# New Earth

November 2026 | Vol. 47 | No. 8

The Magazine of the Catholic Diocese of Fargo




# Giving thanks through service

## North Dakota Catholics put faith in action


4 From Bishop Folda: The Georgia Martyrs

8 Blessing of the animals

24 With hope in the Resurrection: Necrology 2026

Friday, December 4th

# Winter Gala

with Bishop John T. Folda

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**ON THE COVER:**
Holy Spirit Church in Fargo decorated in fall finery. (Paul Braun / *New Earth*)

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NEW EARTH

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**Mission**
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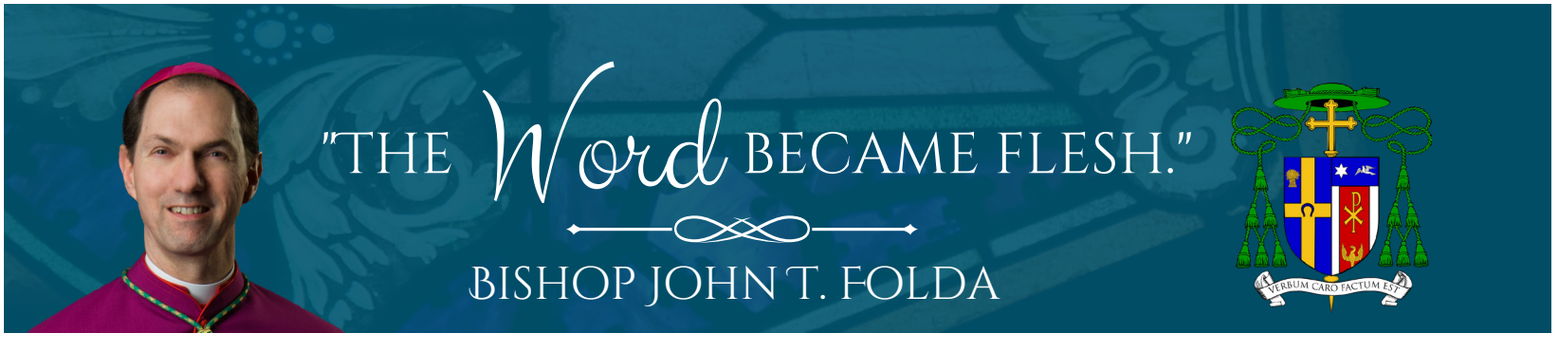


# The Georgia Martyrs

Fresh off of last month's beatification of Blessed Fulton Sheen, the Church in the United States has another cause for rejoicing. In the city of Savannah on the eve of All Saints Day, we celebrated the beatification of the Georgia Martyrs, five Franciscan friars who gave their lives for our Lord as missionaries in what is now the state of Georgia. These brave men traveled from Spain in the sixteenth century to serve God in the New World, and they shared the gift of our faith with the native peoples who were residents of this land. They were well received by the native Guale people who lived in that region, and many embraced the Catholic faith.

But the Church's teaching on marriage was a challenge to the common practice of polygamy among the natives, especially among their leaders. A baptized Guale man who was next in line to the chiefdom attempted to take a second wife right there at the mission of Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. When one of the friars, Father Pedro de Corpa, objected to his plan, the Guale chieftain killed him. In his rage, he then hunted down the remaining friars as well, and all five were martyred in September 1597. Their names are Father Blas Rodriguez, Father Miguel de Añon, Brother Antonio de Badajóz and Father Francisco de Veráscola.

The story of these martyrs isn't widely known, but it deserves our admiration and gratitude. Like so many others who spread the faith here, these courageous men left behind their families and homeland and ventured into the unknown so that Jesus Christ could be known and loved by all. They could have chosen a safe life with little risk, but instead they chose to risk everything out of love for our Lord. Even the decision to cross the ocean in those days was an act of great bravery and sacrifice. Their particular mission was not accompanied by military forces, so no one was coerced to believe in Christ.

It was the witness of their lives and the beauty of their teaching that led the natives to believe in Jesus. Their willingness to stand fast in the face of danger out of love for Christ and his people is especially poignant when so many are indifferent to God in our day and age. And their defense of the truth of Christian marriage is significant for our times when marriage and family life are undermined and threatened in so many ways.

There is an interesting local connection with this new group of Blesseds. The cause for their canonization was opened by Bishop Raymond Lessard of Savannah in 1984, and many of you will recall that Bishop Lessard was a priest of the Diocese of Fargo before he was named a bishop. So, as thousands of people, Catholic and non-Catholic, gathered in Savannah for the beatification of the Georgia Martyrs, it was a priest-son of the Diocese of Fargo who laid the groundwork for this celebration.

It is worth noting that our country is blessed with a growing number of individuals who have been recognized by the Church for their heroic sanctity. Even in our own region, several causes for canonization have been introduced, and more may be on the way. This is a sign that God is at work in our midst, and he continues to call forth holiness from among his people. Now Blessed Pedro de Corpa and his companions will join those others from our land who are already called Saints and Blesseds: St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. John Neumann, St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, St. Kateri Tekakwitha, St. Junipero Serra, Blessed Michael McGivney, Blessed Stanley Rother, Blessed Fulton Sheen, and many others. They were bishops, priests, consecrated religious, and lay men and women who discovered the richness of life in Christ.

We would all do well to learn about these holy men and women who played such an important part in the life of the Church here in the United States. They didn't have extensive resources to work with, and sometimes they didn't even know the languages of those they served. But they persevered and lived holy lives, and now they have attained a heavenly reward. They still have much to teach us about God and the gift of faith, and I have no doubt that at every moment they are interceding for us before the throne of God.

On Nov. 1, we celebrated All Saints Day, that wonderful observance of the vast number of saints who don't have earthly fame but are rejoicing in the presence of God in heaven. This solemnity was originally instituted to recall the many saints and martyrs of the early Church whose stories are known only to God. All Saints Day and the beatification of these holy friars is a good reminder to us that we are all called to be saints. We are all made for holiness and for eternal life with Christ. May the example of the Georgia Martyrs and all the Saints inspire us to grow closer to Christ so we too may dwell with him forever in heaven.

Holy Martyrs of Georgia, pray for us!

## BISHOP FOLDA'S CALENDAR

**Nov. 9-10**
Catholic Rural Life, St. Paul Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.

**Nov. 14-19**
USCCB Meeting, Baltimore, Md.

**Nov. 26-29**
Thanksgiving
Pastoral Center Closed

**Dec. 2 at 3 p.m.**
St. JPII Schools Board Meeting, Pastoral Center, Fargo

**Dec. 3**
Crookston Clergy Day of Recollection, Crookston, Minn.

**Dec. 4 at 5 p.m.**
Maryvale Gala, Maryvale, Valley City

**Dec. 8 at 12:10 p.m.**
Holy Mass
Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo
Pastoral Center Closed All Day

## Prayer Intentions of Pope Leo XIV



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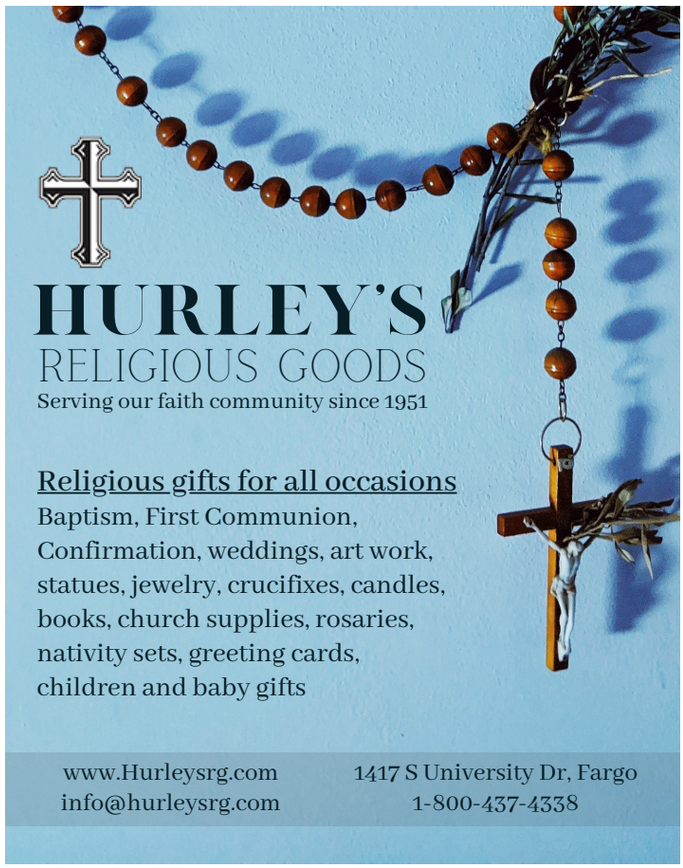

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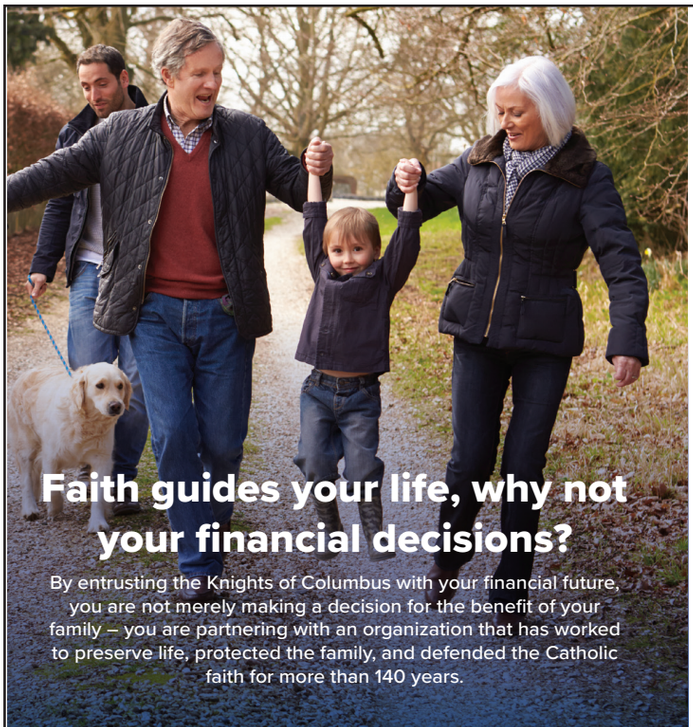

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# The grace of baptism



**DEACON'S BENCH**

**DEACON CURTIS KAUFMAN**
St. Rose of Lima, Hillsboro

I was blessed to baptize twin infants several months ago at St. Rose of Lima in Hillsboro. The sacristan, who prepared everything for me in advance, got me through the double dipping. It takes a village to guide us deacons!

The very next day I had the privilege of leading two more infant baptisms: one following the early morning Mass and another that afternoon. It was a glorious weekend, adding these four children to the community of the universal Church. As a matter of fact, we have had nearly a dozen baptisms here at the parish over the last few months. It's been an explosion of grace! There wasn't any crying from the newly baptized, although I did notice a tear or two among the grandparents.

Monsignor Dennis Skonseng, my parish pastor, always presents the new members of the Church by holding them up above his head. As a father and grandfather myself, my anxiety wouldn't allow me to do that. This makes the mothers very relieved.

We never approach the baptismal font alone. In addition to the minister, parents, godparents and family, we are accompanied by the prayers of the entire Church. The Church prays for the child being baptized, and for all of us. As a community of faith, those present renounce sin and acknowledge our Catholic beliefs. By virtue of our own baptisms, we have all been marked as God's beloved sons and daughters, and our identity and mission is the same as Christ's. The way in which we carry out the mission in our modern world will, of course, be very different from the way Christ carried it out over two thousand years ago, but the mission itself has not changed. We are called, like Jesus, to bring about God's kingdom of justice, love, healing and peace through whatever ways and means are possible. We baptized have been anointed as priest, prophet and king (See *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paras. 783–786 and 1546).

A former pastor at St. Rose of Lima often told the new mothers, desperately trying to quiet their restless babies, to let them make noise. He said it was a joyful sound to the Lord. He was convinced that nothing he had to say in his homily was more important than the expression of new life, present in our parish. Mark 10:14 says "Let the children come to me; do not prevent them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

In baptism, we bring the child to Jesus, asking him to touch, embrace and bless them. St. John Paul II once said, "The future of the world and of the Church passes through the family. As we welcome the child into God's family through Baptism, we are participating in building that future. We are continuing Jesus' ministry of blessing children, of bringing them to the heart of our faith."

Baptism makes us new creations in Christ. We are adopted as God's children, incorporated into Christ's body, and made temples of the Holy Spirit. This new identity should shape every aspect of our lives. We are called to ongoing conversion, turning away from sin and growing in holiness daily. Living out our baptism is a lifelong process. It involves daily choices to cooperate with God's grace, resist temptation, and grow in love for God and our neighbor. While it can be challenging at times, we have the assurance that God is always with us, empowering us through the Holy Spirit to live as his beloved children. Let us all renew our commitment to living out this great gift. May we continuously grow in our understanding of what baptism means, and may our lives increasingly reflect the transforming power of Christ's love and the Holy Spirit's guidance.



# The blessing of the animals

The blessing of animals is a longtime tradition that takes place on or near the Oct. 4 Feast of St. Francis of Assisi.

