can send them a card.

CARMEL of MARY
17765 78th Street SE, Wahpeton, ND 58075
www.carmelofmary.org  carmelofmary@gmail.com

Job opening
Director of Mission Services

CHI St. Alexius Health Devils Lake Hospital and CHI St. Alexius Health Carrington Medical Center are seeking a Director of Mission Services. This is an executive-level position tasked with integrating the mission, vision, and values as well as the heritage, ethics, and identity of our organizations. The Director will be based in Devils Lake and provide leadership for both hospitals.

Masters in Divinity or similar field and 3-5 years of mission service experience in a hospital or health care setting preferred. Apply at careers-commonspirit.icims.com/jobs/120424/director-mission/job
One day, two successful investors, Jerry and Gary, visited my office. Jerry said their client, Edna, who was 90 years old, needed a will. I did not know Edna to be a wealthy person, but everyone needs a will. Jerry said he and Gary had arranged for Clint, a local lawyer, to visit Edna, but there was a little problem. I listened and learned.

The problem was that Edna had a lot more money than she thought she had. She lived in senior housing under rent controls close to many people like her. She could not hear well and was losing her sight.

I went to visit her on a hot summer day. Usually I only visited Edna when she asked me to hear her confession or celebrate the Anointing of the Sick a couple of times a year, so she really wondered why I was visiting on this particular afternoon.

I told her that Jerry and Gary asked me to visit and that she needed a will. She nodded that she was discussing this with Clint.

I asked if she knew who she was giving her money to. She rattled off: her parish $60,000; the local hospital $10,000; the local ambulance service $10,000; the hospital in her hometown $10,000; and the ambulance service in her hometown $10,000.

She smiled and said, “Don’t you think that will be great?”

I said I was sure everyone would be appreciative but that I knew from Jerry and Gary that Edna had a lot more than $100,000 in her various investments. She looked sternly at me and asked, “How much money do those guys think I have?”

I sat back in my chair and revved up my outside voice so Edna could hear me. “Edna, you have a million dollars!”

She lit up with the biggest smile I had ever seen and said, “You’re kidding.”

I continued to explain that when she met with Clint, she should not be so specific in dollar amounts. Speak in percentages. That way, if there’s more money than she thinks there is at the time of her death, all of it will be given to the five charities she named.

Edna said this was a good point. “The total could be a lot more when I am 100 years old,” she said. She assured me that she understood percentages and how the total would have to add up to 100. She was ready to meet Clint.

A couple of years later Edna lost her sight and moved to the nursing home. After I had moved to another parish, I learned that she died. She gave the parish 50%. That’s half a million dollars! I had never been involved in such a transaction before this one, and I have never been involved in another since.

God acts in mysterious ways. A generous woman made six charities very happy. None of them had any idea this gift was coming—especially not the priest who became pastor after me!

When Clint went to inform the priest of the gift, the priest called me and asked if I had made a habit of asking older women for money. I assured him I had not and this was the only gift I was aware of coming his way.

If you do not have a will, visit a lawyer. Name those whom you plan to leave a gift and how much of your treasure you plan to give each. Speak in percentages. Do not forget the place where you worship or your diocese.
hey voluntarily walked in the frigid cold of a North Dakota winter because they knew their cause was right.

Hundreds of young people from across the state, from the University of Mary in Bismarck, Shanley High School in Fargo, Velva, Karlsruhe, Dickinson, and elsewhere, descended on the state capitol grounds in Bismarck on Jan. 29 to mark the anniversary of the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe vs. Wade decision, which legalized abortion in the United States.

Many of those standing on the lawn of the state capitol building hoped to be in Washington D.C. for the annual March for Life, but due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the 2021 March for Life became a virtual event. For young people in North Dakota, that wasn’t good enough. So, spurred by pro-life groups from the University of Mary, students marched on the state capitol. Although their numbers were limited due to COVID concerns, their zeal made up for the lower attendance.

“This generation of young people are deeply committed to the value of life and are very passionate about the pro-life movement,” said Father William Slattery, Chaplain of Shanley High School. “They have been bombarded by a culture that exploits, demeans, and objectifies and in the face of these pressures their hearts remain open, hopeful, and committed to justice.”

One of the speakers at the Bismarck rally was North Dakota Senator Kevin Cramer. He told the young people gathered that, even among those who disagree with their pro-life stance, their voices are being heard, especially in Washington. D.C. That message seemed to resound with those marching.

“I had a basketball game today, but I thought this was the most important thing for me to do because life is the most important thing,” said Anthony Wanner, a junior at Shanley. “A lot of my friends are Catholic, but even my friends who aren’t say abortion should at least be limited, and I know some of them aren’t entirely pro-life, but I know many of them are.”

“In this past year we have experienced many challenges as a nation,” added Father Slattery. “These challenges are not missed by our young people. They have been learning, first-hand, the sacrifices that are required to care for others, particularly the vulnerable and the oppressed. They hear the voice of those crying for justice and equality and have come to see the necessity of rights, especially the right to life. Each year, the pro-life movement grows stronger, and our youth are answering the call to justice.”

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“Even if they don’t agree with us, we’re still putting ourselves out there and making our opinion known, and it can be such a powerful thing,” said Autumn Kotrba, a junior at Shanley. “Going on the March for Life and standing up for what I believe in is something I take a lot of pride in, and since we couldn’t go to Washington D.C. this year, I felt like I might as well do everything I can, so I came today.”
Marie Kraemer, 18, is glad to be alive—and, for her, the annual March for Life, to commemorate lives lost to abortion, is personal.

“I was born in China during the time of the one-child policy,” said Kraemer, who helped organize the march on Jan. 23 in Crookston. “I could have been someone who could’ve been aborted, so (the march) means a lot to me.”

