



Dakota Catholic Action

Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941



More photos and stories found on page 6.

Submitted photo
Students from the three Catholic Schools in the Bismarck Diocese took part in the 2015 March for Life in Washington, DC in January. After students from Fargo Shanley High School in the Fargo Diocese were chosen to carry the lead banner, they graciously invited the Bismarck Diocese students to take part in this honor. See more photos and recounts of the event on page 6.

On special assignment to Africa

Fr. Folorunso makes trip to home country to assess needs at Diocese's Mission

By Sonia Mullally, DCA editor

Father Stephen Folorunso,

who grew up in West Africa, calls Lagos, the most populous city in Nigeria, home. He recently made a trip back home

with a special assignment.

This time, his trip home to Africa took him to the opposite side of the continent to the Bismarck Diocese's African Mission near the city of Kisii. He journeyed there recently to evaluate the need for short-term missionary teams. Even

though this pastor of parishes in the southwest N.D. towns of Hettinger, Reeder and Scranton, is native African, he had never been to Kenya. "I am from Africa, so I am aware of the needs of the people, but to see it in person is entirely different," Fr. Stephen said. "I went to see what we could accomplish for the people there and return home with a plan."

Many people cannot commit to a long-term stay in Africa, but devising a plan for short-term trips for two weeks for example might open up the opportunity for many people to answer the call to be missionaries.

"I went to assess the area and what types of projects that short-term missionaries could

accomplish," he explained. "I came back with details for a plan and a different attitude and appreciation for what we have and how we can make a difference for others."

Possible jobs for short-term missionaries would be constructing and repairing of buildings, preparing work sites for houses and repairs to the school all associated with the orphans served by the Mission. Many of the orphans are too young and the guardian they live with, in some situations, is often too old to accomplish such projects that

require manual labor.

"As Christians, Jesus invites us to take care of the poor," Fr. Stephen explained. "We are all called to be missionaries. When you know you have been blessed in your life, it is your duty to be a blessing to others."

The need is great at the Diocese's Mission in East Africa. Fr. Stephen took notes, photos and held meetings with locals as well as the Diocese's long-term missionaries Brent and

Continued on Page 11



A LOOK INSIDE



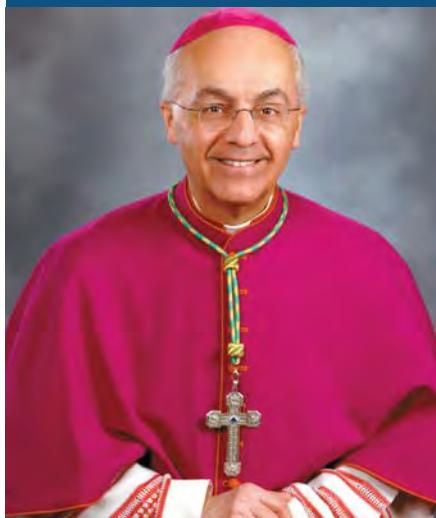
Recap of special week
A recap of two special events held during Catholic Schools Week is captured in photosPAGE 4



African Mission appeal
The Naslund family continues their work at the diocese's African MissionPAGE 8

Let Lent be a time of holy preparation

FROM THE BISHOP



Bishop David D. Kagan

This year, the entire month of March finds us celebrating the season of Lent. But, during this month, we Catholics will celebrate two beautiful solemnities as well. The first is March 19, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary; the second is March 25, the Annunciation of the Lord.

While neither day is a holy day of obligation for us in the United States, I would urge you to come and participate at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on these days if at all possible. So many of you already make a commitment to daily Mass during Lent and for those who cannot

make this commitment due to circumstances, again I urge you to try to come to Mass at least on these two days during Lent.

These two solemnities focus our attention and our prayers on the two persons whom God chose to be intimately involved in the life of His Beloved Son. Who better than Our Blessed Lady and her chaste spouse, Saint Joseph to show us how to love Jesus faithfully in all circumstances of life? Please do make this effort to participate at Mass on these solemnities.

By the time you receive this issue of the Dakota Catholic Action, the Lenten Season will be about two weeks old. One of the better pieces of advice I have been given was from one of the wonderful Sisters who taught me in Catholic grade school. She told all of us at that time (I was a sixth grader) that every Wednesday in Lent, we should make a short examination of conscience just about the prior week and what we did and did not do to keep the season of Lent. That would help us for the next week.

I have never forgotten this and I have done this every year during Lent. She was absolutely correct. What I commit myself to on Ash Wednesday I ought to keep myself to for the entire time of Lent. When I examine this each week, I usually find that I am doing what I should be doing, but I also find that I have been lazy at times about my prayers, penances

and good works. One of the good results of this weekly examination is that I find myself going to confession a bit more frequently and that is always good. Try this and you just might come to like it.

Please do not forget that each Friday of Lent is a day of abstinence for all Catholics who have celebrated their 14th birthday. Try to make each Friday of Lent a day of true sorrow and penance for sins committed. Abstinence from all meat and foods made from meat by-products is a good way to do this.

Finally, if you are able, plan to join us Saturday, April 25 at the University of Mary in Bismarck for our Diocesan Convocation celebrating the Year of Consecrated Life. It is not only a great opportunity to thank the religious women and men of our Diocese for their loving service to Christ and the Church, but it is a good way to learn more of the real necessity for all of us to cultivate the evangelical counsels in our own vocations. All of the details and registration information can be found on our Diocesan website. You can also read more about the event on page three of this issue of the DCA.

May this Lent be a time of holy preparation for the Paschal Triduum, the days of our salvation, for all of us. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us! Saint Joseph, Guardian of the Redeemer, pray for us!

BISHOP'S SCHEDULE MARCH 2015

- | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| March 1 | • Confirmation at Sacred Heart Church, Glen Ullin, 10 a.m. |
| March 10 | • Diocesan Building Commission Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 11 a.m. |
| March 13 | • Home on the Range Board Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 12 p.m. |
| March 15 | • Confirmation for Churches of Sts. Peter and Paul, Strasburg, St. Mary, Hague, at Strasburg, 10 a.m. |
| March 17 | • Real Presence Radio interview, 9 a.m.
• First Choice Clinic Banquet, Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck, 7 p.m. |
| March 19 | • Mass and pastoral visit to Marillac Manor, Bismarck |
| March 22 | • Confirmation for the Church of St. Nicholas, Garrison, and Immaculate Conception, Max, at Garrison, 11 a.m. |
| March 25 | • Pastoral Visit to St. Gabriel's, Bismarck, 9:30 a.m. |
| March 28 | • Palm Sunday Vigil Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 5 p.m. |
| March 29 | • Lenten Penance Service, Church of Ascension, Bismarck, 3 p.m. |
| March 30 | • Chrism Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 11 a.m.
• Lenten Penance Service, Church of Spirit of Life, Mandan, 7 p.m. |

BISHOP IN ACTION



Bishop John Folla, Diocese of Fargo, and Bishop Kagan visited with legislators after the Legislative Mass and dinner on Jan. 29. Rep. Mike Nathe (right) of Bismarck and Rep. Mike Lefor from Dickinson were among the crowd of legislators and public officials who attended the event held at Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Bismarck. The North Dakota Catholic Conference organized the event.

