

New

May 2023 | Vol. 44 | No. 5



Earth

The Magazine of the Catholic Diocese of Fargo

Inspiring youth to be
missionary disciples

Youth and young
adult programs
take new direction

From Bishop Folda:
"Male and female he
created them"

A Eucharistic reflection
on the Prodigal Son

Grandmother passes on her
statue restoration skills to
the next generation

Join the Diocese of Fargo and 80,000 Catholics across the country for the first National Eucharistic Congress in 83 years!



National Eucharistic Congress

July 16-22, 2024
Indianapolis, Indiana

Schedule

July 16: Bus from Fargo to Mundelein, IL to Our Lady of the Lake Retreat Center to visit the shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe. Supper and overnight at retreat center.

July 17: Visit to Marytown, IL. Arrive at Hotel Hampton Inn, Indianapolis, within walking distance to the conference.

July 17-21: Conference

July 21: Supper in Rockford, IL and travel to Mauston, WI for the night.

July 22: Arrive in Fargo mid-afternoon

Featuring

The Diocese of Fargo is offering a pilgrimage to the Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. The Congress will include five days of talks, Mass, Eucharistic procession, Adoration, and much more. There are only 100 spots available for the pilgrimage route to the Congress.

Register

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NATIONAL
Eucharistic
Revival

ON THE COVER:

A priest carries the monstrance holding the Blessed Sacrament at the 2019 National Catholic Youth Conference in Indianapolis, Ind. (Kathy Loney | Diocese of Fargo)

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NEW EARTH

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Mission

Our mission is to inform, teach, and inspire readers about the Catholic faith and the life of parishioners in Eastern North Dakota. *New Earth* is the official monthly publication of the Diocese of Fargo.

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“Male and female he created them”

The transgender issue has become an almost constant feature in the media and throughout our culture. The North Dakota State Legislature took up this issue in several bills that were considered during the session that just concluded, and a growing number of public entities are dealing with the complexities of transgenderism in policy and practice. Readers might also recall that several years ago the Diocese of Fargo joined a lawsuit that challenged the federal imposition of transgender mandates on church affiliated institutions.

There can be no doubt that gender dysphoria is a real challenge for those who experience it, and those challenges often extend to their families as well. Unfortunately, the transgender movement has become in our time an ideology, a cultural movement that is largely at odds with our faith, with biological facts, and often with common sense. It is built on the assumption that we can change our identity at will, simply by identifying our “gender” as different than the biological sex we were born with. At its most basic level, this is a denial of God’s act of creation. To deny the sex of our birth is to question or even reject our creation by God as his son or daughter. He created us out of love as male or female, and it is not possible that he made a mistake in doing so. The human person is a composite of both body and soul, and the body is not extraneous to our identity. As male or female, our sex is part of who we are as God’s children.

Pope Francis has been very clear in his rejection of this gender ideology, which he describes as “one of the most dangerous ideological colonizations.” In *Amoris Laetitia* (“The Joy of Love”), his recent document on marriage, he warns that there is a growing ideology of gender that separates personal identity “from the biological difference between male and female.” In this view, “human identity becomes the choice of the individual, one which can also change over time” (56). In the face of this cultural challenge, the Church reaffirms the beauty and sovereignty of God’s design in the life of each person, which includes their bodily integrity and gender. To put it quite simply, we must not presume to alter the biological sex God has given us. Pope Francis warns: “It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality. Let us not fall into the sin of trying to replace the Creator. We are creatures, and not omnipotent. Creation

is prior to us and must be received as a gift” (*Amoris Laetitia*, 56).

The transgender issue becomes especially difficult when it intersects with other issues like public accommodation, athletic participation, preferred pronouns, and educational programs. It is particularly troubling when children are involved. Some educational institutions have elevated the transgender issue above the rights of parents and their God-given responsibility for their own children. Surgical procedures, puberty blockers, and other medical interventions are used by some providers on minors—children—in a misguided attempt to change their gender. But such procedures can never really change the innate sexual identity of a person, and they cause lasting damage to the bodily integrity of one who has not even reached adulthood. Following the principles of Catholic moral theology, the bishops of the United States have reaffirmed the immorality of such medical acts, both for adults and for minors.

There is no question that those who experience gender dysphoria deserve our respect and genuine compassion. As with any mental or physical malady, this can be a cause of great suffering, both for individuals and for their families. In Christian charity, there is no place for ridicule or disparagement of our neighbors who carry this cross. But those who do not accept the transgender position must also be respected in their recognition of the truth of the human person. No one should be expected to deny the fact of another person’s sex, or required to act in a way that is contrary to their belief in God’s plan of creation. Rather than give in to the pressures of our culture to embrace transgenderism, we must be ready to speak the truth in love, recognizing the struggle of those who suffer while also remaining committed to the truth.

I offer to you once again what I wrote in 2017: “The Church holds to its constant belief in God’s plan for his children, male and female, but we also acknowledge the call of our Lord to accompany those who are not at peace with their own identity. While the culture now tells us that gender is arbitrary and switching genders will solve all our problems, God tells us that only he can give us lasting joy and peace. As the poet Dante says, ‘In his will is our peace.’ To those men, women, and children who experience the pain of gender confusion, we must profess the unfailing love of God. By our friendship and pastoral care, we assure them that they are not alone on their

journey. They are loved and cherished, and they are beautiful in God's eyes. Families that experience this challenge need the understanding and support of their brothers and sisters in faith, so they too will know that they are not alone. And, as always, we offer the support of prayer and penance so that the suffering of others might be lightened."

In the Book of Genesis, we read, "...in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them." As we strive to live in accord with God's plan for all his children, let us also pray for his grace and healing of our wounded culture.



Prayer Intention of Pope Francis

May - For church movements and groups

We pray that Church movements and groups may rediscover their mission of evangelization each day, placing their own charisms at the service of needs in the world.

June - For the abolition of torture

We pray that the international community may commit in a concrete way to ensuring the abolition of torture and guarantee support to victims and their families.



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To Know God...
To Love God...
To Serve God...

BISHOP FOLDA'S CALENDAR

May 15 at 9:30 a.m.

Consecration of Chapel at St. Mary's Academy, Devils Lake

May 16-17

Catholic Benefits Meeting, Denver, Colorado

May 19 at 6 p.m.

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Mary, Grand Forks

May 20 at 10 a.m.

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Michael, Grand Forks

May 20 at 5 p.m.

Confirmation and First Eucharist, Holy Family, Grand Forks

May 21 at 2 p.m.

Confirmation and First Eucharist, St. Jude, Thompson

May 24 at 10 a.m.

Baccalaureate Mass for Shanley High School, St. Anthony, Fargo

May 24 at 6 p.m.

Commencement, Shanley High School Gym, Fargo

May 29

Memorial Day, Pastoral Center closed

June 1 at 4 p.m.

60th Anniversary Mass for Father Richard Goellen, Riverview, Fargo

June 3 at 10 a.m.

Diaconate Ordination, Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo

June 4 at 4 p.m.

40th Anniversary Mass for Monsignor Brian Donahue, St. Francis Provincial House, Hankinson

June 5 at 5:30 p.m.

25th Anniversary Mass for Father James Gross, St. Mary, Grand Forks

June 10 at 10:30 a.m.

Jubilee Mass for Sister Ann Marie OSF and Sister M. Jean Louise OSF, St. Francis Provincial House, Hankinson

June 12-16

USCCB Spring Conference, Orlando, Florida



Diocese of Fargo Official Appointments/Announcements

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

Rev. James P. Gross Pastor of St. Mary's Church, Grand Forks for a second term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Jason V. Lefor Pastor of St. John's Church, Pisek; Sts. Peter and Paul, Bechyne; and St. Joseph, Lankin for a second term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Reese J. Weber Pastor of St. John's Church, New Rockford and Sts. Peter and Paul, McHenry for a second term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Jered A. Grossman Pastor of St. Cecilia's Church, Velva and Sts. Peter and Paul, Karlsruhe for a term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Gregory A. Haman Pastor of St. John's Church, Wahpeton for a term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. F. Scott Karnik Pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Enderlin; Holy Trinity, Fingal; and Our Lady of the Scapular, Sheldon for a term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Matthew J. Kraemer Pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Devils Lake for a term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Jayson T. Miller Pastor of Holy Rosary Church, LaMoure; Assumption, Dickey; and St. Raphael, Verona for a term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Petro C. Ndunguru Pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Rolette; Holy Rosary, Bisbee; and Notre Dame, Willow City for a term of six-years, beginning May 1, 2023.

Rev. Eric S. Olsen Pastor of Our Lady of Peace Church, Mayville and St. Agnes, Hunter for a term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Robert F. Smith Pastor of St. Timothy's Church, Manvel for a term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Very Rev. Chad F. Wilhelm Pastor of St. James Basilica, Jamestown; St. Margaret Mary, Buchanan; and St. Mathias, Windsor for a term of six-years, beginning June 28, 2023.

Rev. Anthony Cruz Parochial vicar of St. Joseph's Church, Devils Lake, in accord with cc. 545-552, effective June 28, 2023, and continuing *ad nutum episcopi*.

Rev. Darrick Leier Parochial vicar of St. Michael's Church, Grand Forks, in accord with cc. 545-552, effective July 7, 2023, and continuing *ad nutum episcopi*.

Rev. Joseph R. Littlefield Parochial vicar of St. James Basilica, Jamestown; St. Margaret Mary, Buchanan; and St. Mathias, Windsor, in accord with cc. 545-552, effective June 28, 2023, and continuing *ad nutum episcopi*.

Rev. Kevin D. Lorsung Parochial vicar of Holy Cross Church, West Fargo, in accord with cc. 545-552, effective June 28, 2023, and continuing *ad nutum episcopi*.

Rev. Eric F. Seitz As Secretary to the Bishop, Master of Ceremonies, Vice Chancellor, and Director of Liturgy for the Diocese of Fargo in accord with the pertinent norms of Canon Law and policies of the Diocese of Fargo. This appointment is effective June 28, 2023, and continues *ad nutum episcopi*. He will also be pursuing graduate studies in Canon Law.



"Oh Mary, let Carmel of Mary overflow with Vocations to water the parched earth with contemplative chants and prayers streaming from their hearts to His in unison with yours."