About 100 people of all ages participated in the march, which began with a prayer at 1:30 p.m. at Central Park. Participants walked, while chanting and braving bitter winds, several blocks to the Polk County Courthouse, where prayers were recited. All the prayers on this occasion were led by teenagers.

The event was organized by the St. Joseph Holy Family Homeschool support group, Lee Walski, of Crookston, announced at the start of the march.

Marie Kraemer, 18, was abandoned by her birth mother and taken to an orphanage in China, she said. She is grateful that her birth mother did not choose abortion, in the face of pressure from the Chinese government, she said.

At age 13 months, she was adopted by Laurie and Phil Kraemer, of Grand Forks, who raised her and another adopted Chinese girl, along with five biological children, she said.

“Every day of my life has been a gift. I feel so grateful that I am able to live the life that God wanted me to have,” she said.

A student at Lake Region State College, a junior college, she plans to transfer to the University of Minnesota Crookston to study equine science, according to Kraemer, who has attended the March for Life twice in Washington, D.C.

“It was eye-opening, honestly, to see groups from all over the United States, seeing everyone there, thousands and thousands,” she said. “It was very peaceful. Really cool.”

Before the event, she was excited when she heard that people from around the region planned to attend the march in Crookston, according to Kraemer, who credits Mary Kennelly, a member of a local home-school group, for getting the ball rolling.

“She said we should really do something this year,” Kraemer said, noting that this is the first such march that’s been held in Crookston.

“We need to stand up for all lives, instead of just some lives,” she said. “I believe the baby’s life starts from the moment of conception, so to be able to stand up for those lives, it really matters. They don’t have a voice.”

At the event on Jan. 23, Joseph Vandal, 15, of Minto, led the procession, holding a staff with a gold crucifix atop. He was followed by Nathan Walski, 16, of Crookston, who held up the U.S. flag.

“I believe life is a right, not a choice of other people,” said Vandal, a high school freshman, adding that he has participated in other similar pro-life events in Fargo in the past.

Joey Walski, 14, has never attended a March for Life rally, he said.

“I was going to go to the March for Life in Washington, D.C., but the group we usually go with was not going to go this year,” said Walski, noting that the corresponding event in the nation’s capital is taking place on a much smaller scale than in years past.

Joey Walski said he feels strongly enough about the abortion issue to take part in the event in Crookston, which his mother, Lee Walski, coordinated.

“I think someone needs to speak out for the babies who cannot speak out for themselves,” said Joey Walski, an eighth-grade, home-schooled student.

As they walked through the streets, participants were escorted by the Crookston Police Department vehicles, with flashing red and blue lights, up North Ash Street and through residential areas to the courthouse parking lot. They chanted, in response to the lead speaker, the Litany of the Holy Face of Jesus and repetitions of the “Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee...” prayer. They also recited the Lord’s Prayer in unison.

Four men carried a raised platform with a white statue of the Virgin Mary.

The crowd included people of all ages, some pushing baby strollers and others carrying signs with messages, such as “Please Let Baby Live,” “Choose Love, Choose Life,” “Remember the Unborn” and “Pray to End Abortion.”

The group walked back to its starting point in Central Park, ending with the song, “God Bless America.”

March for Life takes action in Crookston, MN

By Pamela D. Knudson | Originally published in the Grand Forks Herald

Students from the Catholic homeschool group from the Fargo Diocese and Crookston Diocese lead a March for Life in Crookston, Minn. on Jan. 23. Attendees traveled from Fargo, Grafton, Grand Forks, Hankinson, and Minto. (Grand Forks Herald)
Sophomore students Jacob Mayo, Keagan Walker, and Giovanni Nasello from Shanley High School, Fargo triumphed over teams from St. Mary’s Central High School, Bismarck; Trinity High School, Dickinson; Sacred Heart School, East Grand Forks, Minn.; and Bishop Ryan Catholic School, Minot, in the 12th annual state-wide Know Your Faith competition. Chaplain Father William Slattery and Religion teacher Brandon Schott accompanied the students to the competition in Minot on Feb. 3. Shanley will host the 2022 state competition. (submitted photo)

St. Michael’s Elementary School in Grand Forks as a “Celebrity Reader” for Catholic Schools Week. (Photo by Katie Mayer)

Shanley Senior Greta McArthur proclaims the Word of God at the Catholic Schools Week Mass on Feb. 4 at Shanley-Sullivan in Fargo. (submitted photo)

Father James Meyer, pastor of Holy Family Church in Grand Forks, celebrates Mass at Holy Family-St. Mary’s Elementary School in Grand Forks as part of National Catholic Schools Week celebrated Jan. 31 to Feb. 6 with the theme “Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service.” (submitted photo)

Students from Holy Family-St. Mary’s Elementary School in Grand Forks dress up for Twin Day. (Photo by Sara Dudley)
How healthy is your domestic church?

CATHOLIC CULTURE IN THE HOME

DR. GREGORY POPCAK
Executive Director of the Peyton Institute for Domestic Church Life

Editor’s note: In the February issue of New Earth, we featured the liturgy of Domestic Church life. The following is a continuation of this idea.

To briefly recap, the Liturgy of Domestic Church Life enables Christian families to bring Eucharistic grace home, be transformed by it, and carry it out to the world. This liturgy of family life is made up of three rites—the Rite of Christian Relationships, the Rite of Family Rituals, and the Rite of Reaching Out—each of which is tied to our baptismal call to live as priests, prophets, and royals, respectively. Finally, each rite recommends four practices that families are encouraged to live out in a way that works best for them but, when taken together, help them experience all the blessings and benefits that come from creating an authentically Christian household.

How well is your family living the three rites that make up the liturgy of Domestic Church Life? Take the following quiz to find out! Rate your family on a scale of 1 ("We don’t do this at all") to 5 ("This describes us perfectly!").