SOCIAL MEDIA



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Bismarck Diocese

3 hrs ·



Bishop Kagan during his homily at the 9 AM Ash Wednesday Mass at Cathedral . . . "Be proud of those ashes marked on your forehead in the sign of the cross. It identifies us with Christ." Proudly display those ashes upon your forehead today!



Like



Comment



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Publisher: Most Reverend David D. Kagan, D.D., P.A., J.C.L., Bishop of Bismarck

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www.bismarckdiocese.com

The Dakota Catholic Action (0011-5770) is published monthly except July by the Diocese of Bismarck, 420 Raymond Street, Bismarck, ND 58501-3723.

Periodical postage paid at Bismarck, ND, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to address below.
Dakota Catholic Action, PO Box 1137, Bismarck, ND 58502-1137

The Dakota Catholic Action is funded in part by the annual God's Share Appeal.

Celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life

Special event on April 25 at the University of Mary

Gain a special understanding and appreciation for the men and women devoted to the consecrated life during a conference on April 25.

The public is invited to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life at the McDowell Activity Center on the University of Mary campus south of Bismarck. The event, sponsored by the diocese, Annunciation Monastery, Sacred Heart Monastery and Assumption Abbey, is free and open to everyone. The schedule will feature two keynote speakers and six breakout sessions with three in the morning and three in the afternoon. Mass will be celebrated at the close of the day.

Keynote speakers

Sister Anna Laura Karp, O.P., a member of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation of Nashville, Tenn., will be the day's first speaker at 9 a.m.



Sister Anna Laura

Sister Anna Laura grew up in Little Rock, Ark.; and attended the University of Dallas majoring in English. She lived in Rome for a semester, and taught English as a second language to Mexican girls after graduation. Two years after graduation, she entered the convent. Over the past 18 years in the convent, she has primarily taught high school English and theology. Currently, Sister is among the founding faculty of Frassati Catholic High School in Spring, Texas, the newest Catholic high school in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, which is now in its second year. Sister Anna Laura chairs the English, theology, and ethics and culture departments.

The afternoon keynote speaker, Fr. Roger Landry who is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass., will begin at



Fr. Landry

1 p.m. Fr. Landry, since his 1999 ordination, has served as a pastor, diocesan newspaper editor and high school chaplain. In March, he began working at the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations. He writes for many Catholic publications and preaches several retreats a year for diocesan presbyterates, permanent deacons, seminaries, religious institutes and lay people. He was an on-site commentator with Raymond Arroyo for EWTN's coverage of the conclave



that elected Pope Francis and is national chaplain of Catholic Voices USA.

Breakout sessions

The breakout sessions will be a three-person panel consisting

of a religious sister, brother or priest, and layperson. Topics are: poverty and property; chastity and relationships; obedience and authority; prayer and work; stewardship and social justice; and vocations.

Register online

Registration is available online at bismarckdiocese.com/consecrated-life. The day begins at 9 a.m. and concludes with Mass at 3:30 p.m. Lunch will be served, and pre-registration is requested in order to provide an accurate count.

—Staff report

Why I love silence

Reflection on personal perspective of living the consecrated life

**By Sister Margaret Nelson, OSB,
Annunciation Monastery**

Editor's Note: In honor of the Year of Consecrated Life, this is the first in a series of personal perspectives from those living this holy life.

I love silence. Yes, silence -- no speaking, no Internet, no radio, no TV, no smart phone, just me alone in the silence. Only in silence will I hear the Word of God. Only in stillness of body and mind will I be able to listen to the God within me.

I am a Benedictine Sister of Annunciation Monastery in Bismarck. As a community of monastic women, we value silence and solitude. In our busy, noisy, global-connected world, the opportunity for time and space for silence is one of the great blessings of consecrated life.

Although Annunciation Monastery sisters are busy serving others in our varied ministries, we also take time to sit in silence and pray, listening for God's voice. Three times a day we gather to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. This is the prayer of the Church and is Scripture based consisting of hymns, psalms and readings. It is not a rushed or hurried prayer, but has a reflective rhythm to it with silent pauses between the psalms to let us ponder what we have heard.

We also are blessed to participate in the daily Eucharist. In the Eucharist we have times of silence in which we contemplate the Word and the mystery of our faith, sharing in the very life of Christ.

In addition, we have monthly



Days of Contemplation in which there is little or no speaking from the time we get up until after 5 p.m. evening prayer. Meals are in silence. There is also adoration of the Blessed Sacrament that day.

These days of quiet allow me to take a longer time for silence in order to deepen my relationship with God. Silence is not important for its own sake. It is vital because in the silence I can hear God speaking to me and loving me. This brings me peace and joy which I am able to pass on to others.

Each sister has a bedroom for privacy and solitude. The bedroom areas of our monastery are quiet especially at night. We respect each other's time and space to listen to God. Some sisters rise early in the morning to pray and reflect. Others like me spend time with the Lord at different hours of the day. I have found that evening is the best time for me to sit in reflective silence with God. I am more alert and awake. Anything on my "to do" list is either finished or can wait until tomorrow making it easier to free myself from distractive thoughts.

Just like good friends and spouses take time to foster their

relationships, I must take time to grow in my relationship with God. It is the most important part of my day. I turn off the radio, even if I am in the middle of an exciting sports game, disconnect from the Internet, and try to unclutter my mind. I am reminded of Psalm 46 which says, "Be still and know that I am God." In silence I pray the Scriptures of the Eucharist for the next day and if a word touches my heart, I sit with it and let it sink in. Sometimes I hear nothing; other times I do hear God speaking to my heart. I try not to have my own agenda for my conversations with God, but wait in stillness to receive whatever God wants to tell me. Often, I am surprised at the message.

Once when I was on a silent retreat, I woke up at 5 a.m. and a voice inside me said, "Get up, get up, I want to be with you." I was surprised and honored to hear that invitation. However, since I am definitely not a morning person, I answered "Oh, God it is 5 o'clock in the morning; it is too early to get up." But that inner voice persisted, "Get up, get up, I want to be with you." I got up and spent one of the best times with God utterly aware that I was in the Divine Presence.

That is why I love silence. Only in the silence do I hear the voice of God. Only in silence and stillness does my relationship with the loving God grow and blossom. Try it; you too can hear God's voice. Use Scripture as your base; wait in patience and be ready for surprises.

CHILDREN'S MASS

Bishop Kagan enters the church of St. Anne's for the children's Mass for Catholic Schools Week.



Light of Christ Catholic Schools President Gerald Vetter greets students as they enter St. Anne's Church for the children's Mass for Catholic Schools Week.



Students from the Light of Christ Catholic Schools, Easton Hinnenkamp, Abby Seamands, Casey Fischer, and Will Koch bring forth the gift during the children's Mass for Catholic Schools Week, held this year at St. Anne's parish.



Bishop Kagan delivers his homily at the children's Mass for Catholic Schools Week, held this year at St. Anne's parish. (l to r) Fr. Sattler, Fr. Nelson, Msgr. Lindemann, and Deacon Jerry Volk, look on in the background.