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MONTHLY EUCHARIST MIRACLE

The Eucharistic Miracle of Ferrara, Italy

Republished from therealpresence.org (edited for content)

On March 28, 1171, the prior of the Canons Regular Portuensi was celebrating Easter Mass with three confreres. At the moment of the breaking of the consecrated Host, blood gushed forth from the Host and threw large drops on the ceiling of the small crypt above the altar. Accounts tell of the “holy fear of the celebrant and of the immense wonder of the people who crowded the tiny church.”

Many eyewitnesses told of seeing the Host take on a bloody color, and having seen in the Host the figure of a baby. Bishop Amato of Ferrara and Archbishop Gherardo of Ravenna were immediately informed of the event. They witnessed with their own eyes the miracle, namely “the blood which we saw redden

the ceiling of the crypt.” The church immediately became a pilgrim destination, and later was rebuilt and expanded beginning in 1495.

There are many sources regarding this miracle. Among the most important is the Bull of Pope Eugene IV (March 30, 1442), in which the pontiff mentions the miracle in reference to the testimonies of the faithful and ancient historical sources. Even today, on the 28th day of every month in the basilica, Eucharistic Adoration is celebrated in memory of the miracle. And every year, in preparation for the Feast of Corpus Christi, the solemn Forty Hours devotion is celebrated. The eighth centenary of the miracle was celebrated in 1971.

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. *(From USCCB)*

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I've been to Confession but don't feel like God has forgiven me. What should I do?



ASK A PRIEST

FATHER GREGORY HAMAN

Pastor of churches in LaMoure, Dickey, and Verona

For all the ink that has been spilled about the few people who go to Confession nowadays, there is something about the confessional that stays in the minds of observant Catholics. A person may not have crossed the threshold of a confessional for a good many years, but they probably still notice that threshold when they walk by, and they know they should go to Confession again... someday.

Sacramental Confession is a part of a healthy spiritual life. Some of its healthy effects are listed in the *Catechism*: “the regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit” (CCC 1458). Yet, when we try to make Confession a habit, we can run into certain difficulties that require extra help to overcome. One of those difficulties is the question posed by the reader.

Reconciliation in any relationship should help a person feel fresh and light again. Sacramental Confession can do the same in our relationship with God. We can't presume that good feelings will always follow, though. There can be several causes for this. Let's start with the most objective possible reason: we didn't make a complete Confession last time.

It is sadly true that sometimes, when we go to Confession, we let our embarrassment over one sin or another get the better of us and we hold back from saying it when we're confessing our other sins. A complete, or “integral” Confession requires us to name every mortal sin we can remember since our last good Confession for the simple reason that sincere sorrow requires that. We have to repent of everything we've done that has wounded our relationship with God, not just the sins we prefer to mention. If we've held a sin back, the door is still open to us to go back to Confession and complete the job. If this applies to you, go to your parish or online to get a good resource to examine your conscience, and go and make a good, complete Confession.

Perhaps, though, a person might feel anxious because they just can't say for sure if they named every sin they should have, and they are afraid God is not forgiving them. To that I say,

“Relax.” God does not withhold mercy because of our imperfect memories. We should not fear hidden sins lurking in our foggy memories. Even if we have forgotten sins from our past—which is most definitely true for all of us—God does not keep track of them like a detailed debt collector. “If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you” (Psalm 130:3-4). We give him our sincere contrition today, and we leave the past to his mercy. If you're confident that you are making as good a Confession as you think you reasonably can, then relax.

Similarly, though, a person might walk away from the confessional still feeling heavy because it is difficult for them to let go of their sense of guilt. Maybe that person's image of God has been misshaped by bad relationships or poor ways others have taught them about God. Those can be corrected through good prayer, spiritual reading, and maybe an appointment or two with a priest in spiritual direction. Wherever one turns for help, we all need to exercise simple trust in God's words, exercising the virtue of faith. Pray frequently with Psalm 51 or Micah 7:18-19, “Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity...? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in showing clemency. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.” We can hold onto God's words, even if they don't produce any immediate feelings in us. We acknowledge that God has said them, so they are true. Sometimes when our feelings don't line up with what is true, we must hold onto the truth and our feelings will eventually follow.

Lastly, a person might not feel particularly lighter after Confession because the sacrament has become a good, regular part of their lives and they no longer need the emotional boost that was once more necessary for them. Overall, this is a good thing, but it can also call a person to be even more careful to make their repentance from the heart. Our list of sins can become repetitive from one Confession to the next because habits die hard, and our spiritual effort can benefit from a little boost. To that end, spiritual masters from the centuries say that some good prayer can remedy our complacency. Ponder the sufferings Christ accepted on your behalf or meditate on a crucifix while you prepare for Confession. That can be just the medicine needed.

All in all, the Sacrament of Confession is a sure source of forgiveness and a clear conscience because of the power of God's mercy. He does not demand perfection in our memories or our sorrow, just a humble trust that he wipes away our sins and tells us, “Your faith has healed you” (Mark 5:34).

A Eucharistic reflection on the Prodigal Son

By Steven Splonskowski | Office of Evangelization for the Diocese of Fargo

In the Eucharist, we are invited to a banquet that signifies a relationship and a covenant with Christ and His Church. Our “Amen” as we receive is an assent: “I believe” to the words spoken to us by the minister of communion: “The body of Christ.” As we ponder this mystery, let’s take a moment to also reflect upon our own journey in the Scripture of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:

“There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.’ And he divided his living between them.”

The younger son quickly “squanders his property with loose living.” So, in order to live, he finds work as a swine herder. He begins working with the dirtiest of animals and an animal considered “unclean” by the Jews. As he is feeding the pigs, this son begins to desire even the food of the animals and to “feed on the pods the swine ate.” Then one day he remembers his father and the home he once had. Recognizing that he has become less than he was intended to be, he perhaps imagines himself unworthy of his father’s love or wonders if his father can love him after all he has done. Nevertheless, recognizing his folly and accepting whatever the impact of his offense may be, he says to himself: “I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants.’”

As he is walking toward home he was likely rehearsing his response and preparing for what his father would say. Yet, before he has even seen his father or said any words, “while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him.” The father’s next actions remind us of the good shepherd who leaves the 99 and goes looking for the one lost. The father “ran and embraced him and kissed him.” The son in his rehearsed statement acknowledges his fault and accepts even the harshest consequence for his action:

“Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”

But the father interrupts him before he can finish. He clothes him. He puts a ring on his finger signifying that the father’s love has no beginning and no end. He has a robe brought; this reminds us of how Joseph was given special honor by his father, Jacob, when he received the tunic. The father also had shoes put on his feet. Could this be an acknowledgment of free will and untethered love? His son could now walk away with these treasures if he wished and fall into sin again. However, the son remains and the image of a banquet follows and a celebration.

One might imagine how different the father’s response might have been if the son, in his hunger, came and asked him for a

banquet without acknowledging his sins. This banquet image is often used in Scripture to show a covenant and a new beginning. The son came in a disposition of humility (with knowledge of himself before God). Because of this, we have the loving utterance of the father that echoes the words of the Good Shepherd: “my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.” And they began to make merry.



(Photo by Cathopic)

We can often see ourselves as the son who falls away from the path. But we might also at times be onlookers and see in ourselves the elder son:

“Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, ‘Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends.’”

Here we find ourselves with mixed feelings. The older son is a good son, he is faithful to his father. Yet, he appears to be jealous of the mercy shown to his younger brother. Sometimes we can feel this way towards others who seem to be allowed to live their lives on the edge and still receive God’s blessings. Perhaps we have the sense that “sin is fun,” but we avoid it because we have to in order to make God happy. But if we look more closely we will see that “sin is slavery” and the unhappiness that comes from it is its own consequence, just as the peace that comes from remaining faithful is its own gift. Thus, the words to the elder son:

“Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.”

The Good Shepherd “rejoices more over finding one lost sheep, than over the 99 righteous” because the pain of the lost is immense. The lost sheep wanders in a wasteland of uncertainty and fear with each action of sin creating a deeper self-loathing. The Father searches the horizon of our hearts, always watching and waiting for our return. When we even turn towards him for a moment, he runs to greet us. He renews in our hearts the reality of his love for us, covers us with gifts, but never takes away our freedom. After we acknowledge our sins, he invites us to the Eucharistic banquet as a renewal of our commitment to reside in his love and be his beloved children.

Retreats a place where our hearts can be stirred

By Kristina Bloomsburg | Assistant editor of New Earth

When I went on the Awaken Retreat with Jen Settle March 24–26 at Maryvale near Valley City, my wedding was three weeks away. When I signed up for the retreat, I knew some quiet time away from home would do me good. I'm a planner, sometimes to an unhealthy extreme, so the details of the wedding and packing to move to a new home would be organized well enough by the end of March. And if they weren't, spending some extended time with the Lord would be the best thing for me anyway.

During the retreat, people commented on how calm I was for a soon-to-be-bride. I find it quite easy to be calm during a retreat regardless of what is going on in my life since the sources of stress were back at home. I didn't have any half-packed boxes to look at reminding me of the work I still had to do. Instead, I met several new people, all with new stories and experiences, who helped draw me out of myself. I encountered new ways of praying and new places to explore on Maryvale's grounds.

Retreats are a place where our hearts can be stirred. With our cooperation, they're a place where God can speak freely and clearly without the distractions of everyday life. They're a place to bring renewed focus and new beginnings for our lives. They can be a place of great healing with many tears and much laughter. They're also a great place to take a nap.

When I came home, all the work and worries were waiting for me, including a winter that just wouldn't quit. So the calm and peace of the retreat did not remain in earnest when I returned. I still worried about all there was to worry about, but God's grace was working. In the transition and unknowns, I experienced a greater reminder from God to seek refuge in his presence. I found myself more willing to set my fears aside and pray when anxiety crept forward. I found I was able to give of myself more and more despite the busyness of unfinished details.

When we look at the price tag and time commitment for retreats, it's easy to find excuses to let them pass us by. But remember, the Lord will not be outdone in generosity. The more we pour ourselves out in surrender to him, the more room we create for him to work in our lives. The Church understands the benefits of retreats and requires priests to go on a yearly retreat. When we create our budgets, lay people ought to set a little money aside each month for our spiritual health as well.

Even if the fruits of a retreat aren't immediately evident, which is often the case, it's important to remember that God works for good in all things. Perhaps months or years later, God will reveal the benefits of a retreat. Perhaps he never will. Yet we know, in faith, that all we offer to God will be multiplied and returned to us.

You don't need to be on the cusp of transition to go on retreat. In my case, God provided this time of rest I needed to prepare for the Sacrament of Marriage. But in life, we never quite know when some adventures will start. God wants to bestow his grace to equip us for great and wondrous things.