1. The Rite of Christian Relationships helps families live the priestly mission of baptism. When we work to overcome the selfish, sinful ways we treat each other, imitate Christ’s generous, incarnate love and consecrate the things we do all day to Christ, family life becomes a “little way of holiness.”
   a. We prioritize family time. Because we can only form godly kids if we spend meaningful time together every day, we don’t let outside activities compete with our efforts to create a close-knit, family team.
   b. We are extravagantly affectionate. Christ’s love is generous and incarnate. As a Christian household, we imitate Christ by being generously and appropriately affectionate, affirming, and supportive of one another.
   c. Pope St. John Paul II said that Christian relationships are characterized by “mutual self-giving.” We work hard to respond to each other’s needs (parents and kids), promptly, generously, consistently, and cheerfully.
   d. We practice Discipleship Discipline in our home. As St. John Bosco taught, we reject harsh punishments and focus on teaching, supporting, and encouraging godly behavior through “reason, religion and loving-kindness.”

2. The Rite of Family Rituals equips families to live the prophetic mission of baptism. When families work, play, talk, and pray together every day, they witness to the ways Christians relate to work, leisure, others, and faith.
   a. Work rituals. Each day, instead of dividing and conquering, we make time to do at least some household chores together. We don’t think of chores as just “things that have to get done.” We know they are opportunities to learn to be a team and take good care of each other.
   b. Play rituals. Every day, we make a point to play together, enjoy each other’s company and model healthy ways to celebrate our life together.
   c. Talk rituals. Several times a week, we have meaningful conversations (not lectures) about faith, values, how God is showing up for us and how we can take better care of each other.
   d. Prayer rituals. We pray together as a family throughout each day. We relate to Jesus as another member of our family. We regularly praise him and ask for his help.

3. The Rite of Reaching Out equips families to live the royal mission of baptism. We reign with Christ by serving with him.
   a. We take care of each other at home. Authentic Christian service begins with caring for the people under our roof.
   b. We think about others even when we’re home. As a family, we donate our gently-used items, look for ways to help our neighbors, and make our home a place where others can enjoy godly fun and fellowship.
   c. We are kind, thoughtful, and use good manners in and outside our home. As a family, we’re conscious of leaving people happier than we found them.
   d. We regularly engage in charitable service together as a family.

How’d you do? Every family has strengths and areas for growth. To discover more ways the liturgy of Domestic Church Life can bless your family, visit our Facebook discussion group, CatholicHŌM (Households on Mission)—Family Discipleship.
And something ignited in my soul, fever or unremembered wings, and I went my own way, deciphering that burning fire, and I wrote the first bare line, bare, without substance, pure foolishness, pure wisdom of one who knows nothing, and suddenly I saw the heavens unfastened and open” (La Poesía by Pablo Neruda, translated by David Whyte).

This poem fragment describes what Pope Francis’ Let Us Dream has done to me. “We are living a time of trial. The Bible talks of passing through fire to describe such trials.”

I’ve been waiting for a book like this my whole life. It braids together three cords: the Gospel, the real world, and a path forward. When I recommend this book to others, as I’ve done a lot lately, it’s like serving them a generous slice of my own inarticulate self. This is not a review but a brief, personal response. Let Us Dream is a call to act, an action flowing from a twofold listening to the Holy Spirit and to the margins.

First, Francis likens the Holy Spirit’s guidance to a tug on a string. The world is a labyrinth where many get lost in the circular logic of a self-defeating individualism. Taking a cue from Chesterton’s Father Brown mysteries, pilgrims can track their way out by “the twitch upon the thread.”

Big ideas, like the pandemic, economics, fundamentalism, climate, etc., can paralyze. Concrete action sets us free. The Holy Spirit has given us a ball of thread, the gift of truth. Creatively understanding what’s true will lead us out of the labyrinth and into meaningful engagement with the world. When we open ourselves and set selfishness aside, we feel the Spirit’s gentle tug. We advance when we transcend—that is, rise above feeling lost and yet remaining connected to the task at hand.

When I live this way, it is always without regret.

Secondly, Francis looks toward the margins, the outcasts, the excluded. To such as these we should lend an ear. Here the Spirit works through hidden souls “whom no history book ever mentions” (Edith Stein). These are the folks “able to pull on our thread.”

Makes me wonder about North Dakota. Pope Francis puts great stock in Popular Movements, springing from those on the peripheries. These are not very visible around here. Rural life, even when threatened by death spirals sweeping the prairie, seems but faintly represented by these movements. Among other reasons, doesn’t the very fact of the family farm’s gradual disappearance qualify us as folks on the edge?

This summer I moved 100 miles east from Bottineau to Cavalier County. Perhaps as pastor whose flocks hug our national border, I’m tempted to take Francis’ words about the margins too literally.

Some poking around the internet and a few calls reveal movements afoot that listen to the needs of an agricultural community—for instance, check out the organization Catholic Rural Life. Bishop Folda just joined their board.

Life in North Dakota is already life on the edge. The Spirit is at work here in ordinary people, but we have to be willing to dial down the syndicated voices noising national anxieties and listen to our neighbors. The Pope’s wisdom is as relevant here as anywhere. Rural living is a place of promise where the future is full of hope.

“Let yourself be pulled along, shaken up, challenged....” Pope Francis wrote. “When you feel the twitch, stop and pray. Open yourself... decenter... transcend. And then act. Call up, go visit, offer your service. Say you don’t have a clue what they do, but maybe you can help. Say you’d like to be part of a different world, and you thought this might be a good place to start.”

My start is to share this book.

To be hopeful sometimes feels like pure foolishness; I know so little. But I can’t deny that our Holy Father’s dream ignites something within me. His vision gives wings to Spirit-sent possibilities, if only I can feed on the fire of truth he calls “tradition.” Our tradition lifts high and embraces the cross, the edge of hope, where selfishness dies and solidarity is born.