Students, (l to r)
Austin Link, Dawson
Mills, Elizabeth
Bichler, Cael
Hilzendeger and
Carson Rohrich,
helped out as Mass
servers for the
children's Mass for
Catholic Schools
Week, held this year
at St. Anne's parish

**KNOW YOUR FAITH CONTEST**

Dickinson Trinity High School students hosted the "Know Your Faith" competition held during Catholic Schools Week. The event featured the four Catholic high schools in North Dakota.



Fr. Josh Waltz (in blue), Bismarck Diocese vocations director, tries his best at the donut-on-a-string eating contest during the "Know Your Faith" competition held at Dickinson Trinity High School during Catholic Schools Week.



St. Mary's Central High School Senior Noah Krebs takes part in the pie-eating contest at the "Know Your Faith" competition held at Dickinson Trinity High School during Catholic Schools Week. Krebs won the contest.



Fargo Shanley Deacons celebrate victory at the "Know Your Faith" Contest held at Dickinson Trinity High School. The Deacons were repeat champions.

Minot's Bishop Ryan High School students, dressed in a hunting theme, cheered on their school during the "Know Your Faith" competition held during Catholic Schools Week. The event featured the four Catholic high schools in North Dakota.



Fr. Justin Waltz, Delegate of the Bishop for Catholic Education, fired up the crowd when he announced that next year's "Know Your Faith" competition during Catholic Schools Week will be held at Bishop Ryan High School in Minot.





University of Mary student Andrew Meyer exchanged zucchetos with the Pope in Rome.

Submitted Photos

Pope Francis and University of Mary student exchange zucchetos

ROME, ITALY — If he's not the envy of the entire world, millions of people would at the very least love to have the same experience that Andrew Meyer had with Pope Francis.



Andrew Meyer January with his classmates to study for a four-month semester — knowing his life will be forever changed. But he didn't know just how life-changing it would be.

On Jan. 21, just three weeks into his stay, he and two dozen of his classmates were at a papal audience in the Paul VI Auditorium. Typically held in St. Peter's Square, this would be one of the few audiences for Pope Francis in the auditorium. But Meyer knew this would potentially put him just a handshake away from the Holy Father.

Pope Francis, flanked by security guards and people's outstretched arms hoping for a touch, a smile or even a selfie, walked down the aisle on the opposite side towards Meyer. Then, at just the right moment Pope Francis switched sides. Nervous and excited all at the same time, Meyer realized this was the perfect time and perhaps the only chance he'll ever get to put his plan into action. "My goal for the semester was to trade zucchetos, or skullcaps, with Pope Francis," said Meyer via email, a sophomore triple majoring in theology, philosophy and Catholic studies. "When he went by greeting people, I held mine out to him, and after giving me a little smirk, he grabbed it and took

his off, compared the size to his, tried it on and showed it proudly to his smiling security guard, then traded with me. With a little help from Mary and the saints, I succeeded."

Excitement, pandemonium, and pictures immediately ensued. "I was having a huge adrenaline rush and everyone standing nearby took selfies with me," explained Meyer. "It was really surreal. I was shaking and really relieved it had worked. I was trying to still live in the moment of seeing and touching Pope Francis at the audience, but it was hard to contain my excitement of having the zucchetto in my hands."

Zucchetto exchanges vary with each pope. Meyer believes Pope Francis does it only on rare occasions. "When he does take a zucchetto, he often will wear it for a few seconds before returning it. I know complete switches are not too common."

Dr. Don Briel, the Blessed John Henry Newman Chair of Liberal Arts at the University of Mary agrees. "The history of trading zucchetos is a modern phenomenon that became popular with Pope John Paul II when he began engaging and interacting more with crowds. Since it is still a very uncommon occurrence, anyone fortunate enough to trade or receive a zucchetto from the Holy Father should feel very fortunate and blessed."

Meyer added, "I think the inside is calfskin, because it smelled like leather. I haven't gotten up the guts to try it on, and I don't know if I will. I did try on the one I bought for him and it didn't feel like much, but he doesn't have quite as much hair as me."

Meyer planned the exchange once he got accepted to study at

University of Mary's Rome campus back in December 2013. He's currently in Rome with 24 Mary students who are from various cities around the Upper Midwest: Alexis Bakke, Bismarck; Annie Brickweg, Burnsville, Minn.; Kacie Dietz, Bozeman, Mont.; Morgan Dowling, Littleton, Colo.; Ashley Drum, Faith, S.D.; Peter Foley, West St. Paul, Minn.; Katrina Gallic, Westminster, Colo.; Jean Gehrz, St. Paul, Minn.; Amanda Hillstrom, Mandan; Laura Huber, Strasburg; Kateri Krebs, Jamestown; Catherine Mahrer, Mandan; Grace Maiers, Buffalo Lake, Minn.; Kyle Martin, Aberdeen, S.D.; Sarah Maslow, Burnsville, Minn.; Elizabeth Miller, New Ulm, Minn.; Amanda Mohr, Aberdeen, S.D.; Luke Nasers, Minot; Benjamin Porter, Bismarck; Clare Schoch, Chippewa Falls, Wis.; Ryan Shields, Whitehall, Mich.; Courtney Sibla, Bismarck; Kellen Tibor, Bismarck; Morgan Timmerman, Robbinsdale, Minn.

Even though Meyer may be the envy of all Catholics, Christians, college students and his classmates, Meyer doesn't

see it that way, at least right now. "Since we are with each other all the time, we almost act as a family, so I view this as something we succeeded at together — not just me," said Meyer, who can't believe he's witnessed so much in such a short period of time at Mary's very popular Rome campus. "The feeling of awe witnessing these events or stepping foot into St. Peter's Square for the first time are moments that are priceless. Rome has been above and beyond what I had hoped for."

So, what plans does Meyer have for his new, extraordinary and cherished souvenir from Pope Francis? "I am really not sure myself," said Meyer. "It's safe to say that the zucchetto will end up in one of three places: at the University of Mary campus; my home parish of St. John's, or I will just hold onto it myself. Assuming I would hold onto it I still have plans to give people a chance to see it. Realizing that I have something worn by the pope himself is mind-blowing, and something I will always hold dear."

— Submitted by University of Mary

CLERGY APPOINTMENTS



Bishop of Bismarck
David D. Kagan, D.D., P.A., J.C.L.

The following are with the permission and consent of Bishop David D. Kagan, D.D., P.A., J.C.L.:

Deacon Lloyd Krueger

- Effective Feb. 1, 2015, for Deacon Lloyd Krueger to serve at the Church of St. John the Apostle (Minot). Deacon Krueger is an incardinated permanent deacon from the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee.

Deacon Terry Quintus

- Effective December 22, 2014, for the excardination of Deacon Terry Quintus from the Diocese of Bismarck for the purpose of incardination in the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings.