The Awaken Retreat was the first retreat operated by the Diocese of Fargo at Maryvale. To see more opportunities for retreats at Maryvale, visit maryvalend.org.



A statue of Our Lady of Fatima at Maryvale. (Kristina Bloomsburg | New Earth)

MADE FOR GREATNESS

"My flesh for the life of the world." -John 6:51

Men's
Retreat

July
14-16
2023

Stiklestad Lodge,
Fort Ransom

Cost
\$250

In a fully masculine context, this event will help men encounter God in a deeper way, through the gift of the Eucharist. Guided by Bishop John Folda, we will dive into what it means to have life in Jesus as men and how the Eucharist is that path to a fulfilling life. The retreat will feature profound spiritual insights by His Excellency, Mass, confession, prayer and reflection, and time for growing as brothers in Christ.

Stiklestad Lodge is a corporate hunting retreat lodge that features trap shooting, campfires, and outdoor games. Food will be cooked on an outdoor smoker throughout the weekend.

Register at:
www.fargodiocese.org/mfg-retreat
brad.gray@fargodiocese.org
(701) 356-7903



Grandmother passes statue restoration skills to the next generation

By Paul Braun | Editor of New Earth

Marilyn Loegering is no stranger to difficult projects. Her artistic talents have been put to work for years at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo, keeping the statues and artwork in the sanctuary looking their best. But even she was shocked at what she saw in late January.

"I've repaired many of the statues at the cathedral, including the entire Nativity set," said Marilyn. "I do it for the church, not for a living. The first time I saw the damage I thought 'my gosh, do I have a big project this time.'"

That project was restoring the badly damaged Christ in Death statue that has been a fixture in the Cathedral for nearly three decades. Thirty-five year old Brittany Marie Reynolds is accused of entering the cathedral on January 23, 2023 and pulling the statue from its display, sending it crashing to the floor below. She was arrested by Fargo police shortly afterwards and has been charged with criminal mischief.

"I felt sadness," said Marilyn. "Why would this ever happen? It was pretty much slammed to the floor so corners were damaged, the head was destroyed, the foot was destroyed, along with the canvas."

The good news is the statue was made of plaster, which is easier to work with than porcelain. And when Marilyn was asked once again by church staff to try to restore it, she knew it was the perfect opportunity to bring in some help—her grandchildren, a niece, and a friend. Soon grandchildren Maria Loh, Hanna, David, Grace, and Emily Loegering, niece Jamie Keller, and family friend Isaac Olson were recruited to do the job.

"Getting to work with grandma was very special," said Maria. "I've worked with her on a few painting projects here and there, and she's taught me so much of what I know about art. I would not even know how to hold a paintbrush without her. Using the skills working with her that she taught me is really in a way like giving back."

While Marilyn restored the foot of the statue, the others set to the task of repairing the rest. Marilyn says each brought a unique set of skills to the project. For example, Hanna and David are very good at air brushing, and Maria knew through her chalk drawings how to mix different colors. There were exchanges of ideas, critiquing each other's work, and learning skills from each other. In a sense, the project was a spiritual Lenten journey for the young artists.

"Just before Ash Wednesday the statue was destroyed, so it



Work progresses on the damaged Christ in Death statue. From left to right are restoration artists David Loegering, Hanna Loegering, Emily Loegering, and Maria Loh put their new-found skills to work. (submitted photo)

kind of goes along with our liturgical cycle," said Hanna. "We're supposed to die to ourselves and learn and grow spiritually, and being able to repair the statue before Holy Thursday so it could be back at the church for Good Friday was really great."

"Getting to work on the statue, especially the dead body of Christ, was really a special experience," said Maria. "It was almost a reflection of getting to minister to the body of Christ. Even though it was just with a paintbrush, it really brought insight into what it might have been like for the women who were mourning for him, especially Veronica who wiped the face of Jesus. We were literally wiping the face of Christ to get the dust off, so it brought this whole new meaning to being able to be that close to Christ."

For Marilyn, she looked at the tragedy as an unexpected blessing—a chance for the next generation to carry on after she's gone.

"This project was perfect for training someone else to learn and to pass down the knowledge, because it's time someone else learns to do this," said Marilyn. "I've never experienced greater joy than to have worked with my grandchildren as they did the Lord's work. I think the statue looks better than ever!"



The Christ in Death statue after restoration on display at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo. (submitted photo)

Retreat underscores Eucharistic Revival

By Joel Kaczynski | Parishioner of St. Martin of Tours, Geneseo

March 17–19 at Hankinson’s Franciscan Retreat Center, about 115 men gathered in retreat focused on Christ in the Holy Eucharist. Themed “Body & Blood, Soul & Divinity,” the retreat explored Our Lord’s Real Presence at Mass and during Adoration, reorienting our thinking about the matter in the face of faltering belief among Catholics. The retreat was hosted by Ecclesia Domestica, a men’s ministry based in central Minnesota dedicated to evangelizing Catholic men by calling them to holiness in their families, parishes, communities, and workplaces.

Father Peter Anderl, pastor, St. Boniface Church in Lidgerwood, made the keynote address and tackled the issue head-on, describing the power of the Mass to convey Christ really present for us. Father Anderl noted, “Nothing is greater than the Mass! In it, Christ is re-presented as once and for all sacrificed. It will change your life.” He said that the world’s 400,000 priests say 400,000 Masses every day, and a million or more on Sunday. Millions of times per day, priests, deacons, and religious everywhere are praying divine office for us. Perhaps hundreds of millions of rosaries are prayed. As men, Father Anderl urged us to reclaim our masculinity as beloved sons of the father.

Ecclesia’s Kevin Olson challenged those in attendance with a series of questions. Why are there particular sins associated with men in these times? What should a dad look like? Why don’t we believe in the Holy Eucharist, and model it for our children? How should real men behave? Calling the men to a new holiness, he asserted, “Men need a Savior today!”

Father Bryan Kujawa of the Crookston Diocese spoke Friday afternoon at the retreat. Drawing from Isaiah 6, he emphasized the complete and most incredible change that occurs at the words of consecration during every Mass. “If transubstantiation is true, then how can the response possibly be apathy?” Urging

a new level of Catholic imagination and wonder, he declared the Mass to be an open door to heaven, where the Lord is sitting on his throne.

During the retreat, each man had an hour of spiritual direction with one of the 20 priests and deacons present at the retreat. Retreatants also had an opportunity to examine documentation of Eucharistic miracles that have occurred in the last 13 centuries. These exhibits were initiated by the work of Blessed Carlo Acutis, an Italian teenager who was “enthralled with the Eucharist.” Blessed Carlo died of leukemia in 2006 and was beatified in 2020.

On Saturday of the retreat, Father Brady Keller from St. Cloud celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, while providing a fascinating teaching about the physical, spiritual, and sometimes mystical elements represented in the liturgy.

Other highlights included a presentation on the prophetic dreams of St. John Bosco, on ordering our lives in a world of disorder, and on the Eucharistic Heart of Mary. Heartfelt lay testimonies came from men who have experienced the power of Christ in their personal lives. Between these talks, the men met in small groups to discuss personal reactions to the ideas presented. Time was set aside for personal prayer, overnight Eucharistic Adoration, Rosary, Divine Office, and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy.

Saturday evening, Eucharistic adoration was combined with a powerful prayer/praise and healing service. On Sunday morning during open microphone session, one man—the youngest one there—summarized the reaction of many: “The chaos in the Church right now! After these three days, are you going home to just wrap that mess up again? Or are you going to be part of healing her?”



Priests, deacons, and religious who took part in the retreat. (submitted photo)

Fargo music director part of initial University of Mary Sacred Music Certificate program

Submitted by the University of Mary - Bismarck

Thousands of parishioners at Fargo's Sts. Anne and Joachim Church depend on Patrick McGuire to be an integral part of their liturgy during daily and weekly Mass. No, he's not providing a homily as a priest or deacon. He's the director of music at that church. As conductor, McGuire is responsible for making sure all music-related forms of worship are sacred and performed through the lens of the Catholic Church.

That's a daunting task even for the 27-year-old McGuire, whose life has revolved around music as a high school and college student, vocalist, organist, and teacher. Now he leads the parish's four different ensembles, accompanists, cantors, and manages all the musical selections. "I like to joke that I know enough to be dangerous," quipped McGuire, regarding his knowledge about sacred music.

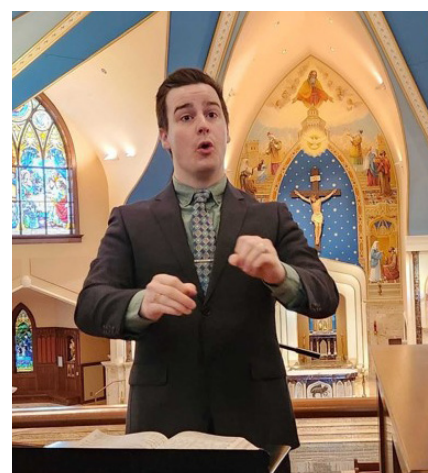
There are thousands of parish directors in the same or similar situation as McGuire. That's where the University of Mary comes in. The private, authentically Catholic university in Bismarck has launched an online, 9-credit, graduate-level Certificate in Sacred Music designed for working church musicians who wish to develop their knowledge and skills in music and worship.

"We are the only program of its kind in North Dakota, and one of only a couple in the Midwest and beyond," explained Dr. Tom Porter, chair of the University of Mary Department of Music and professor of music. "The Certificate in Sacred Music is at the heart of our mission here at Mary, which is to serve the religious, academic, and cultural needs of this region and beyond. The foundation of the program is a course in sacred music that covers the rich traditions of the Catholic Church. On this foundation, we provide practical training in voice, piano, organ, and conducting, as well as practicum that helps the students focus on their own professional setting. The program can be completed in one calendar year. It starts with a summer course that includes a two-week residency on our Bismarck campus. This is followed by fall and spring semesters with a one-credit practicum and a two-credit applied-music course in voice, piano, organ, or conducting. Although it is a graduate-level program, it doesn't require a bachelor's degree in music for admission to the program at the University of Mary. It may be completed as an independent program and is designed for those who are working in parish settings who would like to build upon their knowledge and walk through practical aspects of music ministry with esteemed faculty."

The next Certificate in Sacred Music will be June 5 through Aug. 18, which includes an on-campus residency July 10–21.