As I started writing this article, it was more than 20 degrees below zero. Most of you probably experienced this too, so you understand I’m talking about the actual temperature outside, and not just the wind chill or real feel. Past a certain point of coldness, the only difference you find is how quickly frostbite and hypothermia kick in. As I finish this article in mid-February, it has bounced back to around 0 degrees again. That’s still very cold but about 20 degrees warmer than before.

Why do I talk about the weather? Well, our recent weather is much more than a conversation starter. It can remind us of a very important lesson. We always have the choice to complain about the difficulties in our lives or to rejoice about the blessings. While it may still be 30 degrees below freezing today, it is also 20 degrees warmer than it was yesterday. Which side of that coin do I want to focus on, and more importantly, what type of person do I wish to be?

Think of those people you admire and those who you enjoy spending time around. Are they the ones who always complain about their misery, or do they find a way to enjoy life despite their suffering and problems? – Chad Prososki

Why do I talk about the weather? Well, our recent weather is much more than a conversation starter. It can remind us of a very important lesson. We always have the choice to complain about the difficulties in our lives or to rejoice about the blessings. While it may still be 30 degrees below freezing today, it is also 20 degrees warmer than it was yesterday. Which side of that coin do I want to focus on, and more importantly, what type of person do I wish to be?

Think of those people you admire and those who you enjoy spending time around. Are they the ones who always complain about their misery, or do they find a way to enjoy life despite their suffering and problems? Don’t get me wrong, when you are going through a true trial in life it’s not very helpful—and often quite annoying—if someone carelessly tells you it’s no big deal. But how do we react to all the more numerous little things, the daily aches and pains, we experience in our everyday lives?

We don’t always choose what challenges or crosses we will face in life. What we can choose however is our attitude and how we want to respond to those burdens. Yet why is it so much easier to focus on the bad over the good? Perhaps this tendency has something to do with our fallen nature and concupiscence, or humanity’s inclination to sin.

But like everything, even this tendency to focus on the bad can have a silver lining. Without seeing and feeling strongly about the many problems in our world, how could we use our creativity and gifts to address them? Doesn’t seeing the worst aspects of society and all the injustices allow us to respond to them?

For instance, many of you just helped make a difference by participating in Giving Hearts Day when over 40,000 people donated nearly $22 million to over 500 difference nonprofit organizations serving North Dakota. Catholic Charities North Dakota and many other Catholic organizations, such as our schools, benefited from your great generosity.

Another way our faith helps us respond to the true injustices in our society is by offering us the principles of Catholic social teaching. This includes respect for life and human dignity, the option for the poor, rights to participation, worker rights, care for creation, solidarity with each other, and subsidiarity. The body of Catholic social teaching, which I have discussed often in this column, offers us established principles to help us fight for justice and the most vulnerable in a more helpful and systematic fashion.

No matter what conditions we face, we can always find ways to help someone. In the midst of the frozen temperatures outside, we witnessed the joy of giving from tens of thousands of North Dakotans during Giving Hearts Day on Feb. 11. As a charity, our hearts were warmed by the generous response of so many individuals working together as one. Many other great Catholic and other nonprofits also met their goals, successfully raising the dollars they need to serve the most poor and vulnerable in our communities. If you gave on Giving Hearts Day, thank you again for being part of this collaborative effort to make a difference!
Ten years ago, I began a most extraordinary Lent by walking up the Aventine Hill to the Basilica of Santa Sabina on the first day of the Roman station church pilgrimage—an eight-week journey that led to the book *Roman Pilgrimage: The Station Churches*, co-authored with my friend Elizabeth Lev and my son, Stephen. Liz Lev is the premier Anglophone art-and-architecture guide in the Eternal City, and her masterful descriptions of the Roman stational churches confirm the truth suggested by Stephen’s evocative photographs (best appreciated in the e-book edition of *Roman Pilgrimage*): beauty opens windows into the deep truths of Catholic faith. My contributions to the book—reflections on the liturgical readings of each day from Ash Wednesday through the Octave of Easter—helped make that Lent a particularly rewarding one, as writing those meditations made me dig deeper into the readings from Mass and the Divine Office.

Every Lent, the Church reads the first 20 chapters of the Book of Exodus in its daily prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours. Familiarity, alas, can mute the power of that inspired book, the linchpin of the Old Testament. During Lent 2011, I found new meaning in Exodus through a closer reading of the commentaries by the Fathers of the Church that accompany the story of Moses and the nascent people of Israel in the breviary. The first millennium Fathers drew spiritual nourishment from Exodus because they treated the second book of the Torah as a source of wisdom, not as an artifact to be dissected. This year, my Lenten journey through the Book of Exodus will be further complemented by the commentary of a contemporary man of wisdom, Leon R. Kass. Despite its many confusions, our era has somehow contrived to produce the ideal teacher in Leon Kass: learned humanist, medical doctor, bioethicist of distinction, gentleman and wise counselor—a Jewish scholar who once helped Catholics at the Pontifical Gregorian University read the Scriptures as they’d never done before. Kass’s new book, *Founding God’s Nation: Reading Exodus* (Yale University Press), complements his previous epic, *The Beginning of Wisdom: Reading Genesis* (Free Press); both books grew out of many years of an intense, searching exploration of those biblical texts with students. And out of that open-minded reading of Exodus, a familiar story takes on fresh meaning: now, through Kass’s commentary, Exodus offers us a profound reflection on what it means to be a true people, not merely an aggregate of individuals or a network of families.

What makes a people, a nation? According to Exodus, a nation needs a shared story. In the case of the people of Israel, that was and remains the story of their deliverance from slavery in Egypt, where bondage prevented them from being truly a people. A nation also needs a founding event, in which the people consent to a common way of life. In Exodus, that constituting event is the free acceptance (as Kass winsomely puts it), of “a yoke that becomes a tree of life”—the Sinai covenant, the Ten Commandments, and the Mosaic Law. And a true people need a worthy response to the human aspiration to be in touch with something greater than ourselves. So Exodus instructs its readers to reject false worship (the golden calf) for the sake of true worship—the worship of the One who alone is worthy of worship; the One who enters history to liberate his people and asks them to follow his path into the future.