Blessings of the March for Life in Washington

By Nick Emmel

As I recall all of the gifts God has shared with the St. Mary's Saints for Life (SFL) group this past year, I am grateful. In 2014, we brought 93 pilgrims on the first Bismarck Diocese March for Life High School Pilgrimage to Washington, D.C. This past January, we were honored to be invited by Shanley High School to help carry the lead banner for more than 600,000 people at the March for Life 2015.

With the help of Fr. Jadyn Nelson; chaplain at Bishop Ryan High School; Fr. Thomas Grafsgaard, chaplain at Dickinson Trinity High School; Amanda Ellerkamp, religious studies instructor at Dickinson Trinity and countless others, the three Catholic high schools in the Bismarck Diocese combined for a total of 167 pilgrims attending the March for Life. This level of participation makes Bismarck Diocese history with one of the largest high school pilgrimages to date.

It would be impossible to describe the scope of the March for Life 2015 in the space provided. To highlight our experience, I thought it would be helpful to provide three vignettes from the march this year. Cor ad Cor Loquitur or "heart speaks unto heart" is the theme that weaves these moments together. This motto comes from Bl. John Henry Cardinal Newman's coat of arms and reminds us that God's love cannot be contained. Our faith, hope and love cannot be kept to ourselves; rather it must be given away and shared with others.

The first vignette comes from Sarah Zander, St. Mary's Central High School (SMCHS) junior, as she described the march in this way: "I experienced so many positive people standing up for what is right and what they believe



The group is pictured here on the steps of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Submitted photos

in. It made me appreciate all that Saints for Life does to end abortion and help women. The March for life showed me that God is working not only in the hearts of those at Saint Mary's but 600,000 others as well!"

The second vignette comes from one of our bus drivers who gave us the best compliment of the journey saying, "I drive a lot of students around and these students are inspiring because they are so respectful and thankful. It's good that they are going on the march, it gives me hope." From the student-lead rosaries on the bus, to daily Mass, there was an authentic joy in the hearts and minds of the pilgrims. Even after spending a total of 56 hours on a bus, suffering through little sleep, McDonald's stop after McDonald's stop, I can honestly say that I did not hear a single student complain.

The third vignette describes not the march but the "Life is Very Good Rally" held the night before at the Patriot Center on the campus of George Mason University. Students got to hear from Catholic speaker

Chris Stefanick, the music of Matt Maher, and participate in adoration and confession.

Brady Letteer, SMCHS senior, explains, "It may sound strange, but I was struck with God's presence at the Patriot Center. Not during the music and not during the talks, but during adoration. There is something profoundly beautiful about being in a huge place like that with thousands of others, and to have it be completely silent. Christ was truly present to me during adoration and I am sure many others would feel the same way."

In every instance, the hearts of those opened on this pilgrimage

have inspired faith and penetrated the culture of our diocese and our Catholic high schools. I encourage you to ask those you know who attended this pilgrimage to share their experience with you, and to keep hearts speaking to this mission. By asking others about their experience, one can recognize the work of the Holy Spirit who is responsible for all of these beautiful gifts, as we continue to work together for the greater glory of God.

■ *Emmel is the religious studies instructor and Saints for Life advisor at St. Mary's Central High School in Bismarck.*

March for Life 2015: A student's perspective

By Anne Storick, SMCHS Senior

As a young teen growing up amidst the problem of abortion in the world, I have always wanted to do my part in putting an end to it. The first thing I was taught in eliminating abortion was to pray. And rightly so, prayer is always the first step in defeating evil in the world.

However, in addition to prayer, action is needed. So, when the opportunity arose for me to participate in the March for Life, I took advantage of it immediately. What better way to take action than to join a half million others in peaceful protest of Roe vs. Wade?

Even more amazing was the fact that this year, Fargo Shanley High School was granted the great privilege of carrying the lead banner for the entire 2015 March for Life.

Shanley students generously allowed the students from the Bismarck Diocese to join them in this honor. Altogether, there were more than 700 North Dakota pilgrims. This includes all the Catholic high schools of North Dakota and students from the University of Mary unified and leading the way for an end to abortion.

The experience was incredible! Just the fact that there were so many people who shared our same goal, to abolish abortion in America, was amazing. United for the same

cause, it didn't matter your age, gender, race, or even religion; we were all working together. It was also amazing that we were actually a part of a movement that will one day overturn Roe vs. Wade because we are the pro-life generation. We were standing up for what we believe in and showing America that we do not want abortion any longer; life is precious and should be respected.

As we marched along Constitution Avenue, spectators stepped out on the balconies of particular buildings and watched the procession. Some simply stared at us, while others smiled and even waved. When we



Some 600,000 people took part in the March for Life in Washington, DC in January.



March for Life participants gather outside the U.S. Supreme Court building.



The crowd of marchers approach the U.S. Supreme Court building.



March for Life participants line up before embarking on the March.

reached the Capitol building, we encountered 50 or so protesters of the march. Since we were at the front of the March, we experienced first-hand that to every good action there is always opposition.

The March for Life was an astounding, eye-opening experience for me. It is a constant reminder that we can work together to overturn Roe vs. Wade, and we are not alone in fighting abortion. Let's continue to march on, fighting to protect life!

UPCOMING EVENTS

■ Diocesan Cursillo weekends in March

Bismarck Diocesan Cursillo weekends will be held at Trinity High School in Dickinson. The men's Cursillo is March 5-8 and the women's Cursillo is March 19-22. Early registration is recommended. For information, contact Jim Hopfauf at 701-527-0143 or Colleen Rodakowski at 701-590-9311.

■ Lenten retreat at St. Mary's in Bismarck on March 6-7

St. Mary's parish in Bismarck is offering a family Lenten retreat on March 6-7. The theme is "Living the Joy of the Gospel." The event begins with Stations of the Cross on Friday, March 6 at 6:30 p.m. Featured speaker is Dr. R. Jared Staudt, coordinator of the Catholic studies program at the University of Mary. For information contact Steve at 701-223-5562 or steve@stmarysparishfamily.net.

■ Women's retreat at St. Joseph in Williston on March 7

St. Joseph parish in Williston is hosting a women's retreat on Saturday, March 7 from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The theme is the power of prayer with Fr. Kovash as one of the guest speakers. For more information contact the parish office at 701-572-6731.

■ Benefit supper is March 8

A spaghetti supper to benefit three families of St. Anne Parish in Bismarck will be on Sunday, March 8 from 3-7 p.m. at Saint Anne Church basement and school gym. The families include those of: Tonya Link, Marie Stiegelmeier and Darren Rohrich who are facing many medical bills. Link, the wife of Dr. James Link and mother of seven children, is undergoing treatment for lymphoma cancer. Stiegelmeier, the wife of Paul Stiegelmeier and mother of three daughters, is undergoing treatment for leukemia. Rohrich, the husband of Tara Rohrich and father of six children, recently underwent a kidney transplant.

■ St. Joseph parish mission is March 8-10

The Church of St. Joseph, Mandan, invites you to their Lenten parish mission on March 8-10 at 7 p.m. each night. Guest speaker will be Steve Ray. For more information about Ray, visit www.catholic-convert.com.

■ Choir performance on March 13

The NDSU Challey School of Music concert choir tour performance will be held Friday, March 13 at 7:30 p.m. at Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Bismarck. Stations of the Cross precede the concert at 7 p.m. The event is free and open to the public.