McGuire will be there as one of the first enrolled in University

of Mary's new Certificate in Sacred Music program. He is going one step further and adding the certificate to the Master of Art (MA) in Music degree he is finishing from the University of Mary that also includes seven of nine certificate credits. When he is done, his credentials will read, MA in Music with a Certificate in Sacred Music. More importantly to McGuire, his degree and certificate will be benefiting all the parishioners at Sts. Anne and Joachim Church.



Sts. Anne and Joachim Music Director Patrick McGuire will be in the initial University of Mary Sacred Music Certificate program. (submitted photo)

"If a parish director of music has never had the opportunity to pursue any kind of formal training in what they're doing in the liturgy, or any form of sacred worship, this program is more than worth their time," added McGuire. "There are so many directors of music in parishes who have not been given the tools they need to succeed in their role. Perhaps a great musician, the average director of music does not have a formal understanding of sacred music in the Catholic Church as pertains to liturgical worship, and that leads to all kinds of issues with music selection for Mass and beyond. This program can give you the foundations you need to not only become a more well-rounded musician, but perhaps more importantly, help you to see sacred music through the eyes of the Catholic Church. To fully understand the role and purpose of music in prayer, and develop the music we offer in Mass. We know how important music is to the average parishioner, but how much do we understand the Church's perspective?"

McGuire admits the certificate will give him more confidence and competence when leading rehearsals with his ensembles, when he's writing or arranging music for worship, or in the planning of certain liturgies where background knowledge in sacred music is key to understanding the role of music in worship.

To learn more about the Certificate in Sacred Music, visit umary.edu or contact an admissions representative at enroll@umary.edu or (701) 355-8030.

Historic day for Shanley High School athletics

By Paul Braun | Editor of New Earth

Ground was broken on Apr. 26, for Shanley High Schools new field turf and track project. The \$3.5 million project, paid for through private donations and a \$500,000 matching gift from Scheels Sporting Goods stores, will feature new state-of-the-art field turf. It also includes a new running track, a first for Shanley High School. The school's track teams have never had a home track to call their own until now. Shanley was the first high school in the area to install artificial turf back

in 2009, and the current turf has deteriorated to the point it was coming apart in places. Shanley hopes to have the new turf ready in time for athletic events in the fall. Select students (center) from Shanley High School's Class of 2023 are joined by (left) Marcus Thornton, Vice President of marketing for Scheels Sporting Goods, (right) Father Andrew Jasinski, Board Chairman for diocesan Catholic schools, and Mike Hagstrom, President of the St. JPII Schools network. (Photo by Paul Braun | New Earth)



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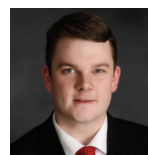
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Grand Forks students create blessing bags for community

By Trish Mohr | Fourth Grade Teacher at Holy Family–St. Mary's School, Grand Forks

The students at Holy Family–St. Mary's School in Grand Forks have made their own spiritual journey from Lent to Easter. With the help of their families, students put together 80 blessing bags to be given to those less fortunate in our community. The bags were filled with necessities such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, socks, chapstick, deodorant, snacks, lotion, combs and brushes, body wash, and shampoos and conditioners.

This note was added to every bag: "Just because you matter! You may be down on your luck right now, but let this little bag

remind you that you are worth so much; you're cared about, there's always hope, you are beautiful and Jesus loves you! We are praying for you!" The Serenity Prayer was also included on the tag.

We are ever so thankful for the blessings we have received, and we hope that our blessings will always be used to help others. Happy Easter from the students and staff of Holy Family–St. Mary's School!



Kindergarten and 4th grade students with the blessing bags they arranged during Lent. (submitted photo)



Thompson parish recognizes students on Divine Mercy Sunday

Father John Cavanaugh, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Reynolds and St. Jude's in Thompson, stands with pre-school and kindergarten students at St. Jude's as they complete their year of religious instruction. They were recognized by the parish following Mass on Divine Mercy Sunday. (submitted photo)



Inspiring youth to be missionary disciples

Youth and young adult programs take new direction

By Paul Braun | Editor of New Earth

With the school year winding down, parents are starting to book summer camps for their school-age children. Camp themes range from sports to music to educational topics. There are also religious-themed youth camps, most notably Camp Summit, a summer youth program sponsored by the Diocese of Fargo for middle school students taking place July 9-13 at Red Willow Bible Camp in Binford.

Camp Summit is just one of the programs initiated by the Diocese of Fargo's Youth and Young Adult Ministry office and director Brady Borslien, as a response to the need of a discipleship-focused middle school camp in the diocese.

"I want to use Camp Summit as a foundation for building youth and young adult programs in the diocese," said Borslien. "Studies have shown that in the middle school years, youth decide on the relevance of a relationship with Jesus in their own lives. By partnering with parishes and providing an opportunity like Summit, I hope that this camp will inspire the youth to dive deeper into the life of the church through their parish religious education and family life. As they grow and mature, we hope that the foundation laid at Summit will draw them back to camp as leaders and mentors to the next generation of youth, witnessing to the miraculous work of God in their own lives."

Borslien was hired as the Diocesan Youth and Young Adult Ministry director in July of 2020, not long after the retirement of long-time director Kathy Loney. His immediate task is to find

a way to get youth programs rolling again in the immediate aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic shutdowns.

"COVID-19 impacted the momentum that was going in the diocese, and so we are rebuilding from the work that was started," said Borslien. "Kathy Loney led this diocese's youth programs for many years and laid a great foundation to build upon. She made great connections with the parishes here, so I was very fortunate to walk into what she did."

Borslien's background in youth ministry started in the Diocese of Crookston. He has roughly 11 years of parish youth ministry experience all at Holy Rosary Church in Detroit Lakes. While serving as a youth minister, Borslien also assisted the Diocese of Crookston by directing the St. John Paul II Middle School Camp, high school and middle school youth rallies, and other initiatives. In 2015 he officially began work at the Diocese of Crookston in youth ministry while continuing to work as a parish youth minister. Prior to that, Borslien was a college student who occasionally helped at his home parish in Crookston and at St. Francis De Sales in Moorhead, Minn., and served on a parish Discipleship team, through NET Ministries, at Divine Mercy Church in Faribault, Minn.

"After marrying my wife, Sadie, I began to see the difficulty of running a parish youth ministry program, and raising a young family," said Borslien. "Between parish bible studies, RE classes, one-on-one ministry, and all the commitments with my diocesan job, we realized that there was too much

on my plate and that it was time to discern next steps. While working for the Diocese of Crookston, I realized just how much I desired to be a resource for parish workers (DREs, youth ministers, parents, volunteers) compared to being a youth minister itself. I absolutely loved being a youth minister, and I still miss that role, but I knew that being a diocesan director was where the Lord was drawing our family. When I heard that Kathy was retiring, it was confirmation that the Lord was calling us to trust him in this discernment.”

Borslien says for both the youth and young adults, the greatest challenges they face is the rapid secularization of the culture and the breakdown in the home. With the culture moving further and further away from a spiritual life, it is becoming more difficult for youth to find community with peers that are like-minded.

“A former youth of mine from Detroit Lakes said to me during her senior year, ‘Brady, I have watched each of my friends become swayed by peer pressure and the culture, and I am the only one left who is still active in the faith. I don’t know how long I will last.’ She saw just how important communal life was, and she was impacted by losing the others around her.”

A second challenge, according to Borslien, is a breakdown in the home. As a youth minister, Borslien says he listened to students talk about how their parents didn’t support them in coming to church functions for a variety of reasons, and that impacted the joy in their hearts. It was tough to see a youth come back from an event, where they encountered Jesus and be too afraid to share about it at home to their families. Though this is a challenge for some youth, Borslien says he has also witnessed some phenomenal parents. He says the devotion they have to the church and the support they provide to their kids is inspiring and powerful.

Along with the aforementioned Camp Summit, Borslien launched Encounter in April. Encounter is an opportunity for a deanery (a region of parishes within the diocese) and their youth to come together for a meal, a dynamic talk, praise and worship music, and Eucharistic Adoration with confession. Borslien says he’s noticed that youth are extremely busy and have less time in their schedules to attend large diocesan functions. His hope is that this event can be a response to that busyness by bringing something closer to their hometowns.

Another program Borslien is building upon is annual summer trips to Steubenville conferences for high school-age students. The Steubenville Youth Conferences, according to the program website, “are an outreach of Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, and are a series of 25 conferences across North America that help teens encounter the love of Christ every summer. The mission is to build the Church by evangelizing, equipping, and empowering God’s children to



Father Sean Mulligan hears confession at the 2021 Relit Youth Rally. (Paul Braun | New Earth)



Brady Borslien, Director of Youth and Young Adult ministries for the Diocese of Fargo, addresses high school students and sponsors preparing to leave for a Steubenville Youth Rally in Rochester, Minn. (submitted photo)



Bishop Folda addresses high school students at a youth rally in Napoleon in 2018. (Paul Braun | New Earth)

COVER STORY

become radical and joyful disciples.” Borslien will be leading his third trip at the end of July, taking nearly 150 high school students and adult sponsors to St. Thomas University in St. Paul.

For young adults, the biggest project Borslien is discerning is a young adult conference. He says there are many young adults in the diocese who have expressed interest in a conference, and so Borslien is currently networking with other diocese about what they do and how the Diocese of Fargo could incorporate some of their concepts into something here.

“The goals that I have set are nothing fancy or new,” said Borslien. “My goal is to continue to build upon the foundation laid by those who came before me. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I will continue to provide opportunities for youth and young adults to encounter Jesus, so that they may ultimately become his disciples. Pray for all of us at the diocese and for the work we do in the Office of Youth and Young Adults. Along with that, continue to pray for our priests and all those who work in the ministry field. Lastly, pray for the youth attending our various events in the upcoming months, especially at Camp Summit, that their hearts may be opened to what the Lord has in store for them.”



Parents and middle school students gather for praise and worship at the 2021 Middle School Relit event at Red Willow Bible Camp. (Paul Braun | New Earth)

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TATTERED PAGES

A review of Catholic books, movies, music

An even-handed approach to Catholic history in the U.S.

By Father James Gross | Pastor of St. Mary's in Grand Forks

As much as I enjoy studying history, I find that I need to approach individual works with a bit of vigilance. Raw data of names, places, events, etc. are only the foundation on which the story is built. The author telling the story determines the direction in which the story goes.