Fathers Raymond Courtwright and Garret Aberle blessed animals outside St. Michael's Church in Grand Forks. Father Patrick Sorrells blessed animals at Holy Spirit School in Fargo. (supplied photos)









# Descendants of blizzard survivor gift St. Anne statue

By Father Andrew Jasinski | Pastor, St. Benedict's Church in Horace

When pioneers from Quebec, Canada settled in the Red River Valley, they brought with them a devotion to St. Anne, the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

It was no surprise, then, that when early North Dakotan Alex Richard was caught in the deadly blizzard of 1888, he turned to St. Anne for help. Hundreds of people died in the storm. Alex attributed his survival to the intercession of St. Anne. In thanksgiving, he provided a crown for the statue of St. Anne in St. Benedict Church, Wild Rice, located south of what was then the fledgling city of Fargo.

When St. Benedict Church moved to its new location in Horace, Richard's descendants commissioned a marble statue for the exterior of the new building. It is modeled after the miraculous statue of St. Anne de Beaupre and infant Virgin Mary in the shrine dedicated to her in Quebec. It was made by Stuflesser Studio in Ortisei, Italy, in collaboration with New Jerusalem Liturgical Design. It was blessed on July 26, the Feast Day of St. Anne.

Shown in the photo (right) are the statue with Alex and Elisabeth Richard's great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, and great-great-great-grandchildren, many of whom still belong to St. Benedict Parish and were present at the blessing.



# A fond farewell to Deacon John Bredemeier!

By St. Michael's Church in Grand Forks

St. Michael's Church in Grand Forks held a farewell reception on Sunday, Oct. 4 in honor of Deacon John Bredemeier, who has retired and moved to Arizona.

Deacon John faithfully served St. Michael's Parish for 11 years, sharing his time, talents, and dedication with our parish family.

We are grateful for his many years of service and the countless ways he has touched the lives of our parishioners.

Thank you, Deacon John, for your faithful service! May God bless you as you begin this new chapter in Arizona. You will be missed!




**Deacon John Bredemeier with parishioner Beverly Byzewski and cake. (supplied photo)**

# Vowed religious come together to celebrate Jubilee Year of St. Francis

By Sister Sara Marie Belisle, OSF | Franciscan Sisters of Dillingen in Hankinson

Pope Leo gave the world a special grace when he announced a Jubilee Year commemorating the 800th anniversary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi on Oct. 3, 1226. Sister Jean Louise Schafer, Superior of St. Francis Convent in Hankinson, did not want to see the year pass for our sisters without some kind of special observance. Her idea was to provide a day or two of reflection on the life of St. Francis not only for the Franciscans of the Diocese of Fargo, but also for all religious in the tri-state area.

The main goal of the July 13-14 gathering in Hankinson was to share our Franciscan heritage with other sisters and brothers and to invite them to celebrate with us. The sisters and brothers enjoyed being together, visiting together and praying together!

Attached to the Jubilee Year of St. Francis is the opportunity to pray specifically for the souls of those who are in eternity. An indulgence can be obtained every day of the jubilee year by visiting a Franciscan chapel, spending some time meditating on Sacred Scripture and praying for our Pope. Special efforts to remember those who have died give shape to the efficacy of these prayers.

Religious from Dickinson, Bismarck, Valley City and Grand Forks, Mitchell, S.D. and St. Paul, Minn. were able to join us. By God's perfect providence, our own Sister Bernadette Gevich, O.S.F., from Dillingen, Germany, and Sister Therese Lemee, S.M.P., superior general of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation in Valley City, and her translator and niece Annie Lemee from Broon, France were visiting North Dakota. They attended the celebration, which added special touches to the days.

Pietro Bernadone, the father of St. Francis, named him after France, the First Daughter of the Church. Dillingen, just over the Alps from Italy, is where our congregation was established only fifteen years after the death of St. Francis. The people of Bavaria were so impressed by the friars St. Francis sent out to spread his message of love of God, peace, brotherhood, littleness and penance for sins committed.



**Vespers July 13 in the Sacred Heart Chapel, Hankinson. (photo supplied)**



**Very Rev. James Goodwin, Sister Jean Louise Schafer, OSF, Superior of St. Francis Convent, Sr. Therese Lemee, SMP, Superior General of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation in Valley City.(Photo supplied)**

The celebration opened with pilgrimage in our Sacred Heart Chapel, evening prayer and Mass. During supper and afterwards it was a joy to sit with other religious and just be together leisurely. Sister Bernadette, who has guided twenty week-long tours to Assisi, provided a wonderful virtual trip to St. Mary of the Angels, the Portiuncula, a little village near Assisi which was the seat of the Franciscan Order. It was there that Francis prayed with his brothers and gave his soul back to God.

Another highlight was the address given by Very Rev. James Goodwin, vicar for religious of the Fargo diocese. He spoke on "The Easter of St. Francis," weaving information from Franciscan sources into a very thorough treatment of the charism and gifts St. Francis brought to the world. One highlight was his identification of the pillars of St. Francis: humility, service (work), Marian devotion, Eucharist, brotherhood (peace) and the Cross (penance).

As followers of St. Francis, we take great inspiration from the life and holiness of our founder. St. Francis is known as the founder of three different holy orders: Order of Friars Minor (priests & brothers), Poor Clares (cloistered, contemplative nuns) and The Third Order, for the laity. From this third order came our Congregation of Franciscan Sisters of Dillingen (Germany), in 1241.

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# Catholic Charities: a lifeline of hope

**By Sarah Jangula | Senior Director of Strategic Engagement, Catholic Charities North Dakota**

For parents raising young children, even the most carefully planned budget can be thrown off course by an unexpected expense. One parent who connected with Catholic Charities of North Dakota's (CCND) pregnancy and parenting support program, Strong Roots Bright Futures, learned that firsthand.

Like many families, she worked hard to provide for her child and carefully managed her limited income. When she set aside money to purchase diapers, she had a plan. But before she could make the purchase, an unexpected expense arose and the money she had budgeted was suddenly gone. She was left wondering how she would meet one of her child's most basic needs. Then she remembered a sticker.

Months earlier, she had attended CCND's Bundle Up Your Baby Bump event, where families can access free baby items, connect with community resources, and learn about available support. Along with supplies and information, attendees receive contact information for future assistance if a need arises. When she found herself struggling, she remembered that CCND had told her to reach out if she ever needed help. She made the call.

What started as a request for diapers became something more meaningful: reassurance that she was not alone. CCND staff connected her with the support she needed, helping relieve immediate stress and ensuring her child had the necessities they needed. Just as importantly, the experience reminded her that people in her community cared and were ready to help.

While this particular situation may not happen every day, stories like it illustrate why Strong Roots Bright Futures exists. Families often face moments when an unexpected bill, emergency expense, or change in circumstances creates uncertainty. Sometimes the greatest need is not only material support but knowing where to turn when life becomes overwhelming.

Through events like Bundle Up Your Baby Bump, CCND helps connect families with resources, services, and a network of support. More than 1,300 individuals have attended Bundle Up events since 2025, creating opportunities for families to access needed items, learn about available assistance, and build connections within their communities.

The program also reflects something larger: neighbors helping neighbors. Community members donate items, volunteer their time and support families they may never meet. In turn, many families who once received support are inspired to help others in the future.

At its heart, Strong Roots Bright Futures is about ensuring families know they are valued, supported, and never alone. Sometimes that support comes in the form of diapers. Sometimes it comes in the form of a phone call. And sometimes, it is the hope that comes from knowing someone will answer when you need help most.

**Catholic Charities North Dakota's Strong Roots Bright Futures program connects families with support, resources, and hope when unexpected challenges arise.**

November is National Adoption Month, a time to celebrate families formed through adoption and the many individuals who support children on their journey to permanency. Through Strong Roots Bright Futures, Catholic Charities North Dakota provides adoption services, pregnancy and parenting support, family resources, and connections to care, helping children and families grow stronger together.

Learn more at www.catholiccharitiesnd.org.


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# A tale of two projects

## How St. Philip's in Hankinson combined unplanned fire repairs with their long-term renovation goals

By Paul Braun | Editor of *New Earth*

With 2026 winding down, St. Philip's Church in Hankinson has much to be thankful for. A renovation project for the church basement is finished, and a restoration project that was at first not in the plans is almost at completion.

Several years ago, pastor Monsignor Brian Donahue and parish leaders had a vision to revamp the church basement to accommodate larger gatherings, dinners, religious education and parish business. The idea was to make the downstairs of historic St. Philip's church a one-stop destination for all church activities, making it no longer necessary to use a building across the street. According to Monsignor Donahue the former space was too small and ill-equipped to serve the current and future needs of the parish.

"We could do coffee and rolls before, and that's about it," Monsignor Donahue told *New Earth*. "And now you've got not only a nice big kitchen, a big serving area, but you've got six potential classrooms for religious education and meetings."

Along with those features, the parish added an elevator that is accessible from the east entry that can accommodate caskets for funerals. There is also new office space that is easily accessible to visitors from an entryway on the church's south side. Parishioners and staff no longer need to use the old white house across the street to conduct parish business and host religious education. The plan is to remove the old house instead of selling it and moving it. That cost is being paid by an outside party as part of a land-use agreement.

"The agreement (with the nearby hardware store) is that they will demolish the house and take care of anything down there that needs to be cleaned out," Monsignor Donahue said. "Then they'll gravel the sidewalk and parking area just like our other parking area and make it all one. And they have a greenhouse they'll put there. The lease is for 25 years, and the cost of the lease is the cost of removing the house."

The entire project is being paid for through a capital fundraising campaign that was built into the Living Our Faith, Building our Future campaign. Monsignor Donahue said over $700,000 was pledged for the $1.25 million project in just the first week of the campaign. The parish used a small portion of what was raised initially to fund St. Philip's share of the diocesan campaign, and the rest is going towards the project itself.



**St. Philip's Church in Hankinson, where repairs are nearly complete. (Paul Braun / *New Earth*)**

However, the project had to be put on hold for a time. That's the tale of the restoration project at St. Philip's Church.

On Dec. 16, 2024, a fire started in the attic of the church and caused major damage to the ceiling above the sanctuary and the nave, mostly from smoke and water damage. After the fire was extinguished, the basement project was put on a brief hold while the investigation into the fire was underway. Early in 2025 contractors were given the go-ahead to work on the basement





New office space, a new kitchen and an elevated ceiling make the church basement a better place for gatherings.
(Paul Braun / *New Earth*)







The ceiling over the altar was destroyed by fire and the entire sanctuary suffered major smoke and water damage. Restoration started soon after the fire investigation finished, and the pastor hopes to celebrate Christmas Eve Mass in church.
(Paul Braun / *New Earth*)

renovation while workers gutted the church upstairs, removed asbestos and other hazardous materials, and started repairs.

During the fire restoration, the Franciscan Sisters of Dillingen offered their spacious chapel to meet the spiritual needs of St. Philip's Parish. The sisters hosted daily and Sunday Mass, weddings, funerals and Masses for holy days of obligation.

The sisters' hospitality was greatly appreciated by Monsignor Donahue and parishioners, but their need will soon be at an end. They hope the church restorations will be completed by Christmas Eve of this year.

Monsignor Donahue plans to have a closing ceremony at the Franciscan Sisters' chapel, then have a procession from there to the newly restored church of St. Philip's for the 4 p.m. children's Christmas Eve Mass. If things go to plan, what a wonderful Christmas gift it will be for the faithful in Hankinson!



Diane Widhalm is ready to serve clients in the food pantry at St. Anthony's Church in Fargo. (Paul Braun / *New Earth*)

# Giving thanks through service

**By Paul Braun | Editor, *New Earth***

Diane Widhalm has been checking in for over five years at the St. Anthony of Padua Church's food pantry from 10 a.m. to noon most Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, tidying up the shelves and preparing for the people who will come seeking assistance. For Diane, it's not just an opportunity to keep busy in her later years, but it's a ministry as well. She says she's empathetic with those who come in because she has known poverty herself and wants to give back any way she can.

Diane's giving spirit is at the heart of what the Fargo church's food pantry symbolizes. The parish mission serves not only the needs of the clients who come in, but it also gives the parish and the faithful a way to be thankful for gifts received from God by giving back.

"I believe the act of sharing our resources, our blessings, are paramount to entering into the deeper life of our Catholic Christian faith," St. Anthony pastor Father Gerard Braun told *New Earth*. "If we are followers of Christ, it becomes critical for us to likewise step out in faith and offer our gifts of time and treasure. It is antithetical to the life of Christ to hold back and still be the Son of God. Nor can it be possible for us to hold back and still be followers of Christ."

Of course, St. Anthony's isn't the only church in the diocese with community outreach programs like a food pantry. Several parishes around the diocese do the same, and some go way beyond in supporting those in need. The Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo has its own food pantry, but the cathedral parish also gives parishioners a chance to make monthly donations to help support five organizations in the Fargo/Moorhead area.

On the first Sunday of each month the cathedral takes up a special collection for the parish charity fund. Parishioners also receive a specific envelope for the fund in their offertory envelopes packet to contribute. The monthly contributions are split between Churches United for the Homeless, the Emergency Food Pantry, the Salvation Army, New Life Center and Catholic Charities North Dakota. Catholic Charities, for example, uses the cathedral donations for its own charity fund, which is used to purchase food and gas cards, and on occasion to assist clients with utility bills or other needs that arise.

In West Fargo, one well-known example of giving back is the Thanksgiving meal put on every year by Blessed Sacrament Church. According to pastor Father Gary Luiten, the dinner was started by John Normandin and Father John Moore 47 years ago. The original purpose was to help the homeless, but it quickly changed into a community gathering that serves people without homes and the poor alongside other parishioners and neighbors. Parish volunteers now prepare meals using 130 turkeys, 30 pans of dressing, 20 pounds of butter, 50 tubs of cool whip, 25 gallons of milk and 40 pounds of coleslaw. Everything



**The Blessed Sacrament Thanksgiving dinner in West Fargo lets parish volunteers give back to anyone in need of a meal on Thanksgiving Day. (submitted photo)**



**The St. Anthony's food pantry also stocks personal care items. (Paul Braun / *New Earth*)**

is donated. Though the meal asks for a free will offering, those unable to pay still get fed. Any extra money goes to the poor fund.