■ Women's Retreat in Stanley March 14

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in Stanley is hosting Marcellino D'Ambrosio, Ph.D. for a women's retreat on Saturday, March 14. The event begins with registration at 8:30 a.m. followed by Mass at 9 a.m. The day will

conclude at 4 p.m. Cost is \$20 and includes a morning muffin and lunch. Advance registration is encouraged. Learn about Dr. D'Ambrosio at crossroadsinitiative.com. Call Elonda at 629-1778, Claudia at 628-2343, or Betty at 629-1802 with questions.

■ Parish mission in New Town March 15-17

St. Anthony Parish of New Town will host their parish mission March 15-17 at 6:30 each night with Deacon George Butterfield as the guest speaker. On March 15, he will speak on the new evangelization. "God as our Father" is the theme of the March 16 talk where time is spent unpacking Hosea 11 and the view of God found there. The March 17 talk will focus on Jesus and the lesson from John 19 in particular.

■ Parish mission in Stanley March 15-17

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in Stanley is hosting Marcellino D'Ambrosio, Ph.D. for a parish mission March 15-17. This world-renowned commentator on Catholic issues will speak each evening at 6:45 p.m. Dr. D'Ambrosio's three talks will educate and motivate people to get excited about being Catholic. For information, contact Fr. Gary Benz at 701-628-2323 or the church office at 701-628-3405.

■ Taizé Lenten prayer services at Annunciation Monastery

The Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery and the United Church of Christ invite the public to Lenten Taizé prayer services. The service at the United Church of Christ will be Wednesday, March 18 at 7 p.m. Prior to this service, a soup and bread supper is served at 6 p.m. (free-will donation). The Lenten Taizé prayer service at Annunciation Monastery is Friday, March 20, at 7 p.m. in the monastery chapel, followed by refreshments. For information, contact Sister Hannah Vanorny at 701-255-1520 or hvanorny@gmail.com.

■ Friday fish fry at Corpus Christi during Lent

The Friday fish fry continues each week of Lent at the Church of Corpus Christi in Bismarck from 5 to 7 p.m. Proceeds support youth ministry events. Cost is \$8 for adults, \$4 for children and \$25 for a family.

■ Mandan's Christ the King Lenten parish mission is March 20-22

Christ the King Parish in Mandan is hosting a Lenten parish mission, March 20-22, presented by Kathleen Beckman. Kathleen is the co-founder and president of the Foundation of Prayer for Priests. The theme of the Mission is "Into Your Hands: Surrender, Courage, Mercy." The three talks are Friday, March 20 at 7 p.m., Saturday, March 21 at 5:30 p.m., and Sunday, March 22 at 11 a.m. all taking place in the main body of the church.

■ Lenten retreat for women on March 21 in Mandan

"The Signs of the Times" is the topic for this year's Lenten women's retreat at St. Joseph in Mandan on Saturday, March 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fr. Thomas Grafsgaard, associate at St. Wenceslaus and chaplain at Trinity High in Dickinson, will address the issues of our times through a Catholic lens. The day includes breakfast and lunch, Mass, two talks, a Q&A session, shopping, a giveaway table, adoration, and confession. For information, contact Theresa Waltz at 701-222-2752 or Patti Armstrong 701-471-9633.

■ Parish mission at St. Joseph in Williston March 22-24

Nationally-known author and Catholic psychologist Dr. Ray Gaurendi is coming to St. Joseph Parish in Williston March 22-24. For information, contact the parish office at 701-572-6731.

■ Men's Lenten retreat is March 28

A men's Lenten retreat will be held at the Church of St. Anne in Bismarck on Saturday, March 28 beginning with Mass at 8 a.m. Featured speakers are Msgr. Richter, Fr. Sattler and Dr. James Link. A light breakfast will be provided following Mass and lunch will also be served. Registration fee is \$25 and pre-registration is required. Contact Mike Bichler at mnbichler@gmail.com or 701-471-0985.

■ Marriage Encounter Weekends

The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is March 27-29 in Minot. Early registration is highly recommended. For information, visit www.ndwwme.org or contact Rob and Angie at Applications@ndwwme.org or 701-347-1998.

■ FertilityCare Week is March 22-28

Creighton Model FertilityCare System—Worldwide FertilityCare Week is recognized March 22-28. Family planning, women's health, infertility solutions and IVF alternatives will be highlighted. Watch for information on upcoming introductory sessions in bulletins and diocesan social media sites.

■ REBOOT LIVE! is April 1

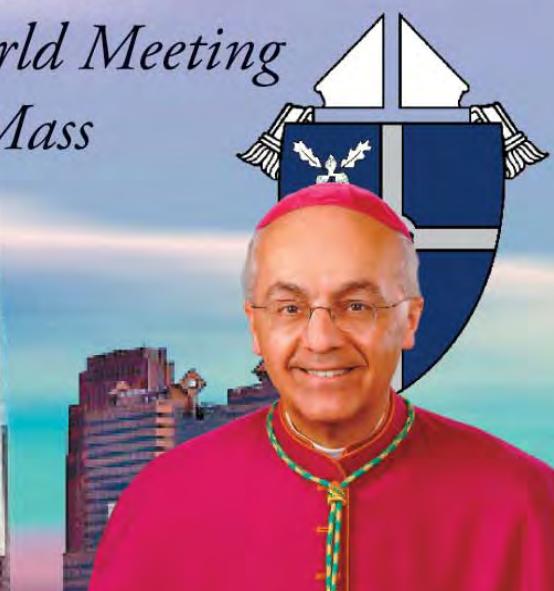
Join the fun at Linton High School on Wednesday, April 1 at 7 p.m. for REBOOT LIVE! Listen to internationally renowned speaker and author Chris Stefanick and special musical guest Jon Niven. Tickets are \$19. Daycare will be provided for those who sign up in advance at the parish office. For information or to purchase a ticket, go to www.reallifecatholic.com/REBOOT or contact St. Anthony in Linton at 701-254-4588. Event co-sponsor parishes are: St. Katherine, Braddock; St. Mary, Hague; St. Michel, rural Linton; St. Paul, Hazelton; Sts. Peter and Paul, Strasburg; and St. Philip Neri, Napoleon. Advance tickets are available at local parishes.

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Annual African Mission Appeal March 7-8

African Mission orphan support program

By Brent Naslund

Over the past two issues of the DCA's special features of the Kenya Connection, you have been introduced to the African Mission team members working in Kenya. In this issue, I want to round out your knowledge of the Mission by telling you more about the program itself.

I will offer some background information on the mission, show how a child qualifies for support, and describe the type of support we provide. Also, because the annual appeal is March 7-8, I will briefly outline the costs associated with the Mission's orphan support program.

\$10 Cost of one solar-powered study lamp

Background Information

Often when we think of orphans, we imagine large orphanages with several children living under one roof. In the rural area of western Kenya where we operate, there are very few actual orphanages. Most of the orphans we support live with guardians. Often these guardians are elderly grandparents, barely able to care for themselves, while others live with aunts or uncles who are already struggling to provide for their own children.