The Book of Exodus thus raises important questions about our contemporary American situation. Can we be the self-constituting nation of the Constitution’s preamble—“We the People of the United States”—if future generations are taught a false story of America by the *New York Times*’ mendacious “1619 Project,” now being imposed on schools around the country? Can we be truly a people if, instead of the preamble’s purposeful, covenantal commitment to form a “more perfect Union” that will “secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity,” our relationships as citizens are merely transactional—you get something, I get something? Can we be a true nation if we worship the false god of wealth, bow to the false messiahs of identity politics, and indulge the false ethic of “I did it my way?”

There is much to think and pray about this Lent. The Book of Exodus is a good companion on the journey, and Leon Kass is an admirable guide to the truths found in that great book.
Senate Bill 2180 a reminder to be vigilant

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.

The biggest event of the North Dakota 2021 legislative session so far concerned a bill that drew national attention and generated an unprecedented number of emails and phone calls, but never had a committee hearing or a floor vote. The bill was Senate Bill 2180, which would have required priests to violate the seal of confession to report information about child abuse.

Here is a short recap. SB 2180 would have required clergy to reveal information about child abuse, even if the information was received in the capacity as a spiritual advisor. For Catholics, that means the seal of confession. Most bills in North Dakota get a hearing and a floor vote, but following an outcry from Catholics and others, the bill was withdrawn from further consideration even before it had a hearing.

While we could claim victory and move on, there are lingering misunderstandings about the bill and existing law that warrant attention. Moreover, there are lessons to be learned from this experience.

Let’s start with the existing law. For decades, all clergy in North Dakota have been mandated reporters of suspected child abuse. Over ninety percent of what a member of the clergy sees, hears, or learns could be reportable. If a pastor sees something in a church service that gives reason to suspect abuse, it must be reported. If a member of the clergy sees something at a wedding reception that is suspicious, it must be reported. If they witness anything at a school, day care, or religious education class, it must be reported.

There is only one narrow situation where the mandate does not apply. It does not apply when the knowledge or suspicion is derived from information received in the capacity of spiritual adviser. This is a non-sectarian and broader way of legally describing what was once known as the priest–penitent privilege.

Senate Bill 2180 did only one thing. It removed this narrow exemption from the mandatory reporting requirement. This would have been unprecedented in American law. Slightly over a majority of the states require clergy to be mandated reporters. A handful of those do not explicitly exempt priest–penitent communications. However, some of those states have other laws that would protect those communications, and the legislative history in the remaining states does not indicate that those laws were meant to require divulging confessions. With SB 2180, North Dakota would have become the first state to ever intentionally and explicitly require priests to violate the seal of confession.

In the Catholic Church, a priest cannot, under any circumstances, disclose what the confessor revealed. The “seal of confession” is absolute. A priest cannot break the seal, directly or indirectly, for any reason, even if forced by the law or threatened with death. Breaking the seal leads to automatic excommunication. SB 2180, therefore, would have placed a Catholic priest in the position of either violating his deeply-held obligation to God to protect the parishioner’s confession or face fines and possible imprisonment.

It is not just the Catholic faithful whose religious freedom was threatened by SB 2180. Just about every faith tradition has some form of spiritual counseling. Following the Reformation, other Christian traditions preserved the seal of confession. Both the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod doctrines preserve it. In fact, the North Dakota District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod had already prepared testimony in opposition to SB 2180 before the bill was withdrawn.

The Anglican tradition also retained the seal of confession, which was recognized in English law since the ninth century. Recognition of the seal of confession has continued in that tradition to the Episcopal Church.

The Orthodox Church states: “The secrecy of the Mystery of Penance is considered an unquestionable rule in the entire Orthodox Church…. Betrayal of the secrecy of confession will lead to canonical punishment of the priest.” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints also mandates confession and church rules require that confessional communications be kept confidential.

News media from across the nation covered the bill. Both bishops had letters read at Mass. Catholics responded to the action alerts from the North Dakota Catholic Conference in large numbers. Legislators said they had never received so many emails and phone calls about a bill. The talk in the halls of the capitol was that senators wanted the bill to go away.

Eventually, the bill’s prime sponsor, Senator Judy Lee from West Fargo, withdrew the bill. Before doing so, she was allowed time on the Senate floor to explain her reasons for the bill. She said her purpose was to call attention to the problem of child abuse in North Dakota and the country.

The problem is real and serious. We need to do more to protect children. Indeed, in our efforts on the bill, we never questioned nor intended to impugn the motives of the bill’s sponsors.

Nevertheless, laws are not just about intentions. SB 2180, despite good intentions, would have been an unprecedented infringement upon the religious freedom. It demonstrates the need to be vigilant.
Hope and companionship with Mary and Jesus

The Sisters of Mary of the Presentation’s vision statement, “Filled with hope, we follow Christ with Mary as our companion, striving to live with loving hearts” is a prophetic statement to guide all of us during this time in our history.

Pope Francis says, “Hope allows us to enter the darkness of an uncertain future to journey in the light.” So what is hope? In reading Hanging on to Hope by Melanie Svoboda, SND, she tells us, “Hope is a longing or desire for something good in the future. Hope begins when we realize there is something we want or need that we do not have yet! Hope longs for something good.”

Hope is the virtue that generates our concrete actions to make our community and world a better place. – Sister Anne Germaine Picard

As we reflect upon our lives this past year we can say we all hoped for an honest and positive election of our new president of the United States. We hoped for the end of violence in our families and cities. We hoped for the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. We hoped for a vaccine. We hoped for a decrease in inequality and racism. We hoped for the common good of others. Hope is within us as the deepest longing of our hearts. God is the source of all true hope and this resides in us as a seed planted by God and becomes complete by our oneness in him. Hope is the virtue that generates our concrete actions to make our community and world a better place.