"Reaching out and serving others in the Thanksgiving dinner is one way of living out our mission as members of the church," said Father Luiten. "That is our overall goal. It's not just serving the food but bringing people from all walks of life to share a meal. It is our hope that serving others will help them realize that they are accepted and loved. Giving back to God by sharing what we have with others is a great way of showing our thanks to God for all the Lord has given to us."

Father Luiten said those coming for the meal are a diverse group. It's a mixture of parishioners who come regularly, while others come because they have nothing else to do on Thanksgiving and it is not practical for some small households to make a big dinner. They come and join in.

"We cater to many people who have nowhere else to go," Father Luiten told *New Earth*. "They just want to be some place with people. We also make meals for the West Fargo police and fire departments and also try to connect with the Fargo-Moorhead ambulance service. We get people from as far away as the Twin Cities and Minot to help serve. Some of them are families who want to teach their children about volunteering. Some college students come as well. Some come to eat and then they offer to stay and help."

Meals are also set aside for Churches United for the Homeless and Valley Senior Services for Meals on Wheels.

The Thanksgiving Day meal at Blessed Sacrament is served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day. Food donations are readily accepted by dropping them off at the church. Donated items that are frozen should be brought no earlier than the week of Thanksgiving due to freezer storage limits.

Are you feeling thankful for the gifts bestowed upon you and your family by God? Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to show how appreciative you are by giving to others. Contact your local parish to see how you may help others this holiday season, whether through food donations, monetary gifts or acts of service.



**Parishioner generosity stocks the food pantry at the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo. (Paul Braun / *New Earth*)**

Stories of faith



# Coming to faith as a teen

**By Jackson Pringle | Parishioner, Saint Paul's Newman Center, Fargo**

I grew up around Fargo and didn't have much experience with religion growing up. My parents were both raised in vaguely Protestant households (Presbyterian and Lutheran), and both of them drifted away as they became adults, so that neither me nor my two siblings really experienced anything but general agnosticism growing up. I went through a bit of a "Reddit Atheist" phase (not that I actually visited or even knew of the internet discussion board website Reddit, but I acted like the stereotype) until I was about 13 years old, after which point I mellowed out a bit and would have described myself as agnostic.

Over time, especially in the domain of politics (I identified as conservative long before my conversion), I began to have a general distaste for the label of "atheist," which made me at least open to religion. When I was 14, I developed a crush on a cute Catholic girl, whom I would start dating at 16 (and marry at 20). By then, I would have described myself as open to the existence of God (mere Deism, as it were). As a conservative recognizing the "utility" of religion for society, I might have said that I wished I was religious.

I don't know if it's more embarrassing to say it was my girlfriend or political YouTubers who convinced me (both had their influence), but, either way, around the age of about 17, I picked up C.S. Lewis's *Mere Christianity*. That book changed my perspective profoundly on religion, and Christianity in particular, from "good or useful in the abstract" to something real. As I read, and grew in my understanding of Christianity, I felt drawn toward the moral weight and truth of the Catholic faith. As someone who didn't really have any desire to not be Catholic, someone who even wished that I did have faith, it was really a profound blessing to have any of my philosophical objections to the theological basis of Christianity so maturely and thoroughly quashed by Lewis. I started RCIA the next year, at 18. The same month that I turned 19, I was baptized and received into the Church at Holy Spirit Parish in Fargo.

During college at North Dakota State University, I have more often been going to the Saint Paul's Newman Center, since I live in the same apartment complex and find the music prayerful and elevating. My father, who is on his own journey with faith, has taken to joining me at Newman (and occasionally other churches). He is particularly impacted by our chant and sacred choral music. Though I have just graduated from NDSU, and my wife and I will be moving out of our apartment and into a house, I am thankful for the wonderful experiences bisonCatholic has offered, and the community has been invaluable in my faith journey post-conversion. Shout out especially to Eric Koch, my Bible study leader, who has just moved down to Iowa for a job post-graduation.

I had a taste and appreciation for sacred music before my conversion, and a choir background in high school, so when I saw that the Newman Center had a choir it seemed like a wonderful opportunity to sing regularly and participate in beautiful music. It has been an absolute blessing, singing challenging and moving choral works that deepen the choir members' singing ability. From what I can tell of my father's reaction, the choir music profoundly inclines the hearts of those in the congregation to God. I had been received into the Church a few months beforehand, and during my pre-baptism Mass attendance, had plenty of opportunity to listen to hymns that I did not particularly find prayerful or elevating. My conversion was certainly not based on how much I liked some of that music, to put it frankly. It wasn't until after my conversion that I settled into regularly attending Newman.

My wife and I were married at Newman on March 7, 2026. The wedding Mass was beautiful. Two o'clock p.m. is a really wonderful time of day to experience the stained glass. My wife and I picked out a few hymns which we actually enjoyed, in addition to the chant and polyphony elsewhere in the Mass, which allowed for some parts to be congregational and others to be extremely beautiful with just the choir singing. A lot about the wedding day can be stressful and busy, but my wife and I are very glad to be able to look back and appreciate the beauty, visible and audible, that accompanied us on that unique and sacred day.

> **"As I read, and grew in my understanding of Christianity, I felt drawn toward the moral weight and truth of the Catholic faith."**



# Our Bodies Tell His Story

Theology of the Body and You



## Christianity, contraception and unlimited bodily control

By Timothy Mosser | The Catholic Coach

When you talk about contraception today, most people – even many practicing Catholics – think the decision is not whether or not you will use contraception, but instead what method of contraception you will use. It has become a "given" in our culture. But far from being part of our Christian culture from the beginning, it started to be accepted less than 100 years ago. The "contraceptive mentality" (I control my fertility any way that I choose) has greatly influenced the modern quest for unlimited bodily control. Let's take a look.

Early Christian writers such as St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, and Clement of Alexandria condemned contraceptive practices common in the Roman world, seeing them as contrary to the gift of life and the meaning of marriage. Medieval theologians, including St. Thomas Aquinas, reaffirmed this view. Even Protestant reformers like Martin Luther, John Calvin and John Wesley explicitly rejected contraception, describing it as a violation of God's command to be open to life.

This shared position was not merely about reproduction. It reflected a broader Christian vision of the human person: the body is good, created by God. Human sexuality has both a unitive and procreative dimension that must remain inseparable. To block fertility deliberately, they saw, was asserting a mastery over humanity that belonged to God alone.

The Anglican Communion's 1930 Lambeth Conference became the first major Christian body to officially permit contraception under limited circumstances. That decision marked a turning point not only in Christian ethics but, as many argue, in the trajectory of Western culture itself. Most Protestant denominations followed suit shortly thereafter.

The Catholic Church did not follow the Anglican change. Instead, it reaffirmed its traditional teaching in Pope Pius XI's 1930 encyclical *Casti Connubii* and later, with even greater clarity, in Pope St. Paul VI's 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. Paul VI warned that accepting contraception would reshape humanity's relationship with the body. If society embraced the idea that fertility could be suppressed at will, he argued, people would soon believe they had the right to exercise unlimited dominion over the human body and treat it as material to be manipulated, not a gift to be received. Many dismissed these warnings as overly pessimistic. Yet decades later, cultural developments surrounding abortion, euthanasia, same sex 'marriage,' artificial reproduction, gender modification and transhumanism have led some to revisit Paul VI's predictions with renewed seriousness.

The cultural acceptance of contraception helped normalize a broader mindset: the human body is something to be controlled, redesigned, or overridden according to personal desire or technological capability.

Abortion became legally widespread within a generation of the contraceptive revolution, framed as an extension of reproductive autonomy. If fertility can be suppressed at will, some conclude, pregnancy itself is a correctable error rather than a natural outcome of sexual union.

Euthanasia and assisted suicide movements similarly emphasize bodily control. Specifically, they claim the right to end one's life when suffering or personal preference dictates. The body becomes an object of choice rather than a given reality.

Same-sex 'marriage' and artificial reproductive technologies are also part of this broader shift. Once society accepted the idea that openness to children can be severed from the sexual act, marriage itself is redefined. If sex need not be open to life, then marriage need not be structured around the complementarity of male and female. In addition, children are seen as a "right" and not as a "gift." Children can be obtained by whatever means technology can render, thus treating them as property.

Gender modification technologies, including hormonal and surgical interventions, reflect an even more direct assertion of mastery over the body. The idea that one's physical sex can be altered to match internal feeling presupposes that the body is malleable material rather than an integral part of personhood.

Transhumanism, with its ambition to merge human biology with technology or transcend biological limitations, represents the most radical expression of bodily control. It envisions a future in which the human body is fully subject to redesign.

These developments illustrate the trajectory Paul VI foresaw. Once society accepts the principle that we can control reproduction, why not control life and death, sex and children, marriage and identity, even the bounds of human nature itself?

The historical pattern is striking. A moral shift that began with contraception has unfolded into a broader cultural re-imagining of the human body and human limits.

So, when Mother Church teaches against contraception, she is not "imposing" a restriction on humanity from the outside. She merely affirms natural law and God's design about the truth of the human person and human sexuality. And she warns of the cultural slide we are experiencing that comes from accepting contraception.

# Did you know consecrated virginity is a vocation?



CONSECRATED VIRGINITY

**SARA LAHR**
Candidate for Consecrated Virginity
Grand Forks

A consecrated virgin is a living sign of the Church as the Bride of Christ, witnessing to His love in the heart of the world. While this is still a relatively rare vocation, the number of women receiving consecration has been increasing in the U.S. and the world.

I write as someone in formation for the Diocese of Fargo, now in my third year of candidacy to become a consecrated virgin. My hope is that through the series of articles, you will learn more and receive hope and joy by this gift of God for the Church. For those who may want a jumpstart, a great place would be a 2018 Instruction from the Vatican called *Ecclesiae Sponsae Imago*, which I use regularly in explaining this vocation.

Pope Francis called consecrated virginity "a sign of the inexhaustible and manifold richness of the gifts of the Spirit of the Risen Lord, who makes all things new" (Rev. 21:5) and expressed to consecrated virgins: "Your lives will reveal the eschatological tension that enlivens the whole of creation, drives the whole of history, and is born of the Risen Lord's invitation: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away" (Song of Songs 2:10). By renewing this vocation in the Church now, the Lord is communicating something of His love and hope for the faithful. It calls us to pay attention to the work of the Spirit.

Consecrated virginity is a diocesan vocation. The woman is formed by the diocese, consecrated by the bishop of the diocese, and lives in and serves the diocese. When I receive consecration, I will be the first woman consecrated in the Fargo Diocese. As such it falls on me to introduce this vocation to the diocese. I don't have all the answers. I plan to spend the rest of my life learning the riches of this vocation, and hopefully you will journey with me on this path of discovery.

In my time of formation, I have received many questions about consecrated virginity. In upcoming articles, I hope to go into more depth on some of the more popular questions: What is it? How is it the same or different from religious life? What is the history? Why is there an increase in vocations now? In this introductory article, I will only touch the most common question: "Why did you, Sara, choose consecrated virginity? If you felt called to be the Lord's spouse, why would you be a consecrated virgin when you could be a religious sister?"

The simple answer to that question is, this is what the Lord called me to! A more nuanced answer would be probably similar to the answer you would get if you asked a Benedictine sister why she entered a Benedictine instead of Franciscan or Carmelite order. Each order has certain charisms that attract souls. You could also ask a married person, if they knew they were called to marriage, why did they marry one person instead of another?

Discerning a vocation is not simply making a calculated choice. It is a movement of the heart; when the Lord calls, he calls the heart to the particular purpose for which He has made it. I don't have time to get into my full story here (maybe a future article), but I did discern religious and married life before discerning the nuance of this call and the particular way the Lord was calling me to commit myself to Him. That initial call was followed by nearly fifteen years of confusion, seeking, questions, and much time in prayer and spiritual direction. I needed the long and often painful journey to come to discover the Lord as my Beloved Bridegroom and to understand myself as His beloved bride. I don't fully understand the whats and the whys, but I know the Who and that is enough.

I'll end with a message from Pope Benedict XVI to participants of the *Ordo Virginum* (consecrated virgins): "Take care always to radiate the dignity of being a bride of Christ, expressing the newness of Christian existence and the serene expectation of future life. Thus, with your own upright life you will be stars to guide the world on its journey. The choice of virginal life, in fact, is a reference to the transient nature of earthly things and anticipation of future rewards. Be witnesses of attentive and lively expectation, of joy and of the peace that characterizes those who abandon themselves to God's love. May you be present in the world, yet pilgrims bound for the Kingdom. Indeed, the consecrated virgin is identified with that bride who, in unison with the Spirit, invokes the coming of the Lord: "The Spirit and the Bride say 'Come'" (Rev. 22: 17).

Celebrating our 72nd Anniversary in the Fargo Diocese
Nov. 1, 1954–Nov. 1, 2026



Mother Madonna, Sister Margaret Mary, Sister Jacinta Marie and Sister Veronica

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# What a seminarian learns at the nursing home



**SEMINARIAN LIFE**

**JOSEPH GRAY**
College I
St. Gregory the Great Seminary
Seward, Neb.

I am so blessed. God has given me so much since I entered seminary in the fall of 2025.