Currently, the Bismarck Diocese's African Mission has 366 enrolled orphans. Ages range from nursery school to high school. We also provide tuition support for 10 orphans attending post-secondary (technical school and university) schools.

Since 2006, the Mission has supported over 780 orphans in meeting their educational goals. Most importantly, we have strong indicators that our program does indeed make a difference to Kenyan youth. According to the Global Education Fund, (www.globaleducationfund.org)

\$10 Cost of one chicken (educational incentive for elementary school aged children)



The Bismarck Diocese African Mission serves more than 350 orphans with various programs.

org/what-we-do/kenya), only 8.5% of Kenyan youth graduate from high school. The Bismarck Mission's high school graduation rate is 50%, nearly six times the Kenya national average. These are tremendous results; especially

\$35 Cost of one goat (educational incentive for high-school aged children)

considering the operating costs to manage the program are just under \$215 per enrolled orphan, per year (or less than .60 cents a day per child).

One of the most intriguing aspects of the program is that it serves the local community as a Catholic outreach program. Currently 57% of our orphans are Roman Catholic, 33% are Seventh Day Adventists, and the remaining 10% are made up of various other

\$300 Elementary School tuition and fees for one year

protestant denominations. Of all the Christian denominations located in our area, only the Bismarck Diocese's Mission offers educational support to vulnerable children. We are making a difference in this part of Kenya and the community sees that it is the Catholic Church making that difference.

Enrollment qualifications

Enrollment qualifications are simple. First, a child must be a

\$500 High School (day-school) tuition for one child, for one year

total orphan—meaning that they have lost both their mother and their father. The cause of their parents' death, however, does not have to result from HIV (because of stigma still associated with AIDS, very few causes of death are officially listed as resulting from HIV/AIDS). Secondly, a child's family must come from within the local Catholic parish area. The students do not have to be Catholic to enroll in the program;

\$600 Technical/Trade School tuition for one high-school graduate per year

to do so. The primary benefits of the mission include: tuition for high school students; school uniforms; textbooks and supplies (often not provided by schools); monthly living allowance/stipend (approx. \$5/month); monthly food allowance (approx. two lbs. of dried corn); limited medical assistance (to include de-wormer treatment, sanitary napkins, semi-annual HIV testing, and transportation fare for HIV positive students needing retrovirus treatments).

The Mission also provides annual educational incentives in the form of goats and chickens to students with good grades.



Submitted photos

Bismarck Diocese Missionary Brent Naslund is pictured with a group of orphans served by the Mission.

they simply need to reside within the geographical area defined by the Church as the local parish. Incidentally, our parish is a very large rural area. It has one main church, three priests, and over 60,000 Catholic parishioners.

Finally, a child must be enrolled in and attending school. Our program is an educational program, first and foremost. We require our orphans to attend all Mission functions in their school uniforms and they are required to provide their report cards at the end of each term in order to prove their school attendance and academic progress.

Benefits offered

Because the Mission is primarily an educational support program, all of the benefits we offer are designed to support a child's education, either directly or indirectly. The program is also deliberately designed to give orphaned children a fighting chance at earning an education. Program benefits, therefore, are not comprehensive. Children in our program still have struggles, but the program does give a child a chance at earning his or her own education, if they are determined

\$800 Cost of sending one orphan to a secondary boarding school, for one year

Other Support

Your generosity to the Mission not only helps to sustain the educational support activities outlined above, but it has also supported other needs as well. Each year we have been able to build houses for orphans with the greatest need. In fact, this year we have already selected two more families to receive homes. In the past, we have also dug wells and built out-house latrines. In the future, we also hope to be able to provide qualifying families with a cow so that they can have their own milk supply and a small way of earning some of their own money.

In conclusion, I hope this article was able to showcase the Mission program and also convey the important role the mission plays in the lives of the orphans we support and, by extension, the community at large. In the next issue I will highlight success stories from orphans who have

\$1,750 Cost of university tuition and fees for one high school graduate, for one year

graduated from the African Mission program. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Brent, along with his wife, Jessica and children, Cameron and Chloe, are full-time missionaries at the Bismarck Diocese's African Mission in Kenya. The Naslunds arrived in Kenya in September and plan to serve there for three years.



MARCH 2015

MARCH 2015

KENYA CONNECTION

The Kenya Connection is a newsletter about the activity of the Diocese of Bismarck's mission in Kenya. The logo symbolizes the call of Christ to reach out and assist those in need.

It's all in a day's work

By Jessica Naslund

Many questions have come my way in the last couple of months regarding everyday life in Gekano. What does a person, particularly a mother, do each day living here as a missionary?

My response is that I do the same as you, just not as quickly. Lack of modern luxuries like a washer, dryer, dishwasher, water and electricity seems to slow me down quite a bit. But there is a saying here that makes a lot of sense, "there is no hurry in Africa." As soon as I could wrap my head around that, I was just fine. "Delivered in 30 minutes or its free" just has no place here. All that aside, this is what a typical day for the Naslunds looks like.

It's **4:30 a.m.** and Brent's alarm goes off. As he is known to be the early riser in our family, he's getting up to do his morning routine, which includes the most important job of the day—getting the water boiling for coffee. We still do not have water in our cistern so this water comes from the well where it was likely collected the day before.

In prior years our missionaries had to boil this water not only for hot meals/beverages, but also for safety. Now, we have a countertop purifier that does all the purification. We are lucky, as we do not need to spend time boiling our drinking water. The purifier, with all of its filters and chemicals, works its magic almost by itself. Just add water and wait. I am up at **5:15 a.m.** to make sure I get my coffee as I prepare for the day.

By **5:45 a.m.**, the kids are awakening. Daily Mass begins at **6:30 a.m.**, so this gives them plenty of time to wash up for the morning. Buckets of water are hauled in from the back and boiled to help with morning washing.



Bismarck Diocese Missionary Jessica Naslund is pictured with a couple of the orphans served by the Mission.

Our walk to church is not more than five minutes. It is still dark out, but the morning birds are letting us know the sun is on its way.

The air is cool here in the morning and life is still. It is a nice time to be awake. We have new gate guards that help keep our compound safe at night. They are from a nearby Maasai tribe. Typically seen dressed in brightly colored shawls, ours wear parkas and stocking hats this time of the morning. It might be as cold as 60 degrees Fahrenheit! We laugh as we don our short sleeves out the gate. I am sure they think we are crazy.

We are home by **7:15 a.m.** More water is boiled for everything from oatmeal to dishes to just one more cup of coffee. By **8:00 a.m.** our school day begins.

Brent and I have devised a system of divide and conquer that seems to work quite well. We alternate our teaching intervals with the daily tasks that take the most time. Anything that involves water right now seems to be at the top of that list. Brent will begin his lesson plan with Cameron and Chloe while I boil more water to do breakfast dishes. While that water is heating up, I head outside to start laundry.