We walk by faith in the footsteps of Jesus who overcame the evil of the world by his life, death, and Resurrection. He did not want us to walk this road alone, and in his dying breath he turned to John, the evangelist, who was at his side and said, “Behold your mother.” Jesus gave us his mother as a companion, and we as Sisters of Mary of the Presentation live our lives under her patronage.

In the scriptures we see Mary being a companion. She saw that they had no more wine for the Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11). She felt the loss at this celebration and acted to change the situation as she confidently spoke to the servants to “do whatever He (Jesus) tells you.” The water was changed into wine and the feast continued. Mary ministered to her companions through Jesus. Likewise, we pray devotions to Jesus through Mary in the rosary and many other Marian prayers.

Sister Mary Agnes Huber and I live community life together in Harvey. As part of our Morning Prayer we pray the Memorare, asking Mary to be our companion through the day. In our ministry at St. Aloisius Medical Center and St. Cecilia’s Church, we strive to model Mary and be a companion to others. Others frequently tell us that our presence brings them hope, comfort, and peace. We pray that we are the presence of Jesus in our pastoral ministry as daily we choose hope in our Lord.
Life as a Deacon in the seminary

Through the grace of God, prayer, and working with my seminary formators, I was ordained to the diaconate Dec. 19, 2020 by Bishop Folda. The whole liturgy was very beautiful, and it was amazing to finally give my life completely and wholeheartedly to God, a desire of my heart since my early days of undergraduate university. I have felt nothing but peace and a quiet joy since my ordination, and I know now that this is truly what the Lord wanted me to do with my life. But before I can settle into our diocese to serve as a priest, I have one more semester to complete in seminary.

Life as a Deacon in the seminary is a beautiful combination of restlessness and excitement for the present and future. My fellow deacons and I have been in seminary for many years at this point (between five and seven years!), and we are excited to be ordained priests and serve the good people of our dioceses. We must temper that excitement, however, and realize that our formation is not done or else we risk getting what is known in the seminary as the disease “diaconitus,” the seminary mutation of the more common high school strain, “senioritus!” I must admit that striving against this tendency has been difficult. By striving against it, I realize that I am still growing as a man of God, striving to devote myself to my studies for the people I will serve in the future.

As a deacon in the seminary, I am often serving at the most holy Mass as a deacon and also exposing Christ in the monstrance. These are both amazing opportunities for grace and a very intimate moment with Christ. At first, I was very scared about messing up, particularly at Mass. I’ve come to realize that mistakes do happen. With this in mind, I know that the seminary is a place to make mistakes and learn from them. I am tremendously grateful for this because I hope to be able to be more comfortable at the altar so that both the laity and I can enter more fully into the beautiful mystery of the Mass. This is already starting to happen, and I know I need to be patient with myself. In regard to adoration as a deacon, I have the privilege to bless everyone in the seminary via Christ in the monstrance. It is an experience beyond words to do this. By the time the day is over, I am exhausted but fulfilled, knowing with certainty that I am doing God’s will.

I also have specific classes in preparation for the sacraments of the priesthood. These classes include a class on learning how to say and pray the Mass, how to hear confessions, and other liturgies that I will celebrate as a priest. This class is called Liturgical Presidency, and I am excited to start diving into this class as we begin practicing Mass. Another class I have is a summation course called Master of Divinity Integrative Seminar. In this class, we use what we’ve learned throughout our time in seminary to answer various pastoral concerns, and we will give a presentation on a specific pastoral scenario. I am excited about this because it will lead to good discussions in our class about how we can best serve the people of God in hard and difficult moments. One last class that is very specific to preparation for the priesthood is Church Administration, which is taught by a wise, elderly priest who has a wealth of knowledge about leading parishes and assisting them to grow and stay financially healthy.

It has been an amazing opportunity thus far as a deacon back at the seminary to embrace all my formation as I move closer to priesthood. I am at peace and filled with joy knowing that I am doing what God wants me to do with my life. I know that there will be hard days ahead and that “diaconitus” will be a constant foe that I will battle against this semester. However, I am reassured, both by my life of prayer and the prayers of all of you, that I will stay true to my time here at the seminary to become the priest God wants me to be for good people of the Diocese of Fargo.

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Three reasons to launch your own endowment

STEWARDSHIP

STEVE SCHONS
Director of stewardship and development for the Diocese of Fargo

There are several reasons you should consider launching your own endowment. Here are three:

1. **Unending annual gifts**
   
   As a member of your parish, you most likely make at least one annual gift to support your church. Our endowment program allows you to make sure that these annual gifts continue in perpetuity after you are gone.

   Endowment funds are basically investment funds that preserve principal and make payments (or gifts) to your parish from the earnings. In other words, after you are gone your endowment would take your place in providing annual support for your local parish. This could continue indefinitely.

2. **A lasting legacy**
   
   This is one of the most powerful reasons to launch an endowment. The ongoing nature of these funds provides an unending way to not only support your parish, but to remind family and friends of one’s values and commitments.

   Grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and further generations will encounter their own heritage as they see “their” endowment at work. If you want to build a lasting legacy to benefit your parish and inspire people for years to come, launch your own endowment.

3. **Financial stability**
   
   Parishes throughout the Diocese of Fargo derive financial strength from endowment funds. Just knowing a stream of endowment income exists, permits parishes like yours to make better financial projections and to plan for the future more confidently.

   Also, income from endowments allows parishes to do some things they might not otherwise be able to do. Another point: A parish with strong endowment assets tends to draw support from donors who might otherwise pass by your parish.

Several possibilities

You can launch your endowment in several ways. You can do it all at once by making a major gift of cash or marketable assets. Or, you could make all the arrangements now and defer the launch date until activated by your will.