Specifically, Church history either excels or suffers depending on the motives of those who tell the story. In my experience, some authors come to their subject matter wielding a “Captain Caveman” type of club, eager to bash their hated villains over the head. On the other hand, there are authors who lean too far toward a “triumphalist” approach, downplaying anything that may reflect negatively on the Church’s institutional persona. Those of us looking for an honest, good-faith account of history are hungry for a different approach, occupying the territory in between those two poles. We have found such an account in *American Pilgrimage*.

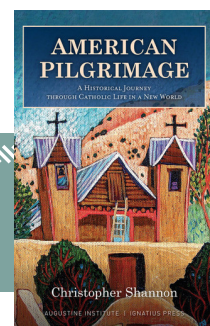
Christopher Shannon, a professor at Christendom College in Virginia, has offered a sweeping survey of the legacy of the Gospel of Christ in America. His work is neither naïve toward abuses committed in Our Lord’s name nor seeking only to skewer the evangelists who have come to our shores. I would describe Shannon’s style as a fair and even-handed “both/and” method: he leaves the readers to draw whatever conclusions we will, while not shying away from celebrating the truly heroic figures of our Catholic past.

I especially appreciate the creative way Shannon went about the presentation of his work. His is not simply a linear narrative, where A happened, then B, and so forth. Rather, the author begins with an analysis of how three empires (Spanish, French, British) interacted with North America. Here he provides helpful context in what took place in modern-day Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean. In the second part, he uses the models of parishes, walls, and bridges in three chapters to dive into the early American Catholic experience, shaped so significantly by the enormous influx of European immigrants in the mid-to-late 19th century. Shannon concludes with the metaphors of four “seasons” (Advent, Lent, Ordinary Time, and Easter) to describe important stages of the Church in America from the mid-20th century to the present day. These include Catholics’ political

engagement, advocacy for human life and social justice, and the implementation of the Second Vatican Council. Hence Shannon has conceived of a “pilgrimage” or journey, observing over 500 years of the working of the Holy Spirit in our land and bringing exhaustive research to the task at hand.

While *American Pilgrimage* touches on virtually all of the “greatest hits” of major moments and influential figures, I was impressed by the depth of its content—not so dense as to get discouraged but filled with people and anecdotes which I had never heard before. Anyone curious about a trustworthy survey of the Catholic Church in the United States will find this book a trip well worth taking.

“American Pilgrimage”
by Christopher Shannon, 2022.



Iconography Workshop and Retreat
June 25-30, 2023
Maryvale Retreat Center, Valley City

Learn the art of Icons! Each participant will create the icon *Mother of God* in this workshop using the techniques that have been passed down from generations of iconographers. Christine Jentz is a professional iconographer from WI. She has done workshops for both beginners and advance students. See her work at www.lumenchristiart.com. There will also be time offered for Mass and prayer. This workshop will begin Sunday June 25 at 3:00pm and conclude Friday after lunch. See more information and registration at <https://www.fargodiocese.org/art-retreat> or call Mary Hanbury at 701-356-7909.

No art experience necessary!
Price includes room, meals and all supplies
\$1025 with shared bath
\$1195 with private bath





Gaze on the Lord's beauty

A look at Catholic images

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament a peaceful composition of the Eucharist

By Mary Hanbury | Director of Catechesis for the Diocese of Fargo



***Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament*, Guido Francisia, 20th century. (Photo by Father Jesse Maingot, OP)**

There is a little known church in Rome just beyond the Corso shopping district called Saints Claudius and Andrew. In this church is this little gem of art, *Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament*. It was painted by Guido Francisia in the 20th century. Since 1866, the fathers of the Congregation of the Blessed Sacrament officiate in the Church, holding perpetual adoration of the Eucharist.

This art piece is not hanging on a wall. It has gold wings coming out the sides and rests only on the tips of the wings coming out of the bottom as if it floats. We see our Lady standing on a cloud (covered by the plants in the photo) and dressed in the traditional blue and red garments. She is holding the Christ Child effortlessly. In fact, there appears to be no weight of him bearing down on her arm. It appears he too is almost

floating. This detail, along with the cloud and gold background give us a glimpse and aura of heaven. The Christ Child is holding the chalice, but he is not grasping it, rather, he has only two fingers barely around the stem. It also appears to float along with the Eucharistic host hovering over the top. The Eucharistic host is bright white with rays streaming out. This is the center of the painting and the focal point. The whole composition is effortless and peaceful, yet the eyes of Jesus are intense and fixed only upon the Eucharist—our eyes go there as well. He is reminding us of the Last Supper when he gave himself to us

under the appearance of bread and wine. Our Lady gazes upon her son, the one to whom she leads everyone, while also giving us her motherly blessing. You may also notice the wheat in the background, also a symbol of the Eucharist.

In this church is the chapel and remains of St. Peter Julian Eymard, 1811–68, the founder of the Sacramentine congregation. The story, as told by his sister, is that when he was five years old, he went missing for a few hours. His sisters found him in the church standing on a stool close to the tabernacle. In response to their anxious questioning, he said, “I am here listening to Jesus.” He grew up to become a priest and eventually established a community devoted to the spread of Eucharistic adoration. He also had a great devotion to Mary, hence the creation of this image for the church where he was laid to rest.

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A lifelong education in Catholic Schools

By Shannon O'Leary | Pre-Kindergarten teacher at Holy Spirit Elementary, Fargo

Pope Francis said, "Catholic schools are important places for reflecting on and developing new ways to evangelize the world and today's culture." I have experienced that very important role in my own life.

My parents made an important decision and sacrifice for me as I started my Kindergarten year at Nativity Elementary in Fargo. From there I went to Sacred Heart Middle School and graduated from Shanley High School in 2005.

Throughout my experience as a student in Catholic schools, there are many vital ways in which I was positively impacted. Prayer was at the very center of my education. Being able to pray together was powerful, as it was also a way to form a stronger community with my classmates. To this day, I still remember specific moments in which I witnessed and took part in praying for students in various situations.

Not only did I get to learn about the importance of prayer but also serving the community. There were various ways in which I learned about the specific needs of others and ways in which to serve them. As I grew older, I crocheted blankets for babies, specific service hours I did on my own, and went to Eventide to serve those in that nursing home.

Faith was infused throughout my education as a student. Mass was always something I had the opportunity to share with my classmates and teachers. I took part in acting out the Living Stations of the Cross, music programs with faith incorporated, and my own participation in the Mass through reading scripture or petitions, altar serving, and receiving sacraments.

After I graduated from Shanley, I went to college at Minnesota State University, Moorhead. There I continued to want prayer and my faith to be a central part of my life. I took part in ministry and played an active role at the Newman Center on campus.

I graduated from college in the spring of 2010 with a degree in Elementary Education. I began looking for a job that summer. I finally got a call from Holy Spirit school principal Jason Kotrba in August of 2010 asking if I would like to come in for an interview for a first grade position that was open. I quickly said yes. That's where my teaching career began.

The Lord had a great plan for me and knew the exact school where I should be teaching. As a teacher, I have gotten the opportunity to give back to the very Catholic School system that made a big impact on my own life. Praying with my students has

continued to be a central part of my own classroom. Hearing what they want to pray about has been impactful for me as a teacher. I also have the opportunity to go to Mass with my students. Being a teacher has given me the great responsibility to pass along the faith to my students as it was done for me when I was a student.

As a teacher, an important part of passing along the faith is finding a great religion program that can help support you in that role. I've been using a program called Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. This program makes a vital impact on the students as well as me. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd has made the Mass come to life for the students in a tangible way. Not only is the Mass brought to light, but Jesus' own life as well. The students see that he lived in a real place. They hear about the stories of Jesus' life and death. They interact in works where they can ponder those stories again; reenacting those stories through the tangible materials provided.

Evangelization is important in continuing to pass along the faith. When I was a student, there were various adults that took part in passing along the faith to me. Now as a teacher, I get the great opportunity to pass along the faith to my students. Years ago, when I interviewed for the job at Holy Spirit Elementary, I made a comment about the impact of the Catholic faith being worth more than what money could buy. I continue to believe that to this day. There is a joy and happiness that is continuous. In our culture, there are many things that can offer happiness in the short-term, but not the lifelong joy I continue to experience through my faith. That is everlasting.

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Some critics of religion need to pick up their game



WORD ON FIRE

BISHOP ROBERT BARRON

Theologian and evangelist, known for his Word on Fire ministry. Bishop of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester, Minn.

Recently, I had the privilege of sitting down with Lex Fridman for a wide-ranging two-hour conversation. Lex is a professor of robotics and artificial intelligence at MIT and an extremely popular podcaster. In this latter capacity, he has spoken to significant players in a number of fields—Joe Rogan, Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, and Sam Harris, to name a few. Though his main interests are in the arenas of science and technology, he is quite open to discussing matters of a more philosophical and religious nature. Fridman has a very engaging style—not argumentative and confrontational, but rather curious, inquisitive. In the course of our two hours together, we talked about God, Jesus, life after death, morality, modernity, Nietzsche, Jordan Peterson, the Bible, faith, and the meaning of life.

Judging from thousands of comments, the general reaction from his largely tech-oriented audience was positive. Many observed they were pleased to hear a serious conversation about matters that went beyond what the sciences can describe. However, I want to focus on the critical reactions, for they tell us much about what young secularists are thinking about religion.

Without a doubt, the most common negative reaction was that I was speaking tossing an unimpressive “word salad,” or “using lots of words to say nothing at all.” Much of this critique was focused on my opening exchange with the interviewer. Lex asked me simply, “Who is God?” I responded, not sentimentally or piously, but rather in the technical language of philosophy. I said that God is *ipsum esse subsistens* (the sheer act of being itself), in contradistinction to anything other than God, in which essence and existence are distinguished. I went on to clarify the meaning of these terms in the manner of Thomas Aquinas, attempting to be as precise and technically correct as possible. To be sure, there are many ways to talk about God, but I chose, with Lex’s audience in mind, to use a more intellectual approach.