It has been a time of huge growth and I can't thank the diocese and formation team here at seminary enough. I have appreciated the chance to learn much during my time. I have had many great experiences during my short time so far. But one I have grown much from is the chance to see and serve the people in my apostolate serving in nursing homes. It is a powerful experience to see these people who are often overlooked. Since starting my apostolate, it has grown from being just a duty that I had to do, to actually seeing the people I serve as real people who need love.

When I began serving in nursing homes two years ago, I did not realize how miserable some of the people there are.

At first, I started to talk with them about the saints. I felt that I needed to bring something to them and that if I didn't perform well enough they would be disappointed.

That mentality, however, started to shift slowly throughout the year. Many of the elderly would tell us about their families and how they have not seen their children since they brought them to the nursing home. It hurt me inside to see the pain that these people struggle with. This has encouraged me to talk with other residents and to just be there for them, because they often know that they have been brought there to die.

Often, they have great stories to tell and depending on how bad their condition was sometimes I would hear the story many times. Hearing their excitement at having someone to talk to left me with a desire to listen again.

There were many stories that I heard that I later learned were not actually how it happened. It was easy to see how they would mentally slip and forget or misremember. One lady at my apostolate last year would tell many stories to me and the rest of my group over and over again.

One time her son was at the nursing home and heard her tell us the stories she had told many times. He was a bit behind her, sadly shaking his head. Due to her dementia, she couldn't remember how something happened. This was hard to watch but it gave me a perspective on how grateful I am that God made me not for this world but the next one.

This year I have visited several nursing homes and I've made some homebound visits. I have been given even more time to be one on one with people. It is so cool how often they are excited to see us. I have been asked many times "How long have you been in seminary?", "How much longer are you going to be in seminary?", "Where are you from?" and much more that has been so cool to share.

But just getting to know them is such a blessing. I have heard much and I have been shown much. It is so humbling to just go to someone and start talking. Oftentimes you hear things that you just don't know how to respond to. I have heard from people that they have gotten this illness or that cancer. This makes them start crying, saying they don't want to die. This shows that there isn't a cure for everything and I can't do anything to help with their problems. All I can do is be with them, pray, and encourage them to do the same.

The humility of this has helped me grow. I will forever remember the chance to just see people and be with them. This whole experience has led to a great deepening of my faith and a desire to go even deeper and learn how to love those around me even more.



# Transform all of November into a time of Thanksgiving



STEWARDSHIP

**STEVE SCHONS**
Director of Stewardship and Development
Diocese of Fargo

Very soon, Americans will celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday—a time largely devoted to sumptuous meals highlighted by turkey and pumpkin pie, traveling to and from ancestral homes, enjoying family, feasting on leftovers, watching Thanksgiving Day parades, and enjoying football.

For many of us, Thanksgiving Day is so full of activity that we can easily forget what is truly at the heart of the holiday: offering our thanks to God for the many gifts bestowed upon us. Although the deeper meaning of the holiday is sometimes lost in today's secular culture, good stewards of life and faith recognize that Thanksgiving should be directed primarily toward God.

Because the "busyness" of Thanksgiving Day can distract us from slowing down to express our gratitude, perhaps this November we might allow thankfulness to permeate our lives for more than just a single day. What if we dedicated the entire month?

Expressing gratitude is at the very heart of good stewardship. Here are a few simple ways to dedicate a little time each day in November to giving thanks for our blessings:

- Reach out to loved ones. Take a minute each day to thank the people in your life who matter to you. Tell them you are thankful for them. Drop someone a note, make a quick phone call, or send a thoughtful text. Telling people you appreciate them will enrich your life as well as theirs.
- Attend an extra Mass. Make a point to attend at least one Mass outside of your regular weekend routine. Going to Mass on Thanksgiving morning is an excellent way to enrich the holiday. As a faith community, we know that giving glory to God in this communal way is a vital aspect of our life of faith.

If you transform the month of November into a month of Thanksgiving, you will find your celebration on Thanksgiving Day to be a much richer and fuller experience than you ever imagined. In fact, you might just discover that your overall happiness improves.

May this month of Thanksgiving be a time when we not only say "thank you" to God, family, and neighbor, but a time when our hearts draw us much closer to the Lord.

*Adapted from the International Catholic Stewardship Conference*






# N.D. Supreme Court upholds ban on transgender interventions on minors



CATHOLIC ACTION

**DAVID TAMISIEA, J.D., PH.D**
Executive Director
North Dakota Catholic Conference

Gender dysphoria refers to the strong and persistent distress some people experience based upon a perceived mismatch between their biological sex and internal sense of gender identity. Those with gender dysphoria often suffer greatly and deserve our respect, compassion, and love. Some seek mental health counseling to address their distress and accept their sexual identity, while others influenced by the gender ideology movement, seek medical interventions to alter their sex characteristics to appear as the other sex, and consider themselves "transgender."

Transgender medical interventions are especially tragic when performed on minors. As any parent knows, adolescence can be a time of confusion, anxiety and distress over the child's sexual development and identity. Transgender interventions on minors are particularly pernicious because gender ideologues prey on the vulnerabilities of minors at this sensitive time of life. Even so, this ideologically driven practice will no longer be allowed in North Dakota.

In September, the North Dakota Supreme Court unanimously upheld the state's law prohibiting transgender medical interventions on minors. The 5-0 decision affirmed the 2023 law passed by the state legislature that makes it a crime for a health care provider to perform certain surgeries on minors suffering from gender dysphoria, or to prescribe, administer, or supply puberty blockers or cross-sex hormones on these minors, for the purpose of "changing" their gender to align with their internal perception of their gender.

The Supreme Court reasoned that it was entirely within the North Dakota Legislature's authority to pass a law like this to protect minors suffering from gender dysphoria and to regulate the medical profession in limiting the kinds of medical practices it can legally perform in the state.

As the court put it, North Dakota has "a strong and legitimate interest in protecting its young citizens from physical and emotional harm" associated with transgender medical interventions. As the court observed, minors are particularly vulnerable to harm from these medical interventions because their immaturity, inexperience, and susceptibility to undue influence can impair their ability to appreciate the risks and grasp the long-term consequences of these treatments. Ample evidence shows that these interventions often lead to irreversible sterility, serious life-long health risks, and worsening psychological distress. The court also noted that these transgender procedures are experimental in nature, not supported by high-quality, long-term medical studies, and are the subject of intense international debate. There is also growing evidence of "de-transitioners" who express profound regret over decisions made for them as minors by adults to undergo these so-called gender-transition treatments.

The Supreme Court also emphasized that North Dakota has every right to regulate the medical profession in our state and prohibit certain medical practices. From territorial days onward, North Dakota has regulated the practice of medicine. For example, North Dakota has a long history of prohibiting abortion unless necessary to preserve the mother's life. The court reasoned that the laws banning abortion in most cases indicate that the state has the right to prohibit certain procedures it deems harmful, even if recommended by a medical provider. In addition, while a person can legitimately refuse unwanted medical treatments, no one has the right to demand a particular kind of procedure that is prohibited. Thus, the ban on transgender interventions on minors does not burden a minor's constitutional rights because no one has a fundamental right to a particular course of medical treatment.

The court also reasoned that North Dakota has always regulated the activities of minors more stringently than adults, with an eye towards protecting them due to their lack of maturity. For example, North Dakota restricts minors from using alcohol, using tobacco, gambling, possessing obscene materials, and entering marriage. Thus, even though the state has made a policy decision to allow transgender medical procedures on adults, it is entirely fitting and within the purview of the state to restrict these same procedures on minor children.

The North Dakota Supreme Court ultimately found that the North Dakota legislature acted within its authority in prohibiting transgender medical interventions on minors, and that it was not the court's role to second-guess the legislature's regulation of the medical profession. The court's unanimous decision affirms the state's responsibility to protect vulnerable children from interventions that carry profound and irreversible consequences. By upholding the law, the court wisely recognized that minors should not be subject to experimental treatments with life-altering consequences they may not fully understand. By upholding the law, the court affirmed the legislature's authority to protect North Dakota's children and regulate the medical profession

We should be grateful to the court for doing the right thing.



A crucifix at Calvary Cemetery in Hankinson.
(Paul Braun/*New Earth*)

# With hope in the Resurrection

## Pray for those who have gone before us

*Please remember in prayer the faithful departed from our parishes, our diocese and throughout the world, with joyful hope in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Included are those who died between Oct. 1, 2025 and Sept. 30, 2025. Any missing necrology from parishes will be published in the December 2026 New Earth issue. Previous year death dates will not be published.*

**Clergy:** Fr. William V Callery-Nov 6, 2025; Fr. Paul Ruge-Jun 17, 2026.

**Deacons:** Deacon Tony McDonald-Dec 7, 2025; Deacon James Hunt-Mar 25, 2026; Deacon Arlen Blessum-Aug 27, 2026.

**Religious:** Sr. Leonida Schmidt, OSF-Oct 21, 2025; Sr. Maris Stella Korb, PBVM-Feb 16, 2026; Sr. Maura DeCrans, PBVM-Feb 25, 2026; Sr. Andrea Arendt, PBVM-Apr 4, 2026; Sr. Hildegarde Keller, OSF-Jul 29, 2026; Sr. Gertrude Massine, PBVM-Aug 10, 2026; Sr. Peggy Byrne, PBVM-Aug 30, 2026.

**ALCIDE -** St. Anthony's Church: Faye G Amyotte-Oct 28, 2025; Brian Birkland-Dec 2, 2025; Ella M LaRocque-Dec 3, 2025; Lorrie DeCoteau-Jan 10, 2026; Eli J Davis, Jr.-Feb 7, 2026; Darrel Thomas-Feb 24, 2026; Leroy T Cote-Mar 2, 2026; Anthony Azure-May 11, 2026; Ernest F Houle-May 19, 2026; Kelly S Davis-May 25, 2026; Wayne L Jeannotte-Jul 25, 2026; Robert J Keplin-Aug 14, 2026; Lynn P LaRocque-Aug 25, 2026; Brent A Gladue-Sep 22, 2026; Charles G McLeod-Sep 25, 2026.

**ANAMOOSE -** St. Francis Xavier's Church: Bradley Lageson-Apr 19, 2026; Donald Weninger-Jul 9, 2026.

**BALTA -** Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church: Richard M Jundt-Oct 24, 2025; Reginia Eisenzimmer-Nov 12, 2025.

**BELCOURT -** St. Ann's Church: Dom Vann-Oct 9, 2025; Richard Rivard-Nov 13, 2025; Riel X Allery-Nov 17, 2025; Richard Baker-Nov 17, 2025; Cornelius "Corn" Grant-Nov 28, 2025; Sheila Desjarlais-Nov 30, 2025; Ella Mae LaRocque-Dec 3, 2025; Earl DeCoteau, Sr.-Dec 22, 2025; Jeanne Charbonneau-Dec 27, 2025; Ernest Wallette-Jan 27, 2026; Steven L DeCoteau-Feb 1, 2026; Cornel J Bercier-Feb 24, 2026; Rodney Charette-Feb 28, 2026; Geraldine Strietzel-Mar 5, 2026; Jeffory "Bart" A Morin-Mar 20, 2026; Patricia St. Germaine-Mar 30, 2026; Brent Bercier-Apr 1, 2026; Gary J Peltier-Apr 1, 2026; Sharon A Parisien-Apr 2, 2026; Delia Jerome-Apr 7, 2026; Francis "Crow" Charette-Apr 19, 2026; Clinton Brunelle-Apr 27, 2026; Peggy Olson-May 6, 2026; Colette Poitra-May 7, 2026; Francis Nelson-May 9, 2026; Shirley A Gourneau-May 17, 2026; Jayton L Slater-May 25, 2026; Janice Morin-Jun 1, 2026; Arden Enno-Jun 5, 2026; Daryl Gourneau-Jun 6, 2026; Rachel Wallette-Jun 5, 2026; Michelle L Keplin-Jun 25, 2026; Sharon Ballow-Aug 17, 2026; Gary Peltier, Jr.-Sep 1, 2026.

**BELCOURT -** St. Benedict's Church: Jeanette Nadean-Feb 10, 2026; Terry Allery-Jul 1, 2026.

**BISBEE -** Holy Rosary Church: Harvey Held-Jun 28, 2026.

**BOTTINEAU -** St. Mark's Church: Marlys L Richard-Jan 5, 2026; Gary Raymo-Jan 18, 2026; Gary Wysocki-Feb 19, 2026; Eileen M Bode-May 25, 2026; Yong Ja Ja Gerlach-Jul 15, 2026.

**BUFFALO -** St. Thomas Church: Janice M Diemert-Nov 3, 2025; Carlotta Beilke-Jan 30, 2026; Barbara J Buhr-Feb 21, 2026.

**CANDO -** Sacred Heart Church: Gladys E Freund-Dec 14, 2025; Edith L Dix-Jan 19, 2026; Marjorie S Beck-Jul 4, 2026.



Three crosses at Calvary Cemetery in Wahpeton. (Paul Braun / *New Earth*)

**CARRINGTON -** Sacred Heart Church: Donald Carr-Nov 21, 2025; John Ihringer-Nov 24, 2025; Gary Boyer-Mar 2, 2026; Jacqueline "Jackie" Simons-Mar 10, 2026; Faith Isabel Eli-May 11, 2026; Gemma Bachmeier-Aug 14, 2026; James Mahutga-Aug 25, 2026.

**CASSELTON -** St. Leo's Church: Michael Eberhardt-Oct 26, 2025; Keith O Marschke-Nov 28, 2025; Lucille Sherman-Jan 9, 2026; Robert "Rob" Punton-Mar 6, 2026; DeLilah A Volk-Mar 19, 2026; Ralph L Nelson-Apr 15, 2026; Marge A Mergner-Jun 9, 2026; Barbara A Nelson-Jun 28, 2026.