You could also start now with a modest amount and add to your endowment later. Other ways might involve a gift annuity arrangement or even the use of a charitable trust.

Many people have discovered that endowment building is one of the most satisfying means to support the good works of their local parish. Through the Catholic Development Foundation, endowments can be established to support your local parish, a cemetery, or a diocesan program. There is great flexibility in choosing where you want the funds to go.

If you want to learn more about this program and how you can participate, contact me at steve.schons@fargodiocese.org or (701) 356-7926.
75 years ago — 1946
A demonstration of international unity based on Christian charity and surmounting barriers of race and nationality was presented to a world recovering from the throes of war when 32 Catholic prelates of 19 nations, representing all six continents, were elevated to the rank of Cardinal by Pope Pius XII in five days of traditionally colorful ceremonies. This scene is the peace that exists if humble men gather together under the leadership of the Supreme Shepherd. This is the marvelous unity of the Catholic Church which has endured for nineteen hundred years against enemies from within and enemies from without. Bishop Muench made his ad limina visit on this occasion—a pilgrimage to the sepulchers of St. Peter and St. Paul at Rome which bishops living outside of Europe are required to make once every ten years.

50 years ago — 1971
Father A. Bernard (Ben) Bachmeier, associate pastor at St. Mary’s Cathedral, Fargo, was officially named editor of Catholic Action News by Bishop Driscoll. Father Bachmeier was serving as acting editor since last August, succeeding the late Alf T. Olson, who had been editor since 1965.

20 years ago — 2001
The National Women’s Health Organization of Fargo, one of two abortion clinics in the state, closed its doors for good. The clinic operated for twenty years and saw 15 to 20 patients a week. The site was an isolated, aging house amongst industrial businesses and stark garage space on 14th Street S, just south of Main Ave, Fargo. Equipment and supplies were being loaded and shipped to other NWHO facilities around the nation. Update: The house was finally demolished in 2018 and was 110 years old at that time.
Is your marriage going down the right road... or is it a little off track?

RETRouvAILLE
A LIFELINE FOR MARRIRED COUPLES

Weekend for couples Oct. 22-24, 2021

Does the distance between you seem wide? Are you already separated? Looking for a better way? Retrouvaille can help and offers hope for a better relationship. 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. Retrouvaille is Christian-based, and Catholic in origin, and welcomes couples of all faiths as well as non-religious couples. Retrouvaille can help get your relationship back on track.

For more information, Call (701) 356-7903 or visit HelpOurMarriage.com

Riverview Place. Home is here.

Riverview Place residents enjoy several Catholic Masses per week plus many other spiritual services.

If faith, fellowship & good food sound like an answered prayer call Maren or Katie today at 701.237.4700.

CHI Living Communities

Take an in-person tour in March & take home a flowering plant.

Independent Living
Assisted Living

5300 12th Street South
Fargo, North Dakota

HomelsHere.org
A Catholic missionary priest in Madagascar known for serving the poor living on a landfill has been nominated for this year’s Nobel Peace Prize.

Fr. Pedro Opeka, 72, is a Vincentian priest from Argentina who has worked with the poor in Madagascar for more than three decades. He founded the Akamasoa humanitarian association in 1989 as a “solidarity movement to help the poorest of the poor” living on the site of a garbage dump.

Janez Janša, the Prime Minister of Slovenia, has announced that he nominated Opeka for the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize for his dedication to “helping people living in appalling living conditions.”

The Akamasoa association (meaning “good friend”) has provided former homeless people and families with 4,000 brick houses and has helped to educate 13,000 children and young people.

Pope Francis visited Opeka’s “City of Friendship” built atop a rubbish dump on the outskirts of the capital city of Antananarivo during his apostolic visit to Madagascar in September 2019.

Pedro Pablo Opeka was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1948. His parents were refugees from Slovenia who emigrated after the inception of the communist regime in Yugoslavia.

At the age of 18, he entered the seminary of the Congregation for the Mission of St. Vincent de Paul in San Miguel, Argentina. Two years later, he traveled to Europe to study philosophy in Slovenia and theology in France. He then spent two years as a missionary in Madagascar.

In 1975, he was ordained a priest at the Basílica of Luján, and in 1976 he returned to Madagascar, where he has remained to this day.

Upon seeing the desperate poverty in the capital city of Antananarivo, especially at the landfills where people live in cardboard boxes and children compete with pigs for food, he decided to do something for the poor.

With help from abroad and the work of the people of Madagascar, he founded villages, schools, food banks, small businesses, and even a hospital to serve the poor through the Akamasoa association.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Opeka has been working to help families who have fallen even deeper into poverty as a consequence of coronavirus measures.

“The situation is difficult for families, for the poor who have many children. We do not have rice. We do not have water. We need water and soap,” Opeka told Vatican Radio in April 2020. Madagascar is one of the world’s poorest countries. Opeka expressed his gratitude to Pope Francis for his appeal for rich countries to cancel the debt of poor countries in light of the pandemic.

“It is necessary if we want to live in dignity,” he said.

Among the other nominees for the Nobel Peace Prize this year are the Black Lives Matter movement, the World Health Organization, Greta Thunberg, Donald Trump, Stacey Abrams, Jared Kushner, Russian dissident Alexei Navalny, and Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya.
Pope Francis: Christian prayer instills “invincible hope” in the human heart

By Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis said on Feb. 10 that prayer can fortify us as we face the challenges of daily life. Speaking at his general audience, the pope explained that prayer helps us to see the “infinite grace” that lies beyond the visible world.

“And thus, Christian prayer instills an invincible hope in the human heart: whatever experience we touch on our journey, God’s love can turn it into good,” he said.

In his address, he continued the cycle of catechesis on prayer which he launched in May and resumed in October following nine reflections on healing the world after the pandemic.