What most struck me about my critics is that none of them engaged the argument I was making or formulated a counter-position; they simply pronounced that what I was saying was gibberish. Anyone even vaguely acquainted with the Western philosophical tradition would know that I was, in point of fact, operating out of a system of thought developed by some of the most brilliant thinkers in the tradition: Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Boethius, Plotinus, Bonaventure, and Thomas Aquinas. It was not scientific speech, but it was perfectly rational, philosophically disciplined speech. That many in the comments simply did not

know what I was talking about was a reminder of how narrow our educational system has become. In my responses to some of these critics, I said, “Would you accuse a theoretical physicist, who was using the technical language of his discipline, of ‘word salad,’ if you did not immediately understand him? Wouldn’t you perhaps summon the humility to admit that you had a lot to learn?” Cardinal Francis George used to say—namely, that before we can even broach the question of the relation between science and religion, we have to reintroduce people to philosophy, the rational discipline that effectively mediates between them. Sadly, many in the Lex Fridman audience didn’t know what to do with the sort of philosophical language in which much of our doctrine of God is expressed.

The second most common criticism was that my very Catholicism effectively disqualified me. “How can you listen to a representative of the most corrupt institution in history?” complained one commentator. “Religion—especially the Catholic religion—is responsible for the deaths of millions,” said another. Here is my favorite: “Of all the differing variations of Christianity, Catholicism is by far the most cynical, repugnant, crass variant. It’s done more harm to the human species than any other religion, it’s kept us back from progressing.” Um . . . just off the top of my head: how anyone, after the murderous secularist and atheist regimes of the 20th century, which piled tens of millions of corpses, can, with a straight face, argue that Roman Catholicism is the source of the greatest corruption in history simply beggars belief. This sort of canard can only be construed as the result of the intentionally distorted recounting of history far too typical in our colleges and universities. Secondly, this is such a cheap trick of our “woke” era: identify your opponent as a member of a supposedly oppressive group, cancel him, and thereby conveniently avoid any obligation to make an argument or respond to one. Thirdly, even if we grant (as we should) that lots of Catholics have behaved badly in the course of a 2,000 year history, what precisely does this prove? That Catholicism is essentially corrupt? That its doctrines, sacraments, liturgies, saints, and culture are fatally compromised? Hardly. That human beings are a bad lot? Sure—and in point of fact, the Catholic teaching regarding the ongoing effects of original sin even in those who are baptized would lead us to expect as much. In a word, this sort of criticism is little more than an intentional distraction from the issue at hand.

Over the years, I have made a slew of suggestions as to how we religious people can improve our evangelical strategies, but I wonder whether I might offer a challenge to those too ready to dismiss religious claims out of hand. First, don’t cavalierly characterize philosophy as “word salad,” and perhaps try to study it. And second, drop the woke posturing and have the courage to enter into real argument with those who don’t share your worldview.

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Sunday, July 2, 2023

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| 2 p.m. | Welcome |
| 2:15 p.m. | Blessing of land and machinery |
| 2:30 p.m. | Mass |
| 3:30 p.m. | Meal and entertainment |

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- Event is free and open to all
- Mass will be indoors
- Bring your own chair and a bag of soil or seed to be blessed
- For more information, visit fargodiocese.org/rural-life



Intellectual formation increases prayer



SEMINARIAN LIFE

GARRETT ABERLE

Theology I at St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minn.

As I finish my first year at St. Paul Seminary, I reflect upon my transition into a new seminary and a new stage of formation. I am now preparing more directly for ministry by conforming myself to Christ. One of the primary focuses of this year has been a conforming to Christ the Word. This Word is the Word we hear in the scriptures and is the wisdom of God.

Throughout my time in seminary, I have learned much and grown closer to the Lord. I have a love for learning, and this has made the necessary academics in my formation easier. Of the four dimensions of formation—spiritual, human, intellectual, and pastoral—I had always considered the intellectual dimension a strength. I, however, see the spiritual dimension as the most important area of my formation. Since the spiritual life was the one area most directly related to loving the Lord, which is the ultimate goal, it seems to me the most important. Understanding this began in my recent retreats and has been strengthened by what I have learned concerning the spiritual life.

The fruits of my new understanding took time to grow, and this process is ongoing. Growth began with my formation in college seminary. Its beginning was rooted in my realization that all the natural sciences (be it physics, math, philosophy, etc.) are all moving towards the same truth. For me, understanding that there is a whole, was an epiphany. After seeing the oneness

of science, I saw that the different areas of formation are also imbued with a similar oneness. Growth in one area of formation can strengthen and aid growth in other areas, even seemingly unrelated ones. This understanding enriched my spiritual life as well. In addition, I also noticed how the spiritual seemed to encompass all the other dimensions of formation. It seemed that growth in other areas truly could cause growth in the spiritual dimension. Recently I have seen the beginnings of this mutual growth in regard to my intellectual formation.

This realization only became truer upon beginning my theological studies. In studying theology, my learning chiefly concerns God. This learning allows me to love him more. Though intellectual knowledge of God does not cause a spiritual life, I have found it a path to deeper relationship. The more I know of him, the more I can know him relationally. For example, in knowing about Jesus's human nature, I can understand more of how Jesus actually relates to me.

I know that I have much growth still in this area, but I have seen the beginnings of the beautiful benefit that intellectual formation can have upon prayer. Inspiration in this area came both from professors who truly love the Lord and Benedict XVI, who found the God whom he loved in his study. I see that this is the eventual goal of our theological studies. Yes, I can share my theological knowledge with future parishioners in catechism classes and homilies, but the goal of all my formation is to fall in love with the Lord. I pray this love overflows into teaching others the faith and walking with persons to Christ. That, however, is secondary. It is an overflow from the abundant gift of God. I have learned that I have only to seek first the kingdom of God and all those other things which the Lord desires to give me will be given to me besides.

ORDINATION *Diaconate*

✦ DIOCESE OF FARGO ✦

Holy Hour & Vespers: June 2, 7:00 pm

Diaconate Ordination: June 3, 10:00 am

Both liturgies are at the Cathedral of St. Mary.



SETH SKJERVEIM

North Dakota Supreme Court ruling causes more confusion



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

On March 16, the North Dakota Supreme Court issued an opinion on the state's "trigger ban" that could greatly set back the work to make North Dakota a sanctuary for life.

Rather than recite the complicated legal and procedural issues in the case, I want to focus on the court's main holding. The court unanimously held that the North Dakota Constitution includes "a fundamental right for a woman to obtain an abortion in instances where it is necessary to preserve her life or health."

Where in the state constitution did the court find this new right? Article I, Section I of the state constitutions states, in part, that all "individuals... have certain inalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life... and obtaining safety..." The court wrote that the rights to defend life and pursue and obtain safety "implicitly include the right to obtain an abortion to preserve the woman's life or health."

That section of the state constitution was adopted in 1889. The court did not cite any historical documents or legal authority to support its conclusion that the section was meant to include a right to abortion to save the life of the mother or to preserve her health. Instead, it baldly stated that the right was "implicit."

The court did cite abortion laws from before and after statehood that exempted from prosecution abortions when they were necessary to save the life of the woman. From those statutes, it concluded that the right to abortion in these circumstances is "deeply rooted in North Dakota's history and culture."

A few problems with this reasoning stand out. First, if the right to abortion to save the life of the mother was considered so fundamental by the framers of our state constitution, why was it not explicitly written into the constitution? Second, the mere fact that the legislature repeatedly chose not to criminalize abortions necessary to save the life of the mother does not mean that there is a "fundamental right" to them in the state constitution. The legislature passes thousands of laws intended to protect life and health. Does the court's decision

mean that all those laws are also fundamental constitutional rights? And if that is the case, why do we need a process for amending the state constitution at all?

The problems with the opinion, however, do not stop there. As mentioned, the court cited in support of its holding state statutes enacted before and after statehood that included an exception for when the abortion was necessary to save the life of the woman. None of the statutes cited, however, included a health exception. Where, then, did the court get the right to abortion to preserve health?

The court apparently found the "health" right in the "obtaining safety" provision of the state constitution. Only once does the court try to explain its reasoning for the health finding. It stated: "Medical journals published shortly after statehood indicate it was common knowledge that an abortion could be performed to preserve the life or health of the woman." The fact that abortions "could" be performed to preserve the health of the woman, however, is a far cry from saying that they were considered a constitutional right. Abortions "could" have been performed 100 years ago for a myriad of reasons. That does not mean that the framers meant to include all of them as rights in the state constitution.

By the way, the medical journals cited by the court were two British medical journals published in 1914—25 years after the adoption of the state constitution.

The court leaves us guessing about what it means by "health." Does it mean, what the U.S. Supreme Court said in *Roe's* companion case, *Doe vs. Bolton*? That case, now overruled, said that "health" included "all the factors—physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman's age—relevant to the well-being of the patient." If so, the court essentially ruled that there is a right to abortion on demand in North Dakota.

Or, did it mean that there is a right to abortion only when it is medically necessary to prevent a serious health risk? In other words, is the right limited to those circumstances when the abortion is necessary and when the abortion itself directly treats a serious health risk? There are hints in the opinion that this is what the court meant, but only future decisions tell us for sure.

By the time this column is published the "trigger ban" will likely be repealed. In some form, however, the litigation will continue. Let us pray that our state Supreme Court does not destroy all that we have done for life in North Dakota and all that we can do in the future.

Another smart use of your IRA



STEWARDSHIP

STEVE SCHONS

Director of stewardship and development
for the Diocese of Fargo

While you may initially appreciate the income, as time goes on, the higher withdrawal requirements can sometimes push you into a higher tax bracket, increasing your taxes.

A few years ago, Congress made the IRA charitable rollover permanent. The rollover law allows taxpayers who are required to withdraw money from their IRAs to give directly to charity. Because the rollover counts against your required minimum distribution (RMD), making an IRA rollover gift to an organization like ours could reduce your income and taxes

The IRA rollover is a great way for you to help support your Catholic parish, diocese or other ministry. While you won't receive an income tax deduction for a rollover gift, you also won't pay any income tax on the transfer.

The transfer only works for IRAs and not with other retirement accounts. An important feature to remember, any gifts to charity that come from an IRA need to come from the IRA itself. So, to realize the tax advantage, the charitable gift should originate and be dispersed by the IRA custodian. For your own unique situation, check with your tax advisor or the custodian of your own IRA account for advice.

Here are some of the requirements for making an IRA rollover charitable gift this year:

- You must be age 70½ or older.
- You must transfer money directly from your IRA to a qualified charity.
- You can give annually up to \$100,000 from your IRA.