**COOPERSTOWN -** St. George's Church: Deborah Fritel-Dec 20, 2025; Evelyn Chaput-Mar 8, 2026; Timothy White-Apr 8, 2026; Delenore D Chaput-May 30, 2026.

**CROW HILL -** St. Jerome's Church: Stephanie "ChiChi" Ramon-Mar 2, 2026; Duane L. Littlewind-Jul 22, 2026.

**DEVILS LAKE -** St. Joseph's Church: Robert J Mertens-Oct 3, 2025; Penny R Keck-Oct 5, 2025; Margaret F DeVoogdt-Oct 9, 2025; Dolores I Schwab-Oct 18, 2025; SueAnn Locker-Oct 21, 2025; Mary A Connor-Oct 25, 2025; Elsie J Shereck-Oct 31, 2025; Kevin D Kraft-Nov 3, 2025; Ann M Breckheimer-Nov 11, 2025; Raymond "Ray" Stein-Nov 13, 2025; Stephen A Platz-Nov 24, 2025; Carol J Weed-Dec 2, 2025; Karen L Beauchamp-Dec 23, 2025; Phyllis A Eback-Dec 24, 2025; Mark A Schwab-Jan 30, 2026; Cynthia T LaMorte-Feb 23, 2026; Donna M Dyer-Feb 24, 2026; Lena M Keck-Mar 3, 2026; James "Jim" H Schuler-Mar 4, 2026; Annette M Hofstad-Mar 13, 2026; Marie L Bryant-Mar 15, 2026; Kathryn A Olson-Mar 20, 2026; Elizabeth R McGarvey-Mar 27, 2026; Kaiden Quejadas-Apr 19, 2026; Donna M Schell-Apr 29, 2026; Raymond L Nelson-May 7, 2026; William A Haman-May 10, 2026; Lisa M Dosch-May 15, 2026; Wade M Reierson-Jun 3, 2026; Rose Kraft-Jun 6, 2026; Richard L Legacie, Jr.-Jun 14, 2026; Darcy K Olson, Sr.-Jun 20, 2026; Colleen M Eresman-Jun 26, 2026; Mary Ann MacDonald-Aug 22, 2026; John Vasichek-Aug 27, 2026; River K Schlosser-Sep 1, 2026; Joni M Flaten-Sep 20, 2026.

**DICKEY -** Assumption Church: Tracy A Schmoker-Feb 21, 2026; Duane G Stroh-Jul 18, 2026.

**DRAKE -** St. Margaret Mary's Church: Magdalena "Maggie" Duchsherer-Jan 29, 2026.

**DRAYTON -** St. Edward's Church: Linda Staskivige-Dec 7, 2025; Robert Lasch-Apr 18, 2026; Charles Herseth-Aug 22, 2026.

**DUNSEITH -** St. Michael's Church: Louis Baker-Nov 16, 2025; Christina Morin-Nov 16, 2025; Randy S Poitra-Dec 21, 2025; Kevin Beston-Jan 16, 2026; Heather DeCoteau-Jan 24, 2026; Ramsey Morin-Jan 29, 2026; Mark Nadeau-Feb 24, 2026; Jesse Poitra-Mar 6, 2026; Linda Krause-Mar 7, 2026; Betty J Belgarde-Mar 7, 2026; Rose LaFromboise-Mar 9, 2026; Stanley J Peltier-Mar 12, 2026; Sherri Gladue-Apr 29, 2026; Geraldine T Azure-May 5, 2026; Brandi L Myers-May 7, 2026; Jackie A LaRocque-May 24, 2026; Lori Nadeau-May 26, 2026; David W St. Claire-May 30, 2026; Janice Morin-Jun 1, 2026; David M LaRocque III-Jul 13, 2026; Vincent St. Claire-Jul 18, 2026; Gloria Beste-Jul 27, 2026; Claudette M McLeod-Aug 11, 2026; Christopher T LaRocque-Aug 24, 2026; Bernice Poitra-Sep 26, 2026; Robin Laducer-Sep 28, 2026.

**EDGELEY -** Transfiguration Church: Carmelita Senger-Nov 26, 2025; Kathern Riedlinger-Nov 28, 2025; Joseph Jangula-Feb 22, 2026; Craig Dallmann-Apr 26, 2026; Mark Lagodinski-Jun 15, 2026; Vivian Biegler-Aug 23, 2026.

**ENDERLIN -** St. Patrick's Church: Elmer G Opatz-Nov 15, 2025; Mary L Lemna-Mar 24, 2026; Marthanna M Gilbert-Apr 7, 2026; Robert Phaff-Aug 16, 2026.

**ESMOND -** St. Boniface Church: Teresa E Lauinger-Nov 24, 2025; Jarlath "Jerry" M Leier-Feb 14, 2026; Alice J Danduran-Mar 24, 2026; Lorraine M Brewer-May 16, 2026; Craig S Arnold-Jun 14, 2026; Alice R Wack-Jul 24, 2026; Leon J Arnold-Sep 16, 2026.

**FAIRMOUNT -** St. Anthony's Church: Doris Matejcek-Dec 7, 2025.

**FARGO -** Sts. Anne and Joachim Church: Patricia M Adams-Oct 4, 2025; Gretchen Noah-Dec 24, 2025; Angeline Kiefer-Mar 1, 2026; Rose C Bjordahl-May 1, 2026; Phyllis Drake-May 8, 2026; Wilbert J Kautzman-May 29, 2026; Jean Maynard-Jun 16, 2026; Arlene Cegla-Jun 17, 2026; Remi Beauchamp-Jul 9, 2026; Alphonse "Bob" Spooner-Sep 16, 2026; Phyllis Hamilton-Sep 22, 2026.

**FARGO -** St. Anthony's Church: Patricia Beck-Oct 1, 2025; Genevieve Tougas-Oct 4, 2025; Marian Chepulis-Oct 9, 2025; Marlys Hareland-Oct 11, 2025; Eugene Weigel-Oct 27, 2025; Richard J Marback-Nov 22, 2025; Margaret Hartze-Dec 2, 2025; Anatasia Krumm-Dec 31, 2025; Yvonne Moore-Jan 4, 2026; Betty L Duval-Jan 7, 2026; Theodore "Bob" Forstner-Jan 18, 2026; Lorraine Martin-Jan 21, 2026; Charles "Chuck" J Noesen-Feb 14, 2026; Lois Drenth-Feb 18, 2026; Tyler J Ward-Feb 24, 2026; Roger F Olson-Mar 8, 2026; Theresa A Huber-Mar 13, 2026; Cathy Gruber-Mar 14, 2026; Gloria A Blotsky-Mar 17, 2026; Paul Laliberte-Mar 18, 2026; Julia Sorlien-Apr 1, 2026; Gary A Riedman-May 12, 2026; Ronald D Norling III-May 20, 2026; Thomas L Bird-May 27, 2026; LeeRoy C Vetsch-May 28, 2026; Van Gioi Nguyen-Jun 16, 2026; Rosemary Schneider-Jun 17, 2026; Robert "Chuck" Solly-Jun 25, 2026; Lillina Kraft-Jun 26, 2026; Raymond Schneider-Jul 9, 2026; Anna T Ngo-Jul 17, 2026; Nancy DeCock-Aug 11, 2026; Mary L Riveland-Aug 13, 2026; Irvin D Rustad-Sep 6, 2026; Catherine Buettner-Sep 8, 2026.

**FARGO -** Holy Spirit Church: Arden Feser-Oct 20, 2025; Rudolph T Lendardt-Dec 3, 2025; Angeline Ding-Dec 4, 2025; Marion Peterson-Dec 15, 2025; Lawrence V Fischer-Dec 23, 2025; Willard Hebert-Dec 29, 2025; Mary J Weiler-Jan 9, 2026; Gerald Worrel-Jan 21, 2026; Diane Bush-Jan 21, 2026; Mary Brady-Feb 4, 2026; Shirley Rinde-Feb 9, 2026; Paulette Osborne-Mar 13, 2026; Kathleen Doyle-Apr 21, 2026; Tom Fetch-Apr 26, 2026; Daniel Krein-May 21, 2026; Edwin Cooke-Jun 29, 2026; Earl Obermiller-Jul 12, 2026; Robert Korum-Jul 16, 2026; James Hebert-Jul 25, 2026; Karen Amundson-Aug 4, 2026; Fred LaVenuta-Aug 25, 2026; Karla Wohlers-Sep 19, 2026; Edward Schmitz-Sep 30, 2026.

**FARGO -** Cathedral of St. Mary: Lois Riedman-Oct 19, 2025; David C Lacher-Dec 29, 2025; Jerry Grover-Jan 16, 2026; Ronald Tellinghusen-Feb 21, 2026; Robert Krag-Apr 6, 2026; James B Blake-Apr 20, 2026; Mary Rita Goering-Apr 24, 2026; Cheryl J Wiebe-Jun 23, 2026; Charles H Thielman-Sep 10, 2026.

**FARGO -** Nativity Church: Elizabeth "Betty" Bossart-Oct 15, 2025; Frederick Fritel-Oct 16, 2025; Rose Booke-Oct 23, 2025; Anna "Ann" Lucy-Oct 23, 2025; James Gress-Oct 29, 2025; Beverly Glessner-Nov 23, 2025; Theresa "Terri" Dahl-Jan 19, 2026; Jean Kelso-Jan 19, 2026; Charles Sjostrom-Apr 12, 2026; Naomi West-Apr 16, 2026; Elmer Bruns-Apr 23, 2026; Mason Mehring-Apr 24, 2026; Lyle Bladow-May 7, 2026; Kip Berentson-Jun 14, 2026; Bonnie Wold-Jul 6, 2026; John Kelley-Jul 10, 2026; Mary Akers-Jul 18, 2026; Loretta Schumacher-Aug 11, 2026; Janet K Feist-Aug 31, 2026; Thomas "Tom" Sauvageau-Aug 31, 2026; Karal Baspaly-Sep 6, 2026; Vicki Richard-Sep 21, 2026.

**FESSENDEN -** St. Augustine's Church: Roxanne M Roller-Jan 6, 2026; Diane Duncan-Feb, 2026.

**FINGAL -** Holy Trinity Church: Maridenis Carpenter-Dec 20, 2025; David J Gruman-Jan 21, 2026; Edmund R LaRoque-Jun 6, 2026; Cecilia M Wadeson-Sep 6, 2026.



**A statue of an angel holding a cross at Calvary Cemetery in Hankinson. (Paul Braun/*New Earth*)**

**FORMAN -** St. Mary's Church: RuthAnn Kudelka-Apr 15, 2026.

**FORT TOTTEN -** Seven Dolors Mission: Barbara J Walking Eagle-Oct 31, 2025; Anna M Two Hearts-Jan 22, 2026; Robert T Cavanaugh, Sr.-Feb 24, 2026; Joseph J Sherman-Apr 12, 2026; Rafael Barragan-Apr 24, 2026; Priscilla Bear-Apr 29, 2026; Eva M Peltier-Dauphinais-Jun 23, 2026; Denver L Littlewind-Jul 20, 2026; Devin R Dunn-Jul 22, 2026; Bernon Spottedbird, Jr.-Aug 25, 2026; Patrick J Cavanaugh-Sep 6, 2026; Ivan Lovejoy, Sr.-Sep 11, 2026; Meredith Sherman-Sep 21, 2026.

**GRAND FORKS -** Holy Family Church: Francis L Kowalski-Nov 17, 2025; Mary Ann McKenna-Nov 20, 2025; Mark E Misialek-Dec 13, 2025; Ellen M Simon-Dec 21, 2025; Francis G Joyce-Dec 31, 2025; LaVerne Rygg-Jan 8, 2026; Veronica J Thoreson-Jan 11, 2026; Rosalie A Schumacher-Jan 18, 2026; David A Godfread-Jan 19, 2026; Jacqueline M Pachl-Feb 3, 2026; Lois Delmore-Mar 18, 2026; Loren J Kadlec-Apr 3, 2026; Darlyne A Fortin-Apr 12, 2026; Elaine J McDonald-Apr 24, 2026; Jill M Devos-Apr 29, 2026; Mary C Compton-May 3, 2026; Mona C Korsmoe-May 5, 2026; Constance A Rumreich-May 29, 2026; Theresa A Kalbrener-Jun 4, 2026; Claudia P Raymond-Jun 20, 2026; Elizabeth "Betty" J Gerszewski-Jun 25, 2026; Frank Miller-Jul 7, 2026; Larry O Belker-Jul 20, 2026; Lester F Nienas-Jul 25, 2026; Julian A Slominski-Aug 5, 2026; Lyle Lange-Aug 9, 2026; Walter M Stroh-Aug 26, 2026; Judith C Belker-Sep 23, 2026; Barbara E Berentson-Sep 24, 2026.