He dedicated the audience—the 24th address in this catechetical cycle—to praying in daily life. The audience took place in the library of the Apostolic Palace due to coronavirus restrictions.

The pope noted that at his last general audience he had highlighted the importance of liturgical prayer.

He said: “Today, we will shed light on how the Liturgy always enters daily life: on the streets, in offices, on public transportation … And there it continues the dialogue with God: the person who prays is like someone in love who always bears the beloved in his or her heart wherever they go.”

“Essentially, everything becomes a part of this dialogue with God: every joy becomes a reason for praise, every trial is an opportunity to ask for help. Prayer is always alive in our lives, like embers, even when the mouth does not speak, but the heart speaks. Every thought, even the apparently ‘profane’ ones, can be permeated by prayer.”

He compared prayer to a light that illuminates the path ahead of us when it lies in shadow.

Quoting from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, he said: “We learn to pray at certain moments by hearing the Word of the Lord and sharing in his Paschal Mystery, but his Spirit is offered us at all times, in the events of each day, to make prayer spring up from us. [...] Time is in the Father’s hands; it is in the present that we encounter him, not yesterday or tomorrow, but today.”

He commented: “There exists no other wonderful day than the day we are living. Those who live always thinking about the future, in the future: ‘But it will be better…’ but do not take each day as it comes: these are people who live in their fantasy, they do not know how to deal with concrete reality. And today is real, today is concrete. And prayer is to be done today. Jesus comes to meet us today, the day we are living.”

When we welcome each day in prayer, he said, we are given the gift of courage.

“Thus, the problems we face no longer seem to be obstacles to our happiness, but appeals from God, opportunities to meet Him. And when a person is accompanied by the Lord, he or she feels more courageous, freer, and even happier,” he said.

“Let us pray always, then, for everyone, even for our enemies. Jesus counseled us to do this … Let us pray for our dear ones, even those we do not know.”
I n July 2018, I shared in “Sidewalk Stories” details of the history of the Kopelman building downtown Fargo, which now houses the only abortion facility in North Dakota.

I’d stumbled upon its history after my curiosity was piqued, following several years of praying next to the structure which, in so many ways, seemed a house of hell. Admittedly, these are strong words, but how else should we describe a place where small human beings are brought to their deaths?

Indeed, when I learned of the history, it left me cold. I kept the information tucked within for a few years, knowing that in time, I would share it with others. The history of a place matters after all and especially the history of a construct that has become a source of atrocity.

Recently, a friend prompted me to revive that article, mentioning that two new, young prayer advocates had expressed curiosity about the building. Innately, we humans wonder about such things, and I was glad to provide some context. Interestingly, the very day I set about finding that piece, another connected to it came onto my horizon.

The Forum article by Tracy Briggs, “Fargo Orthodox Jewish Community Strives to Bring Back the Ritual Bath,” dated Feb. 5, 2021, tells of the “mikvah,” or plunge bath, an ancient custom of Jews. This ritual of cleansing for women following menstruation or childbirth is meant to be an act of purification before resuming marital relations.

The Kopelman building, which now houses our state’s only remaining abortion facility—initially provided for this important ritual. After its original owner, Mr. Jacob Kopelman, a Jewish wig maker, died, his wife, Lena, assumed ownership. Pregnant with her sixth child, she needed an income to support her family, so she reopened the store as Kopelman’s Beauty Shop.

In the basement of the store, Lena ran a mikvah and, as mentioned in my previous article, “For $1 a dip, Lena provided towels, water and soap.” After her death in 1947, her daughter Rose took over, and the building became a men’s formal-wear store. In 1984, it was renovated into a restaurant, then sat vacant from 1996 to 2000. At that point, it became the abortion facility we know it as today.

Ever since learning the building’s origins, especially of the mikvah, that fact has been with me, especially on Wednesdays, when abortions happen there. Knowing the building, once used to cleanse and purify women who’d recently given birth, is now being purposed for the death of children and demoralization of women, has been impossible to shake.

This brings me to the building’s current name, which I rarely print here: Red River Women’s Clinic. Though that is in fact the official name now of the Kopelman building, I don’t consider it a clinic. Clinics heal and bring life, not death. This is part of the ongoing lie perpetrated by the abortion industry, much like the name, “Planned Parenthood.” I can think of no better contradiction than that name paired with its true mission.

But maybe the first part of the Kopelman building’s newest name is truthful. “Red River.” I think about the river that flows, and sometimes rages, just blocks from the facility, and what I’ve been hearing repeatedly as I work through the Old Testament through the “Bible in a Year” with Father Mike Schmitz: “The life is in the blood.” There are far more things naturally connected with the color red than blood. “The life is in the blood.” And so is death.

Here in this building, the blood of life was once washed away as an imperative of God’s Old Testament laws—as a sign of fidelity to our Lord. Now in this building, the blood of life has become a sign of death. The Red River in this case symbolizes, to me, a river of blood flowing out of mothers and babies.

Some might cringe at this, and I don’t blame you. I do not write these words lightly. But in a world of deception, it’s important to report the truth, and this is the truth of what is happening in our city every week. We need to confront it repeatedly to remember the great need to pray for the many who have died here, whether in body or soul, as well as for the confused souls who weekly abet these deeds.

Driving by the Kopelman building, one can hardly escape seeing the name, boldly painted in purple on its front. The next time you do, recall its past and remember its present, and pray with fervency this building will soon be reclaimed by the blood of life, for God’s glory.

Roxane B. Salonen, a wife and mother of five, is a local writer, as well as a speaker and radio host for Real Presence Radio. Roxane also writes weekly for The Forum newspaper and monthly for CatholicMom.com. Reach her at roxanebsalonen@gmail.com.
Do you know where we are? The answer will be revealed in the April New Earth.

Where in the diocese are we?

Last month’s photo is from St. Philip Neri Church in Napoleon.