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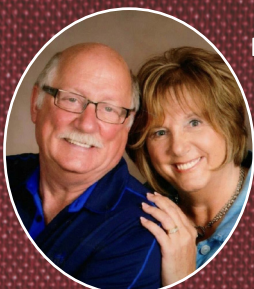
LIFE'S MILESTONES



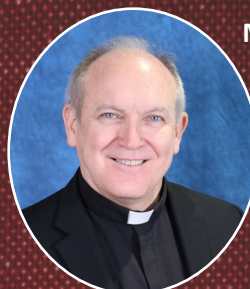
Andrew and Jacqueline Korczak, parishioners of St. Edward's in Drayton, celebrated their 40th anniversary May 14. They have 3 children and 6 grandchildren.



Philip and Marilyn Yale, parishioners of St. Timothy's in Manvel, celebrated their 65th anniversary Apr. 18. They were married at St. Mary's in Grand Forks.



Rick and Terri Heit Schneider, parishioners of St. Joseph's in Devils Lake, celebrated their 50th anniversary on May 5. They have been blessed with 3 children and 7 grandchildren. They were married at St. Joseph's in Devils Lake.



Monsignor Brian G. M. Donahue will celebrate his 40th anniversary of the priesthood June 4 with Mass at 4 p.m. at St. Francis Convent, Hankinson. A dinner will follow. RSVP to saint-philip@fargodiocese.org or leave a voicemail at (701) 242-7327. Indicate if you will be staying for the meal.



Ina Allery, parishioner of St. Anthony's in Belcourt, will be celebrating her 95th birthday on May 30. She and her late husband we're blessed with 7 children, 22 grandchildren, 54 great-grandchildren, and 22 great-great-grandchildren.



Father Richard M. Goellen will be celebrating his 60th anniversary of the priesthood on June 1, at Riverview Place in Fargo. The Eucharist will be celebrated at the Riverview Place Chapel at 4 p.m. on June 1, with a social to follow.



Cecilia Heil, parishioner of St. Michael's in Grand Forks, celebrated her 85th birthday on May 12. Her son and daughter gathered to celebrate the milestone. She is proud of her three grandsons. Her husband Marvin and daughter Connie (both deceased) were with the family in spirit.



Dorothy Huck, parishioner of the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo, will celebrate her 90th birthday on May 25. Dorothy and her late husband, Phil, were blessed with 12 children, 67 grandchildren, and 67 great-grandchildren with 2 more to arrive shortly.



Harriet M. Kotaska, parishioner of St. Timothy's in Manvel, will celebrate her 90th birthday on May 25. She and her husband Cyril, who passed away in 2008, were blessed with 5 children. Harriet now has 11 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.



Jeanice Lawler, parishioner of Immaculate Heart of Mary in Rock Lake, celebrated her 95th birthday on Apr. 10. She and her late husband Mike were blessed with 10 children, 16 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren, and 3 step-great-grandchildren. She resides at Parkview Assisted Living in Rolla.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Life's Milestones includes anniversaries for marriages, ordinations, and religious vows for 25, 40, 50, 60, 65, and 70+ years and birthdays for 80, 85, 90, 95, and 100+ years for those in the Diocese of Fargo. Submissions will only be accepted for milestones occurring during the month of publication, one month prior, or one month following. Send a photo with text to news@fargodiocese.org or to Diocese of Fargo, New Earth, 5201 Bishops Blvd S, Suite A, Fargo, ND 58104 with a stamped return envelope and phone number. Deadline for the June issue is June 1, and the deadline for the July/Aug. issue is July 11.



Marie Rheault, parishioner of St. Benedict in Wild Rice, celebrated her 100th birthday on May 5. She and her husband Dan, who passed away in 2003, were blessed with 6 children. Marie now has 19 grandchildren, 48 great-grandchildren, and 15 great-great-grandchildren.



Steffie Benton, resident at St. Anne's Guest Home in Grand Forks, celebrated her 100th birthday Apr. 29. She has 2 children, 6 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren.

A glimpse of the past

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

75 years ago — 1947

On May 17, immediately following Confirmation in St. Joseph's Church, Bremen, Bishop Dworschak solemnly blessed a field stone shrine in the farm yard of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Lies of said parish. The shrine, completed in 1945, is a replica of the famous shrine of Lourdes. In addition, a small stone church, a replica of the parish church, was built last year near the shrine and is situated amid the landscaped grounds. Plans are underway to make a statue of St. Isidore, patron saint of farmers, to set in place to the left of the grotto.

50 years ago — 1972

The "Chicanos" have been quietly hoeing the beets and picking the potatoes in the Red River Valley for nearly 50 years. It's the second, and even third, generation now that comes north from

Texas each year; almost 9,000 in number. 95% are Catholic. In support, 35 Spanish speaking priests, sisters and seminarians from the Dioceses of Fargo and Crookston, from many other states, and from other countries, converged on Grand Forks for orientation at the end of May before going to live, work and minister among the migrants. Both Bishop Driscoll and Bishop Povish offered Mass and conferred Confirmation during their time in the Valley. Next summer the new sugar plant in Hillsboro will likely bring nearly 3,000 more to the Valley.

20 years ago — 2002

The diaconate was renewed in the Fargo Diocese after a 10-year break. Bishop Samuel Aquila ordained seven men to the permanent diaconate at St. Mary's Cathedral on May 17. "Deacon" in Greek means "servant" or "minister." In Mass, the deacon is the chief of the ministers assisting the bishop or celebrant. He is to lead in integrating the needs and talents of the various members of the body of Christ, so that no one is "neglected in the daily distribution" of charity. St. Stephen is the first deacon martyr and is often shown with stones upon his head symbolizing his stoning.

Events

Upcoming Beginning Experience weekend

The Beginning Experience (BE) Weekend is a Friday evening to Sunday afternoon program for adults grieving the loss of a love relationship through death, divorce, or separation, who are ready to come to terms with their loss and begin to move forward. Presented by a team of persons who have suffered the loss of a loved one, they are willing to share their experience to help others. The weekend is the core program and the foundation of the BE ministry. The next weekend is June 23–25 in Hankinson. For more information, call your BE local area representative: Fargo/Moorhead (701) 318-0949; Fergus Falls (218) 560-1686; Grand Forks (701) 361-2051, or the BE line (701) 277-8784 and leave a message. Visit beginningexperience-easternnd.org.

Nativity parish in Fargo's piano concert

Join Nativity Music/Liturgy/Youth and Young Adult Director Brent Hermans for a piano concert on June 7 at 7 p.m. at Nativity Church in Fargo. The theme for the concert is A-B-Cs. The concert is free, but a free-will donation basket will be available, with all proceeds going to the Nativity Liturgy and Faith Formation office. Desserts and coffee provided.

An evening with Bishop Folda and the Fargo RedHawks

The Knights of Columbus invite you to join Bishop John Folda for a night of baseball and fireworks with the Fargo RedHawks on July 7. The Knights of Columbus has reserved 500 seats behind home plate. This is a great opportunity for your parish to enjoy a fun night out in Fargo. To claim your tickets, contact George Lacher at georgelacher@msn.com no later than June 10.

Sister Patricia Geis, age 88, passes away Apr. 17



Sister Patricia Geis died at Union Hospital on Apr. 17. She was born on Dec. 14, 1934 to Henry and Alice Cieszykowski Geis and baptized Patricia Jane.

Sister Patty, as she was familiarly called, entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence on July 21, 1952 and received the name Sister Anna Marie. She professed Final Vows on Jan. 23, 1960. She earned a bachelor's degree from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College and a master's degree from Northern Illinois University. Of her 70 years as a Sister of Providence, she ministered as a primary teacher for 49 years in Indiana,

Illinois, California, and North Dakota. She taught at Annunciation, Brazil from 1958 to 1964. Retiring from full time teaching in 2005, she served as an adult literacy tutor for Schools on Wheels in the Chicago suburbs for another 13 years.

Sister Patty was a warm, welcoming person. She was interested in anyone she met, engaging the person in conversation and listening attentively. Her loving spirit exhibited itself in her generous service, both in her ministry of teaching and beyond.

Sister Patty is survived by two sisters, Mary A. Rachupka, a resident of Providence Health Care, and Rosemary Schiefer of Tucson, Ariz. The Mass of Christian Burial was held Apr. 25 with Rev. Terry Johnson presiding. Burial was held in the cemetery of the Sisters of Providence.

DECREE

Uniting the Parishes of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, Oriska and St. Catherine of Alexandria, Valley City

In Nomine Domini. Amen.

Whereas the Parishes of St. Bernard of Clairvaux in Oriska, ND and St. Catherine of Alexandria in Valley City, 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 Fr. Brian Bachmeier, Pastor of St. Bernard of Clairvaux; Fr. Paul Duchscher, Pastor of St. Catherine of Alexandria. The parish was heard on 21 November 2022 and 5 January 2023, and the parish finance council and pastoral council on 22 January 2023 (c. 50);

Whereas I have provided the presbyteral council sufficient information to judge the appropriateness and legitimacy of uniting the parishes of St. Bernard of Clairvaux and St. Catherine of Alexandria;

Whereas consultation regarding this matter occurred with the presbyteral council on 26 January 2023 according to the norms of canons 127 and 166;

Whereas just causes suggest that the Parish of St. Bernard of Clairvaux be united to the Parish of St. Catherine of Alexandria, namely, that St. Bernard's has a very small membership, and is unable to continue to sustain itself. The proximity of the parishes provides the minimal possible disruption for those who regularly attend at St. Bernard's;

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. Bernard of Clairvaux in Oriska, ND, with all its rights, obligations, and privileges, is hereby united to and amalgamated with the parish of St. Catherine of Alexandria in Valley City, ND.

On account of this extinctive-union and amalgamation, this newly amalgamated parish is to be known as the Parish of St. Catherine of Alexandria.

It comprises the territory of the former Parish of St. Bernard of Clairvaux in addition to the current territory of the Parish of St. Catherine of Alexandria. The Parish of St. Catherine of Alexandria remains in Deanery VII.

The temporal goods and patrimonial rights proper to St. Bernard's are allocated to the Parish of St. Catherine of Alexandria, 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. Bernard's are to be properly preserved and safeguarded by the Parish of St. Catherine of Alexandria.

This decree is effective July 17, 2023 and 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 April, 2023.

Mr. Timothy M. Olson, JCL

Chancellor

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DECREE

Relegating St. Bernard's Church to Profane but Not Sordid Use and Authorizing It's Pious Destruction

In Nomine Domini. Amen.