**GRAND FORKS -** St. Michael's Church: Ruth A Jenson-Oct 12, 2025; John "Jack" Buchner-Oct 28, 2025; Jerome "Jerry" Berman-Oct 30, 2025; Alfred P Langer-Nov 16, 2025; Evelyn A Boushee-Nov 17, 2025; Genevieve "Gen" A Brant-Nov 22, 2025; Maria Dondoneau-Nov 23, 2025; Ann Buckley-Nov 30, 2025; Alice Wosick-Dec 2, 2025; George A Wysocki-Dec 12, 2025; Francis A Feist-Dec 21, 2025; Delories A Deitz-Dec 25, 2025; Patricia "Pat" A Swangler-Dec 29, 2025; Grace M Bergman-Dec 30, 2025; Barbara A Langer-Jan 5, 2026; James Dohman-Jan 24, 2026; Kevin Fee-Feb 6, 2026; Wren Davidson-Feb 9, 2026; Theresa M Adams-Feb 16, 2026; Ronald B Delorme, Jr.-Feb 24, 2026; Jesse J Chalich-Mar 11, 2026; Michael "Mike" W Benson-Mar 28, 2026; Rosemary Steffen-Apr 7, 2026; Keith W Myers-Apr 27, 2026; Ernest "Ernie" Osowski-May 5, 2026; Wayne "Chris" Olson-May 12, 2026; Elizabeth J McGurran-May 19, 2026; Leonard Kathman-May 27, 2026; JoAnn M Brown-Jun 8, 2026; Carl D Wandrie-Jun 20, 2026; David E McGurran-Jun 21, 2026; Mary Anne "Annie" Jordan-Jun 27, 2026; Hank Heffern-Jul 1, 2026; Richard J Simon, Jr.-Jul 4, 2026; Andrew R Venjohn-Jul 5, 2026; Helen E Tadjalli-Jul 12, 2026; JoAnne J Woinarowicz-Jul 19, 2026; Mary G Deraney-Jul 23, 2026; Elaine Maszk-Jul 26, 2026; Ovide H Marcotte-Jul 27, 2026; Richard J Jerombeck-Jul 27, 2026; Marguerite J Jordan-Sep 18, 2026.

**GRAND FORKS -** St. Mary's Church: James "Jim" A Quandt-Nov 16, 2025; George "Judd" McKinnon-Dec 2, 2025; Lois L Stoltman-Jan 13, 2026; Haley B Dionne-Mar 20, 2026; Therese M Linnertz-Apr 1, 2026; Jane M Schjeldahl-Apr 19, 2026; Chester J Rose-May 8, 2026; Ramie A Kowalski-May 17, 2026; Maria A Herda-Jun 26, 2026; Ronald M Terrian-Jul 29, 2026; David L Lewandowski-Aug 6, 2026; Edward J Rerick-Sep 4, 2026; Helen J Osowski-Sep 15, 2026.



**A Virgin Mary statue at St. Anthony's Cemetery in Mooreton. (Paul Braun/*New Earth*)**

**GRAFTON -** St. John's Church: Delores Burianek-Oct 8, 2025; Bernadette M Greenagel-Oct 28, 2025; Florence R French-Oct 28, 2025; Harriet E Dosmann-Nov 1, 2025; Donald Burns-Nov 21, 2025; Flora T Pilon-Dec 4, 2025; Angela R Carriere-Dec 5, 2025; Maxine E Wilkes-Dec 7, 2025; Dorothy Koester-Dec 28, 2025; Monica C Rudnik-Jan 24, 2026; Jessica Longtine-Feb 7, 2026; Eugenia R Dvorak-Feb 27, 2026; Marcel R Sabourin-Mar 6, 2026; Henry A Korczak-Mar 25, 2026; Richard P LaBerge-Mar 31, 2026; Leona Grzadzielewski-Apr 9, 2026; Rita Staffne-Apr 30, 2026; Mary Collette-May 17, 2026; Deanna R Azure-May 29, 2026; Maxine Schanilec-Jul 1, 2026; Quirino Garza-Jul 1, 2026; George H Gill-Aug 5, 2026; Edward Boura-Aug 8, 2026; Irma Torres-Aug 13, 2026; Clairce Dusek-Sep 22, 2026.

**GWINNER -** St. Vincent Church: Christopher S Olson-Sep 26, 2026.

**HANKINSON -** St. Philip's Church: Carolyn Kassa-Nov 25, 2025; Agatha Herding-Mar 4, 2026; Kathy A Schiltz-Jul 25, 2026; Mary T Stein-Aug 2, 2026.

**HARVEY -** St. Cecilia's Church: Stephen Ripplinger-Nov 8, 2025; Wesley Feickert-Dec 3, 2025; Glenn Ihli-Feb 18, 2026; Daniel Hager-Mar 7, 2026; Mildred Heilman-Apr 12, 2026; Raymond Wentz-May 11, 2026; Linda Belgarde-Aug 8, 2026.

**HILLSBORO -** St. Rose Church: Luverne Vettel-Oct 4, 2025; Nicholas Boeddeker-Dec 13, 2025; Russell Waters-Jan 6, 2026; Thomas Salzwedel-Jan 16, 2026; Yvonne Anderson-Apr 7, 2026; Susan Kartes-Apr 30, 2026; Delmer Dobler-Jun 29, 2026; Mary Ann Boeddeker-Jul 1, 2026.

**HOPE -** St. Agatha's Church: Rick D Schmitz-Oct 30, 2025; Larry R Kimble-Jun 18, 2026.

**HORACE -** St. Benedict's Church: Robert Klein-Feb 9, 2026; Dorothy C Duchschere-Mar 3, 2026; Barbara Sauvageau-Apr 29, 2026; Michael B Plugrath, Jr.-Jun 20, 2026; Mitchell "Mitch" Irmen-Jun 20, 2026; John F Muckenhirn-Sep 24, 2026.

**JAMESTOWN -** St. James Basilica: Jeannette B Redlin-Dec 3, 2025; Anton Schweitzer-Dec 4, 2025; Patricia M Nordine-Dec 13, 2025; Richard Hamkens-Dec 22, 2025; Ana Julia Ortegon-Dec 25, 2025; Jennifer Kylmanen-Dec 25, 2025; Cecilia Newton-Jan 7, 2026; Lorraine Greeenwood-Jan 12, 2026; Martha Jeske-Jan 14, 2026; Jake Stiles-Jan 21, 2026; Norman C Vandal-Jan 23, 2026; Doris Nogosek-Mar 3, 2026; Alliana Villaneuva-Mar 8, 2026; William Kennedy-Mar 12, 2026; Yvonne Szarkowski-Mar 21, 2026; Frank Samek-Apr 11, 2026; Cameron Petrek-Apr 20, 2026; Diane Fischer-May 6, 2026; Patrick Bergman-May 12, 2026; Elaine Jaskowski-May 13, 2026; Caroline Nordtvedt-May 18, 2026; Brent Burkett-Jun 10, 2026; Donn Yatakis-Aug 1, 2026; Carol Splonskowski-Aug 8, 2026; Tamara Votava-Aug 8, 2026;

Angelica Briones-Aug 8, 2026; Joann L Graham-Sep 15, 2026; Helen Johnson-Sep 27, 2026.

**JESSIE -** St. Lawrence Church: Lisa Puhr-Nov 11, 2025.

**KARLSRUHE -** Sts. Peter and Paul's Church: Angeline Keller-Dec 17, 2025; Carey L Ziegler-Sep 22, 2026.

**KENSAL -** St. John's Church: Darwin Hoggarth-Jul 30, 2026.

**KINDRED -** St. Maurice Church: Yoselin Itzel-Apr 22, 2026; Joseph Berg-Jun 10, 2026.

**LAKOTA -** St. Mary's Church: Raymond P Schuh-Nov 17, 2025; Muriel E Trappen-Nov 22, 2025; Louis J Hamel-Feb 17, 2026; Joseph R Trappen-Mar 28, 2026; Barbara A Wall-Jul 26, 2026; Patricia Schuh-Sep 6, 2026.

**LAMOURE -** Holy Rosary Church: James "Jim" Bitz-Dec 14, 2025; Raymond Heiser-Dec 26, 2025; Constance "Connie" Bitz-Jan 2, 2026; Mary P Nivens-May 18, 2026; Patrick L Thomas-Jul 18, 2026; Elizabeth "Betty" Pratt-Aug 22, 2026; Carolyn Berry-Sep 9, 2026.

**LANGDON -** St. Alphonsus Church: Sandy Stevens-Oct 6, 2025; Jean Westphal-Jan 1, 2026; Beverly Gellner-Feb 3, 2026; Theodore Mikkelsen-Feb 7, 2026; Marilyn Borho-Mar 5, 2026; Lillian Meling-May 8, 2026; Charles Bata-Jun 21, 2026; Joan Hiltner-Aug 17, 2026; Richard Hamann-Aug 27, 2026; Geraldine Schneider-Sep 6, 2026; Marjorie Nowatzki-Sep 29, 2026.

**LARIMORE -** St. Stephen's Church: James E Lee-Nov 30, 2025; Marjorie "Marge" Gillespie-Apr 11, 2026; Alicia Juarez-Aug 1, 2026; Marianne L Snyder-Aug 14, 2026; Lonnie Guenthner-Sep 24, 2026.

**LEEDS -** St. Vincent de Paul Church: Ronald A Brossart-Jul 3, 2026.

**LIDGERWOOD -** St. Boniface Church: Richard A Kane-Nov 10, 2025; John A Saunders-Nov 16, 2025; John Ahrens-Mar 4, 2026; Thomas Mattson-Mar 17, 2026.

**LISBON -** St. Aloysius Church: Lynne Puhr-Oct 28, 2025; Sylvia Holmstrom-Jan 3, 2026; Matthew F Lyons-Jan 20, 2026; Kay Zirnhelt-May 20, 2026.

**MADDOCK -** St. William's Church: Gary L Stadum-Feb 22, 2026; Iris I Simonson-Apr 22, 2026.

**MCCLUSKY -** Holy Family Church: Vonnie Erdmann-Jul 1, 2026.

**MEDINA -** St. Mary's Church: Jacqueline "Jackie" Knetter-May 16, 2026.

**MCHENRY -** Sts. Peter and Paul's Church: Judith Bartlett-Jul 6, 2026.

**MICHIGAN -** St. Lawrence's Church: Norma M Vasichek-Mar 9, 2026; Patrick C Riely-May 6, 2026.

**MILNOR -** St. Arnold's Church: Mary A Olson-Sep 6, 2026.

**MINTO -** Sacred Heart Church: Brenda Staniszewski-Oct 9, 2025; Georgene Robinson-Oct 20, 2025; Arlene Lykken-Nov 5, 2025; Michael Lunski-Nov 23, 2025; Deborah Slominski-Dec 12, 2025; Sharon Sullivan-Dec 23, 2025; James "Jim" Costello-Jan 16, 2026; Frank Vavrosky-Jan 19, 2026; Doris M Altendorf-Feb 24, 2026; Richard "Rick" Longowski-Apr 16, 2026; Shawn Bayner-Jun 22, 2026; Edmund Jiskra-Jul 14, 2026; Karla Harstad-Jul 16, 2026; Brendan "BJ" Brazil-Aug 13, 2026; Anna Mae Gerszewski-Aug 27, 2026; Henry Zolondek-Sep 6, 2026.

**MUNICH -** St. Mary's Church: Donna Laturnus-May 19, 2026.

**NAPOLEON -** St. Philip's Church: Ida Doll-Dec 26, 2025; James F Glatt-Dec 27, 2025; Margaret Fettig-Feb 12, 2026; Donna M Feist-Feb 23, 2026; Delano Mann-Mar 16, 2026; Gerald L Regner-Jul 9, 2026; Charlotte "Cheri" Glatt-Aug 13, 2026; Martin J Vetter-Sep 1, 2026; Anton Doll-Sep 3, 2026; Anna Nolz-Sep 11, 2026; Alvin "Al" Weigel-Sep 13, 2026.

**NEW ROCKFORD -** St. John's Church: Joe Schmatlz-Nov 29, 2025; Patricia Gathman-Apr 14, 2026; Bradley J Georgeson-Jul 18, 2026; Quentin Lange-Aug 3, 2026.

**NORTONVILLE -** Holy Spirit Church: Dana Braunberger-Sep 22, 2026.

**OAKES -** St. Charles Church: Larry Heier-Oct 30, 2025; Johanna Kvigne-Dec 25, 2025; Raymond Heiser-Dec 26, 2025; Tim Forward-Mar 4, 2026; Alysha Novak-Mar 17, 2026; Joan Buske-Mar 21, 2026; Marjorie Forward-Jun 20, 2026; Helen Andrus-Jun 23, 2026; Lauri Kelsen-Jul 17, 2026; Doris Heiser-Sep 16, 2026.

**OAKWOOD -** Sacred Heart Church: Guy E DeMers-Aug 18, 2026.

**PARK RIVER -** St. Mary's Church: Mary K Heggen-Oct 26, 2025; David A McLean-Jan 29, 2026; Patricia L Sweeney-Apr 12, 2026; Donald L Pitcher-May 15, 2026; David J Mongeon-Jun 28, 2026; Jack W Thompson-Aug 11, 2026; Marvin "Terry" McBain-Aug 30, 2026.

**PEMBINA -** Assumption Church: Leo Holm-Sep 28, 2026.

**ROLLA -** St. Joachim's Church: Ronald G MacKinnon-Nov 17, 2025; Darwin Hamley-Jan 18, 2026; Janet A Bonn-Feb 5, 2026; William "Bill" E Bucher-Feb 24, 2026; Ivan Hamley-Mar 1, 2026; Yvonne M Longie-Apr 4, 2026; Janis R Neameyer-Apr 15, 2026; Ronald J Unger-Jul 13, 2026; Leonide "Lee" A Crosby-Aug 7, 2026.

**RUGBY -** St. Therese Church: Elaine G Kraft-Oct 14, 2025; Helen Kremer-Nov 24, 2025; Joseph Fritel-Nov 28, 2025; Jerome Voeller-Dec 30, 2025; Katherine Haman-Dec 31, 2025; Kira Lemar-Jan 1, 2026; Larry Schumacker-Jan 6, 2026; Joanne Geisinger-Feb 13, 2026; Beatrice Mattern-Feb 23, 2026; Loretta Heilman-Mar 2, 2026; Barbara Kuntz-Mar 23, 2026; Denise Lagasse-Mar 25, 2026; Ilene Mattern-Apr 30, 2026; Anna M Selensky-May 3, 2026; Arden Miller-May 7, 2026; Bernice Kirchofner-May 12, 2026; Jon Stork-May 28, 2026; Daniel Bischoff-Jul 2, 2026; Christine Axtmann-Jul 14, 2026; John Voeller-Jul 21, 2026.