My laundry system has become much easier now that I have a great new concrete washing table. It is off of the ground and makes a world of difference. I am still using my three



Bismarck Diocese Missionary family Jessica Naslund and her children, Cameron and Chloe, work to organize items before distribution to the AIDS orphans served by the Mission.

bucket method (wash, rinse, soften) however, lately I find myself cheating and skipping that last rinse to help preserve water. Everyone has caught on because if I don't do the bucket of softener everything is "crunchy" when it dries on the clothesline.

After a few buckets of laundry, it is my turn to teach. The water for dishes is nice and hot so Brent will take over where I left off. He juggles kitchen duty with meeting with students and visitors, answering phone calls and inputting recent data regarding the latest mission weekend into his notes. He has also started teaching religion class four times a week here at St. Theresa's as well as serving at Gekano Parish for Adoration and daily Masses. It is easy to fill the day.

By **1:00 p.m.** and depending upon visitors, we usually have most of our lessons taught and are ready for the big task of the day—fetching water. This task determines what we will eat and drink, if we will bathe, if our clothes are cleaned, if our dishes are done, if the toilet is flushed and really the general wellbeing of our household. I will never take water for granted again!

Our well is the distance of nearly two city blocks away from our house and we share it with the girls who live here on the campus as well as the teachers, staff and Sisters. We are lucky as we are able to drive to it, which is not the case for many. The well is not electric so the water has to be manually pumped using a handle that we take turns pulling up and pushing down. Right now, we fill about eight, five-gallon buckets or 40 gallons every day. This sounds like a lot of water, but it is amazing how fast it goes even though we have become very good at reusing water. Each droplet is saved whether doing dishes, laundry or bathing for other uses such as mopping floors or flushing water.

Continued on page 10

It's all in a day's work

Continued from page 9

Lunchtimes here seem to be getting later and later for our family, however that seems to fit the customs of the people whom we deal with the most. It would not be uncommon to finish lunch at 2 p.m. for us now. Of course, with each meal a process of boiling and washing takes place. I aim for a clean kitchen by 3 p.m. as soon it will be time to prepare an evening meal and you guessed it...boil more water!

Trips to the nearby grocery store, home visits and other mission work continues later in the day. Sometimes we might join the girls from St. Theresa's for a prayer or the Rosary at the parish. Perhaps I might sneak a few minutes in on my sewing machine during this time as well. I have been taking in a few odd jobs like fixing uniform seams for the girls at school as well as making new curtains for the mission house and the new guesthouse that we, in conjunction with the Sisters, are fixing up. Of course as with any house, there is always a floor to mop or room to clean as well.

By 5 p.m., the primary school students are starting to come home from their nearby schools. Cameron and Chloe have good friends who live right here on the compound that they eagerly await for each day. Their playtime might consist of helping them pump water for food, laundry and bathing, walking to a nearby home to grind maize or play a local game of song and dance. The local children have long school days usually followed by a lengthy walk home. There is not much time to play during the week for them.

I have started a few extra activities from the mission house that take place in the evenings that I am excited about and am trying to build. Right now, I have a small library book checkout system for the nearby children. They really enjoy it, as this is not something available to them normally. I make a big deal about a book returned in good condition so they can check out more. It is great to see them march back each week with a big smile. I also have a little craft club that meets a few evenings a

week to do everything from origami cranes to sewing. They call it their "creativity club." They don't know it, but it is a time we work on their English language skills as well. I suppose you could say they work on my Swahili skills at this time, too.

By 6 p.m., clothing on the line needs to be taken down and put away. Buckets of water need to be carried in to fill the water purifier and start the evening meal. More water is brought in to boil for evening cleaning and bathing and still more to make sure the bathroom is ready for morning.

If all goes well, we will be eating supper by 6:30 p.m. and ready for the Rosary by 7:30 p.m. Cameron and Chloe are avid readers so the offer to have free reading time before bed is never passed up. They seem to be pushing their bedtime back with each passing night, but usually lights out by 9 p.m. This gives Brent and me time to finish up loose ends and wonder where the day went.

We feel so blessed to be active members of this community, yet with that have been saddened by the constant cry for basic living needs. We continue to do the best we can with the funds we are given to help support the families of our area. The Bismarck Diocese's Mission support is greatly appreciated and spoken about with such love and affection here that at times it brings tears to my eyes. I am proud to be on the team. Good people of the Bismarck Diocese's Mission, you are doing great things! Please continue to pray for our mission and know that your contributions are making a big difference.

■ Jessica, along with her husband, Brent and children, Cameron and Chloe, are full-time missionaries at the Bismarck Diocese's African Mission in Kenya. The Naslunds arrived in Kenya in September and plan to serve there for three years.



Bismarck Diocese Mission provides the orphans, seen here in their classroom, with a portion of their school fees and money for school uniforms.

Dear Mrs Renner and Class,

Habari, za asubuhi rafikis? I am fine and doing well. We loved getting your Christmas letters. Some of you asked questions. I will try to answer a few.

The #1 question I would like to answer is what I got for Christmas. This is what I got for Christmas: A cool lego set & two books of the Percy Jackson series. I liked them so much I finished both of them. I have started Chloe's Roald Dahl books. So that is what I got for Christmas.

The #2 question I would like to answer is if I have seen any spiders. Yes I have seen two spiders in the grass. The spiders were very small so it was really hard to see them. But it was really cool! So that is the news about the spiders.

The #3 question I would like to answer is how much are U.S. dollars worth. You can't buy anything here with them but thanks anyway. The only kind of money you can use here is the shilling.

Thanks for sending the \$!, you are the best. So that's how the money thing works.

I really miss you guys. I hope to see you soon. You guys were the best friends for me! See you guys soon. Bye rafiks!

You friend,
Cameron

Dear Mrs. McLeod and Class,

I'm fine, how are you? I am going to try to answer some of your questions that you sent in your Christmas letters. They were great, thank you so much.

School is going great. Do you remember my mom and dad homeschooled us? We don't speak Swahili so it would be hard to go to a school here. We go to 6:30 daily Mass to 7:30. Our school day begins at 8:30 and goes until 2:00. We are learning the same subjects as you.

Some of you were wondering how the puppies are. They are grown up and gone now. Our guard dog had the puppies. They were so cute. They were all black and white. We got to hold them and they were soft!

We are planning to come back this Spring if everything goes all right. I am excited to come back. Very, very excited. I will come to visit. I will give you all a hug and a high-five.

Love,
Chloe

Building homes and changing lives for orphan families

By Leon Heick

Having adequate shelter is something many of us take for granted in America. But for orphans under the care of the Bismarck Diocese's African Mission, it's a great privilege, even a luxury in most cases.

Building homes is just one of the many critical things that the diocese's Mission does for the lives of the AIDS orphans. In most cases the orphans are living with a grandparent, aunt, uncle or older sibling. The Mission team visits the homes of the orphans and assesses their housing situation.

Most orphan families could use a better house, but with limited funds the Mission gives priority to those families that have the greatest needs. During the six months I was in Kenya, the Mission provided the funds to build six houses.

Once the team decides which families are to receive a new home, Rogers Osoro, the Mission director, meets with the families and explains how the mission will fund the construction. In most cases, the house will be built on the same property near the house in which they currently live. Our Mission team currently does not actually build the house, but provides the funds so the labor force in the area will have a job



Submitted photos

A group of orphans stand outside their newly-constructed home.

and therefore will have money to support their families.