Whereas the Parish of St. Bernard of Clairvaux in Oriska, ND is a subject of the Bishop of Fargo;

Whereas the church itself, located at 606 5th Street, Oriska, ND is property of the Parish of St. Bernard of Clairvaux in Oriska;

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 the church comprises part of the stable patrimony of the parish of St. Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1291);

Whereas the pastor and people of the parish territory in which the church is located were heard on 21 November 2022, 5 January 2023, and 22 January 2023, and recommended the relegation and pious destruction of the edifice due to the burden of maintenance and in order to prevent desecration;

Whereas grave causes suggest that this church no longer be used for divine worship, namely, the maintaining the edifice in a suitable manner is gravely burdensome, and its location puts it at serious risk of desecration unless continually occupied (c. 1293 §1, 1°);

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 26 January 2023 (cc. 127, 166);

Whereas I have received two written appraisals for the church (c. 1293 §1, 2°);

Whereas the College of Consultors on 20 February 2023, and the Diocesan Finance Council on 28 March 2023, consented to the pious destruction of the church (c. 1292 §1);

Whereas I have received the consent of those whose rights might be legitimately harmed, namely, the pastor of the parish concerned (c. 1292 §1);

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 and pious destruction;

Therefore, the requirements of law having been fulfilled (c. 1222 §2; c. 1291) I hereby relegate the Church of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, located at 606 5th Street, Oriska, ND, to profane but not sordid use, effective July 17, 2023. At that time it loses its blessing, dedication, and consecration, and may no longer be used for divine worship. I likewise consent to the pious destruction of the Church building after that date.

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).

The first Mass in Oriska was celebrated in 1881. I take this opportunity to give thanks to God for the more than 140 years that the people of the Oriska area have 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.

†Most Rev. John T. Folda

Bishop of Fargo

Given at the Chancery

This 5th day of April 2023.

Mr. Timothy Olson, JCL

Chancellor



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Diocese of Winona-Rochester marks historic move with a new Pastoral Center

By Peter Martin | Diocese of Winona-Rochester

On Apr. 12, Bishop Robert Barron of the Winona-Rochester Diocese in southeastern Minnesota hosted a ground-breaking ceremony to celebrate the beginning of the building of a new Pastoral Center in Rochester.

This past November, Bishop Barron announced that, thanks to the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Jack and Mary Ann Remick, the construction of a new building had been made possible. The new Pastoral Center will be across the street from Lourdes Catholic High School, between Jeremiah Lane NW and Valley High Drive NW.

The Diocese, which serves the 20 southernmost counties of Minnesota, has recognized that 65% of the nearly 140,000 Catholics in the diocese live in the area between Rochester and Mankato with Rochester being the diocese's most populous city. By moving the Pastoral Center to Rochester, the Bishop's office will be better situated to serve Catholics across the Diocese. The



Architectural rendition of new Winona-Rochester Pastoral Center. (submitted photo)

Diocese hopes to have completed the building of the Pastoral Center and be moved in by May 2024.

The Diocese of Winona-Rochester serves 96 parishes, four high schools, 30 elementary schools and the Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary on the campus of St. Mary's University in Winona.

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Pope Francis: “There is no vocation without mission”

By Hannah Brockhaus | Catholic News Agency

In his message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations 2023, Pope Francis said God’s call to a particular vocation also includes the mission to offer one’s life for others.

“God’s call,” he said, “includes a ‘sending.’ There is no vocation without mission. There is no happiness and full self-realization unless we offer others the new life that we have found.”

The 60th World Day of Prayer for Vocations took place on Apr. 30, the Fourth Sunday of Easter, also known as Good Shepherd Sunday. St. Paul VI started the annual event in 1964.

“This day,” Pope Francis said, “is a precious opportunity for recalling with wonder that the Lord’s call is grace, complete gift, and at the same time a commitment to bring the Gospel to others.”

In his message, he emphasized that the Church’s vocations—lay, priesthood, religious, or consecrated life—work together in a harmonious symphony. The vocations are “joined together in ‘going forth’ to radiate throughout the world the new life of the kingdom of God,” he said.

Speaking about the inspiration of a vocational call, Pope Francis said sometimes the Holy Spirit acts in a completely unexpected way. He recalled an indispensable moment in his own journey when, on Sept. 21, 1953, on his way to a school celebration he “was led to stop by a church and go to confession.”

“That day changed my life and left a mark that has endured to the present day,” he said.

However, he added, God’s call to a specific vocation is often revealed in a more gradual way: “in our encounter with situations of poverty, in moments of prayer, when we see a clear witness to the Gospel, or read something that opens our minds.”

“When we hear God’s word and sense that it is spoken directly to us, in the advice given by a fellow brother or sister, in moments of sickness or sorrow... In all the ways he calls us, God shows infinite creativity.”

Pope Francis compared the gift of a vocation to a “divine seed that springs up in the soil of our existence, opens our hearts to God and to others, so that we can share with them the treasure we ourselves have found.” Love is also a very important part of vocation, the pope said. “This is the fundamental structure of what we mean by vocation: God calls us in love and we, in gratitude, respond to him in love.”

“We realize that we are beloved sons and daughters of the one Father, and we come to see ourselves as brothers and sisters of one another,” he said, pointing to St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, who said: “At last I have found my calling: My call is love. Indeed, I have found my proper place in the Church... In the heart of the Church, my Mother, I will be love.”



Pope Francis smiles with two religious sisters during his general audience on Jan. 11. (Vatican Media)

In his message, the pope said everyone in the Church is a servant in accordance with his or her charisms, while the common vocation is “to give ourselves in love.” One way this finds a concrete expression, he said, is in the lives of the men and women who are raising families as a domestic church, or who are working “as a leaven of the Gospel to renew the different sectors of society.”

Another expression is that of the consecrated men and women “who are completely committed to God for the sake of their brothers and sisters as a prophetic sign of the kingdom of God.”



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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. To make a report of sexual abuse of a minor and related misconduct by bishops, go to ReportBishopAbuse.org or call 1-800-276-1562.



So, you don't think the devil is real? Think again.



SIDEWALK STORIES

ROXANE B. SALONEN

Mother of five, writer for *The Forum* and *CatholicMom.com*, speaker and radio host for *Real Presence Radio*

Recently, my husband invited me to watch an interview between Daily Wire political commentator, journalist, and author Michael Knowles, a Catholic who reclaimed his faith a decade after he turned to atheism at 13, and Father Dan Reehil, a Wall Street banker turned priest and exorcist.

Based on those descriptions, you can imagine the potential for an invigorating conversation. That expectation was delivered; so much so that we watched the full two-hour discourse a second time that evening with our 17-year-old son, Nick.

In the teaser for the interview, it showed Father Reehil mentioning having encountered the devil in person, but I assumed he was talking about during exorcisms—as in confronting this disgruntled angel in the possessed. But it wasn't that. He was speaking of distinct encounters in which the evil one showed up in the form of a stranger directly and aggressively tempting him against a sin he'd been trying to overcome—something a mere stranger couldn't have known—on two different occasions.

When we got to that portion of the interview, Father Reehil's responses ignited specific memories of some related encounters I've had as a pro-life sidewalk advocate. I paused the interview to share with my two beloved comrades.

Since Nick spent several summers praying with me on the sidewalk of our state's only abortion facility in Fargo before it closed down in late 2022, I knew there'd be some meaningful context to what I was about to say. "I've experienced that—frequently—on the sidewalk," I said.

Though I've never been present at an exorcism, I understood what it was like to meet the angel of death in person in a place where spiritual warfare is particularly palpable.

One of those occasions took place a few years back when a woman began antagonizing my prayer partner and me, but targeting me most forcefully. She wasn't from the area and didn't know me at all, but she began mentioning things about my life she couldn't have known, deriding me in a way that only "old Scratch" could. I recognized fairly quickly what was happening,

and knew she was a mere vessel; that it wasn't her talking but a demon. My friend sensed the same.

More recently, I mentioned here about how a man, on a bike, had come barreling through our line of sidewalk advocates at the closing of the fall 2022 40 Days for Life campaign, startling us and almost running over a few people. And how, in his wake, a gust of wind had begun whipping around, knocking over speakers in a nearby pickup, leaves and dust swirling before finally halting. There was no doubt to us that this wasn't just a casual biker, but someone specifically trying to disrupt us; yes, likely a demon in disguise.

As the Daily Wire conversation continued, Knowles shared about a time he met someone on the subway, and how he quickly recognized him as not just a random stranger, but someone sent by God to encourage him. His name also was Michael, and he departed as quickly as he'd appeared.

Along with having experienced the palpable presence of the father of lies on that sidewalk, I've also encountered God's heavenly helpers. Just as often as evil has manifest through human interactions there, I and others have been privy to those spirits who've come to fortify our efforts.

Most often, they've appeared in the "distressing disguise of the poor," as Mother Teresa called them; the destitute who seem to have a keen awareness of the divine. I've been amazed at how these humble emissaries of God have delivered such powerful messages of life and encouragement.

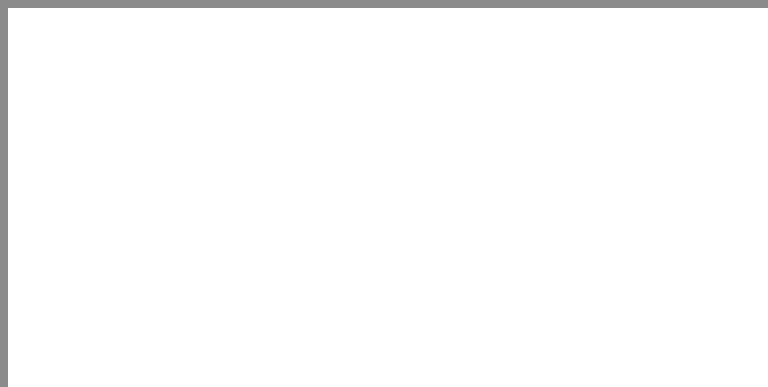
So, yes, Satan has shown up on the sidewalk, many times in my experience. You might have similar stories of when you felt a chill at someone's pointed words, directed at you, that undoubtedly did not come from heaven but the pits of hell—as well as, hopefully, when an angel of God has delivered a message of light to your heart.

But if you haven't, and still don't buy the "devil is real" bit, I'd invite you to the Red River Women's Clinic in Moorhead, Minn. some Wednesday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. If you come, prepare to possibly hear the voice of the fallen angel, disguised in human form.

But do not fear, for the one who rose from the dead is just as assuredly there, with far more power and might; the very one who said, "A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy. I came that they might have life, and have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

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Where in the diocese are we?

Last month's photo is from
St. Cecilia's Church in Velva.