**SANBORN -** Sacred Heart Church: Robert Miller-Oct 26, 2025; Lillian Moug-Feb 3, 2026; Lawrence Christensen-Apr 1, 2026.

**SELZ -** St. Anthony's Church: Lenora C Thomas-Nov 19, 2025; Anton "Tony" Volk-Mar 20, 2026; Gladys Hager-Jun 14, 2026.

**SHELDON -** Our Lady of the Scapular Church: Andrew P Bartholomay-Feb 21, 2026.

**ST. JOHN -** St. John's Church: Aloysius Nadeau-Jan 23, 2026; Ramona M LaFountain-Jan 24, 2026; Robert Monette-Feb 4, 2026; Mary S Falcon-Feb 20, 2026; Constance Baker-Apr 19, 2026; Leonard Gustafson-Apr 20, 2026; Leroy Jeannotte-May 3, 2026; Faylynn Ferris-Aug 9, 2026; Tanner E Langan-Aug 9, 2026;

Michael DeMers-Aug 10, 2026; Robert Desjarlais-Aug 23, 2026.

**ST. MICHAEL -** St. Michael's Church: **W**arren Green-Oct 13, 2025; Allen Alberts II-Oct 17, 2025; Tammy Anderson-Lightening-Oct 24, 2025; Barbara Walking Eagle-Oct 30, 2025; Danica T White-Nov 1, 2025; Manny Langstaff-Nov 12, 2025; Debra L Jackson-Nov 13, 2025; Berkley B Morin-Nov 17, 2025; Fallon G Littleghost-Nov 17, 2025; Richard DuBois-Dec 1, 2025; Dayven D Alberts-Dec 7, 2025; Julianne Jetty-King-Dec 8, 2025; Viola Delorme-Dec 27, 2025; Stacy Azure-Greene-Dec 26, 2025; Michael F Bellisle-Jan 6, 2026; Carlene Walking Eagle-Peltier-Jan 8, 2026; Robert W Ironhawk, Sr.-Jan 11, 2026; Merlyn N Knutson III-Jan 24, 2026; Lillie O Owlboy-Jan 29, 2026; Terrance L Herman, Sr.-Feb 6, 2026; LaVerne M Bear-Feb 9, 2026; Brandon S Black-Feb 13, 2026; Willis W Herald-Feb 19, 2026; Robert W Richotte, Sr.-Feb 26, 2026; Londa M Keo-Feb 28, 2026; Latasha L Thompson-Mar 5, 2026; Baby Stevenson-Mar 5, 2026; Ella J Brown-Mar 6, 2026; Clarence F Morin, Sr.-Jun 16, 2026; Curtis D Jones-Jun 25, 2026; Jacqueline J Yankton-Jun 28, 2026; Deborah J Adams-Jun 29, 2026; Brightyn H Driver-Jun 29, 2026; Lois J Bull Bear-Chaske-Jul 1, 2026; Hazlen A Delorme-Jul 8, 2026; Lakin Cowboy Delorme-Jul 8, 2026; Jeffrey A DeCoteau-Jul 20, 2026; Nevada D Lee Rue-Jul 23, 2026; Bonita F Littleghost-Aug 3, 2026; Lindsey N Lawrence-Schultz-Aug 9, 2026; Cynthia M Alberts-Aug 28, 2026; Geneva M Feather-Sep 2, 2026.

**SYKESTON -** St. Elizabeth's Church: Todd P Hafner-Oct 3, 2025.

**TAPPEN -** St. Paul's Church: Jason A Schmidt-Aug 8, 2026.

**THOMPSON -** St. Jude's Church: Margaret Szepelak-May 29, 2026.

**TOLNA -** St. Joseph's Church: Vance E Halvorson-Jul 13, 2026.

**TOWNER -** St. Cecilia's Church: Joseph "Joe" Haman-Oct 12, 2025; Rosemary Bailey-Nov 3, 2025; Donald Blake-Nov 6, 2025; Beatrice Schmaltz-Mar 15, 2026.

**WISHEK** – St. Patrick's Church: Francis M Schaffer-Dec 22, 2025; Michael J Hulm-Jan 7, 2026; Donald "Donnie" Welk-Jul 19, 2026.

**VALLEY** CITY - St. Catherine's Church: Mavis M Lendorf-Oct 20, 2025; Robert "Bob" McAllister-Nov 15, 2025; William "Bill" C Trader-Nov 17, 2025; DuWayne Sauer-Nov 28, 2025; Donna Peterson-Dec 4, 2025; James C O'Brien-Feb 5, 2026; Rita Clancy-Mar 3, 2026; Ralph E Metcalf-Mar 21, 2026; Virginia A Vincent-Mar 27, 2026; Sharon Vanorny-Apr 26, 2026; LeRoy Neubauer-May 19, 2026; Darlene A Noecker-Jul 7, 2026.

**VELVA -** St. Cecilia's Church: Troy Selzler-Dec 26, 2025; John L Merck-Apr 27, 2026; Elizabeth Grad-Jun 11, 2026.

**VESELEYVILLE -** St. Luke's Church: Mary E Suda-Oct 23, 2025; Mark J Wasylow-Nov 26, 2025; Mark A Suda-Sep 10, 2026.

**WAHPETON -** St. John's Church: Edward Shorma-Oct 19, 2025; Myrtle B Gregor-Nov 11, 2025; Dudley J Gordon-Dec 3, 2025; Connie Hutton-Dec 7, 2025; Orville Moran-Jan 17, 2026; Delores Berg-Feb 26, 2026; Bonnie Kretchman-Mar 2, 2026; Gerald C Quam-Mar 12, 2026; Dan Onchuck-Mar 27, 2026; Gerald D Davis-Mar 30, 2026; Therese Gast-Apr 16, 2026; Lynnae Loeks-Apr 29, 2026; Bertha Baumer-May 14, 2026; Joan Bauch-Jun 15, 2026; James Arnhalt-Jul 8, 2026; Curtis Haberman-Jul 31, 2026; David Raftevold-Sep 29, 2026.

**WALHALLA -** St. Boniface Church: Marc R Benoit-Oct 3, 2025; Lorraine M Storey-Nov 2, 2025; Amy L Phillips-Nov 23, 2025; John D. Reimer-Nov 29, 2025; Edward Stremick-Dec 13, 2025; Larry Ladouceur-Mar 11, 2026; Keith F Fitzsimonds-Apr 20, 2026; Jean A Rose-May 2, 2026.

**WARSAW -** St. Stanislaus Church: Louis "Billy" Zola-Dec 31, 2025; Evelyn Slominski-Jan 2, 2026; James "Jimmie" Lizakowski-Mar 19, 2026; Gail Knutson-Mar 25, 2026; Lydia Plutowski-Aug 30, 2026.

**WEST FARGO -** Blessed Sacrament Church: Nic Jalbert-Feb 5, 2026; Wesley "Wes" Weeding-Mar 20, 2026; Shirley Reiter-May 4, 2026; Madonna DesRoches-Jun 5, 2026; Kenneth Klemisch-Jun 20, 2026; Hattie Witt-Aug 21, 2026; Frank Metzger-Sep 18, 2026; Alice Cumber-Sep 18, 2026; Collette Folstad-Sep 20, 2026; Patricia Muldoon-Sep 28, 2026.

**WEST FARGO -** Holy Cross Church: Charles Drake-Oct 16, 2025; Wallace J Odegaard-Nov 6, 2025; Raymond Heick-Nov 29, 2025; Mark Berginski-Dec 4, 2025; Janet Banish-Dec 7, 2025; Mary Gilbrath-Dec 22, 2025; Cambell Polejewski-Dec 27, 2025; Brad Meyer-Jan 7, 2026; Elizabeth "Betty" Holland-Jan 8, 2026; George Boice-Jan 27, 2026; Robert "Bob" Urlaub-Feb 16, 2026; Tim Forness-Mar 1, 2026; Stanley Buzalsky, Sr.-Mar 19, 2026; Cynthia Unruh-Apr 23, 2026; Randy Berntson-May 14, 2026; Victoria Nordmark-Jun 7, 2026; Gerald Begin, Jr.-Jun 17, 2026; Dale Ronning-Jul 26, 2026; Ashley Warne-Jul 28, 2026; Lawrence Graham-Sep 18, 2026; Darlene Soucy-Sep 25, 2026.

**WINDSOR -** St. Mathias Church: Louise "Lou" Wanzek-Oct 25, 2025.

**ZEELAND -** St. Andrew's Church: Victor Meier-Mar 3, 2026; Thomas Salwei-Jun 16, 2026.



**A statue of Jesus Christ at Calvary Cemetery in Wahpeton. (Paul Braun/*New Earth*)**

# LIFE'S MILESTONES



Leon and Donelda Lauer, parishioners of Holy Family in Grand Forks, celebrate their 70th anniversary Nov. 10. They were married at St. Catherine of Siena in Oldham, S.D. They are blessed with five daughters, 11 grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.



Craig and Diane Pausch, parishioners of Sts. Peter and Paul in Mantador, celebrated 50 years of marriage Oct. 30. They are blessed with a daughter and a son, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, and eight grandchildren.



Bill and Mary Schumacher, parishioners of St. Rose of Lima in Hillsboro, celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary Nov. 26. They were married at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Strasburg. They were blessed with four children, one son deceased.



Warren and Deb Sola, parishioners of Our Lady of Peace in Mayville, celebrated their fiftieth anniversary Oct. 8. They were married at St. Agnes in Hunter. They are blessed with three children and six grandchildren.



Marie (Weninger) Boyle, parishioner of Basilica of St. James in Jamestown, celebrated her 100th birthday Oct. 27. She was married to Donald for 59 years until his passing in 2014. Marie is blessed with many nieces and nephews.



Bernice Fuchsgruber, parishioner of Sacred Heart in Cando, celebrates her 100th birthday Nov. 18. Bernice and John were married for 70 years before he passed away in 2008. They were blessed with one son, three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.



Althea Gronos, parishioner of St. John the Evangelist in New Rockford, celebrates her 90th birthday Dec. 5. She and her late husband Roger were married for 56 years. She is blessed with four children, 10 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren. She continues to be very active in her parish and attends Mass daily.



Donald Swartz, parishioner of St. Mary's in Grand Forks, celebrated his 95th birthday Oct. 15. Donnie and his late wife Annella "Annie" were blessed with three daughters, seven grandchildren, and ten great-grandchildren. He was an usher at St. Mary's for over 50 years.

**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 only accepted for milestones occurring during the month of publication, two months prior, or one month following.

Send photo and text announcement to Susan.Noah@fargodiocese.org or to Diocese of Fargo, *New Earth*, 5201 Bishops Blvd S, Suite A, Fargo, ND 58104. If you would like your photo returned, please include a self-addressed stamped return envelope (that fits your photo) and phone number. Deadline for the December issue is Nov. 19.

**For all diocesan events, go to www.fargodiocese.org and click on the "events" tab.**

# Events

**Grand Forks:** Holy Family Church Altar Society's 66th Annual Christmas Tea. Nov. 7 1-4 p.m. Fresh baked pie, tea, coffee and cider will be served, bake sale with lefse and raffle.

**Hillsboro:** Fall Dinner at St. Rose of Lima Parish. Sunday Nov. 8 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at parish center 503 3rd St. SE. Traditional turkey dinner served family style with mashed potatoes, gravy, dressing, carrots, pie and all the trimmings! Take-out and gluten-free option available.
Adults $15; Children grades K-6 $5; Preschool free. Meal delivery for homebound call 636-5981.

**Various locations:** Catholic Man Night. A great opportunity for men to share in prayer and fellowship. Evenings begin at 6 p.m. with adoration and confession. A light, free-will offering meal is served at 7 p.m. Speakers begin at approximately 7:30 p.m.
Nov. 10 at Nativity Church in Fargo. Speaker: Fr. Taylor Ternes
Nov. 16 at St. William's Argusville. Speaker: TBD.
Nov. 20 at St. Aloysius in Lisbon. Speaker: federal judge Ralph Erickson.
Dec. 10 at Holy Spirit Church in Fargo. Speaker: Fr. Eric Seitz

**Oakes:** St. Charles Borromeo Church Fall Dinner. Sunday, Nov. 15 11 a.m. until gone. 410 7th St N. Turkey dinner with all the fixings, including pie! Adults $15, children 6-12 $7, kids 5 & under free. To-go orders available, call/text 701.290.7753.

**West Fargo:** Holy Cross Catholic Church Holiday Collections Craft Show. Nov. 21 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Over 85 crafters and vendors for all your holiday shopping needs. Admission $2 with a portion going to the Perry Center. Lunch available for purchase.

47th Thanksgiving Dinner at Blessed Sacrament. Nov. 26 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Enjoy a complete turkey dinner with all the trimmings. Free will offering welcome! 210 5th Ave W.

**Valley City:** Women's Silent Retreat for Beginners: Nov. 19-22 at Maryvale retreat center. Go deeper with the Lord in prayer, learn the basics of Ignatian prayer. Fr. Andrew Jasinski serves as retreat master. Learn more www.fargodiocese.org/womens-retreat

**Rachel's Vineyard Retreat: Hope and Healing**: Nov. 20-22, 2026 Have you, or someone you know, suffered from the physical, emotional, or spiritual effects of a past abortion? Rachel's Vineyard offers a safe, non-judgmental and confidential weekend retreat for anyone – including women, men, couples, grandparents or siblings - who struggle with the feelings of loss or guilt that can accompany an abortion experience. For more information, contact Sherry at 701-520-1229 or email rvregister@yahoo.com. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

**Fargo:** Cathedral of St Mary hosts St. Nicholas Festival Sunday, Dec. 6 9 a.m.-2 p.m. specialty breads for breakfast (9 –11 a.m.), cider pork tenderloin dinner with holiday desserts (11 a.m.–1:30 p.m.), Christmas bake sale, silent auction baskets, religious goods for purchase, and a visit from St. Nicholas.

# A glimpse of the past

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

### 75 years ago — 1951

Rev. Joseph Hylden, diocesan resettlement director for displaced persons (DPs), issued an urgent request this week for new applications for home and employment opportunities for DPs. The request is occasioned by arrangements between the National Catholic Welfare Council and the U.S. government as the national immigration program ends Dec. 31, 1951. Afterward, no further DPs will be allowed to enter the country. To take advantage of the remaining time, War Relief Service, the national Catholic agency resettling DPs, last summer put in a blanket assurance for 25,000 Catholic DPs. "Even if these people come to us, then quit and leave, we have done a wonderful act; we have provided them with the 'freedom of quitting'. Something most of them have never enjoyed. We have given them a freedom that we Americans have enjoyed and taken for granted." In issuing his statement, Father Hylden said, "We in the Diocese of Fargo ought to take our share of these people, as we have done in the past. We have extended honest charity to our needy brethren."

### 50 years ago — 1976

On Nov. 5, Bishop Dworschak died at Villa Maria Nursing Home in Fargo. Bishop Dworschak became the fourth Bishop of Fargo on May 10, 1960. He retired Sept. 8, 1970 because of failing health. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in St. Mary's Cathedral Nov. 12. Bishop Justin Driscoll was the main concelebrant. Bishop Lessard, a former Fargo diocese priest, gave the homily. He referred to the many months stretching into years that Bishop Dworschak had suffered. "Bishop Leo did not die last week; he began his death at the moment of his baptism. We saw his dying in the selfless service to all of us, in the manner in which he forgot himself to make room for others. And because of this, he began to anticipate his glory from the moment of his baptism."

### 20 years ago — 2006

Bishop Samuel Aquila was the main celebrant for the Mass dedicating St. Timothy's new church in Manvel. Efforts began almost 30 years ago to modify St. Timothy's church building to make it more accessible, add space and restrooms. For many reasons, previous efforts did not come to fruition. A completely new church building now stands about four blocks away from the previous church and present rectory. The first Saturday night Mass in the new church, three parishioners in wheelchairs were present. They could not get into the old church. Others who have difficulty climbing steps were thrilled to be able to walk right in. The whole parish enjoys the convenience of the new church, gathering space, social hall, accessible restrooms, classrooms and church office.

New Earth

**Want to advertise in *New Earth*?**

Contact Paul at (701) 356-7958
or paul.braun@fargodiocese.org

## Diocesan policy: Reporting child abuse

The Diocese of Fargo is committed to the protection of youth. Please report any incident 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 Rev. Luke Meyer, 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.

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# Duluth diocese officially begins canonization cause for Minnesota priest Joseph Buh

By Tyler Arnold | EWTN News

The Diocese of Duluth, Minnesota officially launched a formal canonization cause for the 19th century Slovenian-born missionary priest, Monsignor Joseph Buh, who now holds the title of "servant of God" in the Catholic Church.

"It is humbling to know that we stand in a moment of history that the Holy Spirit has chosen to be able to bring forth Monsignor Joseph Buh, not only for days past, but for the present moment, as we are experiencing once again a Catholic revival in the Diocese of Duluth," Bishop Daniel Felton said at the opening of the Sept. 22 Mass for Buh's cause for canonization.

Felton celebrated the Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Rosary in Duluth. He was joined by a representative of the Slovenian government, a representative of the Catholic Church in Slovenia, representatives for local indigenous communities, and representatives of the Slovenian American community.

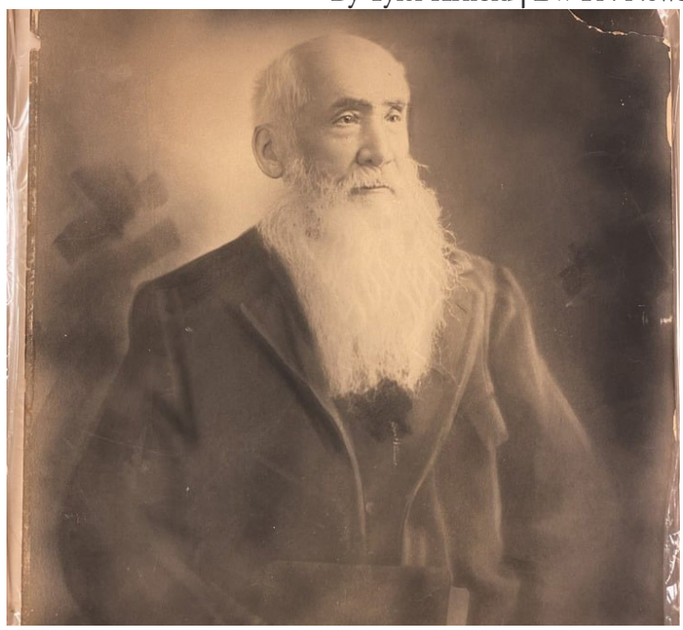
A person's official cause for canonization typically begins at the local level, with the diocesan bishop launching the investigation. In June, Felton consulted with the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), which voted to support Felton's inquiry into Buh's cause.

**Monsignor Buh "wanted to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, growing closer to Jesus in all ways."**

Buh, who was born in 1833 and died in 1922, ministered to poor immigrants and indigenous people, including the Ojibwe, and helped establish more than 50 parishes in the area. If Buh were canonized, he would be the first saint from Minnesota.

"As Monsignor Buh is with us, he would be the first one to say, 'this isn't about me — it's about the way that God chose me to bring the healing, to bring the hope, to bring the joy of Jesus to others,'" Felton said. "And so we too acknowledge tonight, it's not about us. It's all about Jesus."

In his homily, Felton said there is no better description of Buh than "servant of God," which now is his official title. He said, "that was his one desire, [it] was to be a servant of God." He said Buh "wanted to be a disciple of Christ, just growing closer to Jesus in all ways."



**Monsignor Joseph Buh was renowned for his love and care for the poor immigrant and Native American populations in northern Minnesota. (Diocese of Duluth)**

Felton referenced the Gospel reading of the Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and "would carry them to the place that the Holy Spirit desired for them." He said in the early 1900s, "that same Spirit was hovering over the Diocese of Duluth in a great moment of revival."

The bishop noted that Buh, when ministering to the indigenous communities and others, would always live with that community and learn the language, "and it was only when he knew that language, the language of the people, that ultimately he would know their hurts and their pains, he would know how they were filled with despair, he would know their tribulations in life."

"And only when he actually knew that in his heart he could speak that language of the people, only then secondly, did he always begin to talk about Jesus, to put Jesus on center stage, to say Jesus is healing to your hurts, Jesus is hope to your despair, Jesus is joy to your tribulations," Felton said.

Now that Buh is a Servant of God, the diocese will perform an inquiry into his life and submit its findings to the Vatican's Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, which will determine whether to move forward with his cause.

# Pope Leo XIV sends message after surgery to Vatican conference, asks for prayers

By EWTN News Staff

Pope Leo XIV, recovering from lung cancer surgery in Rome, sent a request for prayers to participants in a Vatican conference.

"As you know, I have been unable to be among you during these days," Pope Leo wrote in the Oct. 14 message to clergy members and Catholics. "I thank you warmly for your prayers and for the work you have done together. Your sharing of experiences and attentive listening are indeed a gift to the whole Church."

The pope's message was read at the conclusion of the conference "10 Years After *Amoris Laetitia*: Proclaiming the Gospel with Families Today," a meeting examining the legacy of the apostolic exhortation and how to strengthen family participation in the Church's mission.

"Entrusting each of you to the protection of the Holy Family of Nazareth, I ask you please to pray for me, as I pray for you," he wrote.

The pope encouraged participants to bring the meeting's insights back to their bishops' conferences and dioceses, continue proclaiming the Gospel with families, and ensure families remain active participants in the life and mission of local Churches.

### Leo's homily delivered

At the closing Mass for the conference, Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, dean of the College of Cardinals, delivered a homily prepared by Pope Leo XIV saying: "The world has no future without strong families open to the gift of children and attentive to their education and growth."



**Pope Leo XIV waves as he leaves Gemelli Hospital Oct. 17. (Veronica Giacometti/EWTN News)**

Families and faith communities should accompany people facing hardship with compassion rather than condemnation, the pope's homily said.

"Those who are more vulnerable, or who are experiencing difficult circumstances and moments of crisis, will also find support and encouragement, surrounded by affection and shielded from judgment and prejudice. Let us remember that 'as wounded as the family may be, it can always grow beginning with love,'" Tagle said, delivering the homily prepared by Pope Leo.

**"Entrusting each of you to the protection of the Holy Family of Nazareth, I ask you please to pray for me, as I pray for you."**
**-Pope Leo XIV**



## Quotable

**St. Clement of Rome**
**Feast Day Nov. 23**

**"Let us contend with all earnestness, knowing that we are now called to the combat. Let us run in the straight road, the race that is incorruptible."**




# Autumn pro-life witness brings hecklers and hope



**SIDEWALK STORIES**

**ROXANE B. SALONEN**

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

As the autumn season of pro-life witness in our area begins to wind down, stories of fortitude are emerging, bringing, along with reports of some heckling, a heaping of hope. Brad Youngquist, Moorhead 40 Days for Life 2026 fall campaign director, said the campaign's opening included several excellent talks, including one especially touching by Joy Singh, who traveled from Bismarck to encourage area pro-lifers for the kickoff event.

"It's hard for me to recap it, as so much of it was excellent," said Youngquist, estimating that about 40 people gathered the morning of Sept. 23 near the Women's Care Center in Moorhead to celebrate life and hear inspiring testimonies. Speakers included Rachel Letvin, director and nurse manager of the new Alliance Women's Clinic in Fargo, and Easton Tanquist from River City Church, a young husband, father and future pastor who has been instrumental in saving several babies from abortion at the site this past year. To add joyful musical refrains, there were Tim Mosser on synthesizer with his young son on drums.

Youngquist said he was touched by what Singh shared about her post-abortion trauma. She said how she decided to visit the ocean "one last time before her plans to commit suicide," he recounted. Since it was a weekday, she was initially alone. "But suddenly, a man is standing beside her, sent by God, who told him a woman there needed his help."

Youngquist said it was truly a miracle that this man, a pastor who said he typically didn't go to the ocean, was there at just the right time to give Singh hope for healing.

Along with the part of her story she shared with local pro-life advocates, Singh shared her story with Live Action last year for the article, "She took the abortion pill, saw her baby, and considered suicide. Then God sent a stranger."

Singh told LiveAction she was inbetween undergraduate and graduate studies when, on New Year's Eve, she spent the night with a casual male acquaintance and became pregnant. This left her in shock with a life-altering decision to make on her own.

In the article, Singh said that after sharing news of her pregnancy, the father of the baby told her he was Catholic and against abortion, but he also would be moving home soon to deal with some family issues and wouldn't be able to help her with the baby. Ultimately, this led to her to choose to abort the child through chemical abortion. Then she deeply contemplated ending her own life.

Singh said there was a pivotal moment at her abortion appointment. The ultrasound technician inadvertently left the still image of her baby on the monitor for her to see. Though the technician quickly turned it away from her, the image was imprinted in Singh's mind. Nevertheless, she said, it seemed too late to turn back.

After seeking help through the pastor, Singh explained, she found healing. She "began sharing her story from the pulpit and with other women." She now facilitates a "Forgiven and Set Free" Bible study retreat for post-abortion recovery.

A few days before the local 40 Days for Life campaign began, about a dozen bisonCatholic students and others on Sept. 19 joined Pat Castle, founder of the Life Runners ministry, to walk with a "Remember the Unborn" sign from St. Mary's Cathedral in Fargo to the Red River Women's Clinic in Moorhead, also to witness to the value of life.

Though the clinic was closed that day, a Saturday, longtime area pro-life advocate Dave Foerster reported that as the group neared the clinic, they were met by abortion escorts and workers who turned up the volume on their vile music to "greet" the pro-lifers. "We said a Rosary on the way over and continued while kneeling on the grass just off the sidewalk," Foerster said.

Foerster said the music was so loud he couldn't hear responses to the prayers. As they began to leave, one escort, dressed as a clown, approached him and began shouting obscenities.

Castle said the pro-abortion crowd of about 20 crudely dressed hecklers were shouting "anti-God jeers," adding, "We knelt and prayed the Rosary out loud, hoping those lost souls will choose God and life." Afterward, he passed out 25 free "Remember the Unborn" shirts to the college students. "They are so excited to wear the witness on campus, with the soul-saving Trinity on the front, and life-saving encouragement on the back that says, 'All In Christ!'" Castle said, adding, "God first, life always, teammates forever!"

This sentiment sums up the hope that comes with being an advocate for life, which always wins in tangible vitality, if not always in measurable worldly victory.

NEW EARTH

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## Where in the diocese are we?

## Do you know where we are?

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



**Last month's photo is from Holy Family Church in Grand Forks.**