The homes built are called mud houses. The materials are mud, logs and metal sheets. The family hires a carpenter in the vicinity and this carpenter will layout the house, hire workers and build the house. Rogers and the Mission team oversee the construction and provide funding

during the different phases of the construction.

After the carpenter is hired, he purchases trees locally, has them cut down and delivered to the building site. The logs are then spilt and cut to about nine feet long. The house size is about 20 ft. by 20 ft. and typically has two bedrooms and a living room. There will be no running water, plumbing or electricity. There will be no kitchen. They cook with wood and because of the smoke do the cooking outside the living quarters.

The house is constructed with holes dug two feet deep, two feet apart and the logs then placed in the holes to frame out the walls. More logs are used to frame out

the roof. Metal sheets, purchased by the Mission from the town of Kisii and delivered to the site, are used for the roof. Branches are nailed about two feet apart horizontally up the sides of the walls. Mud is packed in between the branches and logs to finish the walls. The doors and windows are made out of wood.

The final step is to seal the walls with a mixture of cow manure and mud by smearing this combination to cover the logs and branches. Smearing the walls needs to be done yearly to prevent the walls from eroding due to all the rain.

Heick was among a group of individuals to serve for six months last winter at the Bismarck Diocese African Mission in Kenya.



Above, Leon Heick was one of the missionaries who assisted with the house building while serving at the diocese's African Mission for six months last winter. Below and at right, construction progresses on homes for the orphans.



On special assignment to Africa

Continued from Page 1

Jessica Naslund, in order to get a sense of the specific projects that short-term missionary teams could get done while there.

The Naslunds are serving in the Gekano Parish in the Diocese of Kisii, which is home to 65,000 Catholics with only three priests. The Bismarck Diocese estimates a Catholic population at just fewer than 62,000, to get a perspective of the need for more helping hands by way of missionary teams.

The Bismarck Diocese's African Mission began approximately 25 years ago under the direction of Bishop John Kinney. The intent was for the diocese to send a continuous stream of long-

term missionaries to live and work with the local people. Jim and Henrietta Nistler, the first couple from N.D. to travel to the Mission, served there for 10 years. Since then, however, there have been few people to serve on a long-term basis until the Naslunds began their three-year commitment last fall. Many short-term missionaries have served in many different ways.

"It's one thing to give money, but another great gift is to give of your time," Fr. Stephen expressed. "I understand that people are weary to leave their comfort zone to serve as a missionary. But so many I've talked to who have done it, realize how blessed it makes them feel and how rewarding it is."

Run to Win

1 Cor. 9:24

MICHELLE DUPPONG



Seeking holiness in the ordinary

You were made to be a saint. Do you believe that? Do you think you can do it?

I want to remind you that there's no doubt in God's mind that you CAN do it! He made you for it. The only way you can get to heaven is if you are a saint.

But, isn't it true that at times when we read some of the stories of the saints, we can get a bit discouraged thinking we have to be just like them and do the things they did in order to be among the favored ones of God? Take St Joseph of Cupertino, for example. He levitated. I don't know about you, but I can't mark that one off my bucket list yet! St. Rose of Lima survived on only a couple hours of sleep a night. St. Francis of Assisi gave up all the wealth he had to the point of taking off the very clothes he was wearing.

My point is that sometimes we can get caught up in thinking that holiness is imitating everything the saints did, and we forget that God is calling each of us to follow Him and carry out the mission

He gives us in a unique way. We shouldn't and can't judge our holiness by comparing ourselves to others, whether they're the saints in heaven or our neighbors here on earth.

God is giving each of us the grace we need to be holy in the everyday, ordinary tasks of our lives. Not all of us are called to move to China to be missionaries. Some are given this call. But, all Christians are called to be missionaries where we are at and to share God's love with the people He puts in our path each day. This is something we all have the capability of doing with God's grace.

When I was beginning college, I was struck by the story of a young man from Italy named Pier Giorgio Frassati who died in 1925 and was raised by the Church to the rank of "Blessed" in 1990. Blessed Pier Giorgio lived a very ordinary life to which most of us can relate. He loved the outdoors, sports, hiking, swimming, riding bike, being with friends, playing practical jokes,

laughing, photography, studying engineering, etc. Sound like someone you'd like to have as a friend?

Pier Giorgio grew up in a family where the faith was not openly practiced and his family relationships were strained to the point where his parents were considering a divorce, which was unheard of at that time. In spite of this, Pier Giorgio, even as a young child, embraced his Catholic faith and desired to be as close to Jesus as possible. His heart was enflamed with a love for others, especially the poor and sick, so he spent much of his free time visiting and serving them. He contracted polio from the poor he worked with and died during finals week of his last semester of college at the age of 24. When he was beatified, St. John Paul II gave him the title "Man of the Beatitudes."

Why do I share his story? Well, reading about Pier Giorgio's life made holiness seem so practical, so attainable. He was an ordinary young person who loved Jesus and

allowed this love to pour forth into his relationships with others. He embodied what Jesus taught in the eight beatitudes (Mt. 5:3-10). He's a hero to me; and I want to be like him.

When I found out that I had cancer, I knew I wanted to pray through Pier Giorgio's intercession. I want him to go before the throne of God on my behalf to ask for a miracle. I want to be the miracle that helps him get canonized a saint so that the whole world can see through Pier Giorgio's story that we all can be saints—that we all have what it takes. But, we just need to say "yes" to the Father's will for us today. He knows what is best for us. Let's trust Him.

Duppong, a native of Haymarsh, N.D., has served as director of faith formation for the Bismarck Diocese since July 2012. Check out Michelle's monthly faith formation talk series online at www.bismarckdiocese.com under the Adult Faith Formation.

Pope Frank

ABBEY NAGEL



Holding baby Jesus

Pope Francis gave a recent homily for the opening of the Year for Consecrated Life. He had great things to say about what it means to be a religious brother or sister, bringing Christ into the world for others. But as I was reading, something else struck me.

In his homily, the pope used the image of the Blessed Virgin Mary carrying baby Jesus. He explained that, like anyone holding a baby, Jesus is in front of Mary, and she walks behind Him, following. In that way, the pope explained, Jesus was leading Mary on a path toward God.

I thought this was insightful. As we know, Jesus became one of us and leads us to God. But it's something new for me to think about Him leading us as an innocent infant. I know that one could have profound meditation on this idea.

As I continued to think about it, I wondered: how does the same concept apply to newborn babies today? How does this apply to me holding and carrying my own baby?

Of course, we know that our little babies aren't Christ, and so the situation is different in that way. But at the same time, we hold them in front of us. We follow them down a path. Their path is of complete innocence. Their path is of simplicity and trust in their caregiver.

When Jesus said that we must become like little children, I suppose this is partially what he was talking about—living simply and trusting in our caregiver, God. I guess it never occurred to me that children aren't only examples of how to be holy, they teach us

how to be holier. They teach us while we care for them.

Through carrying them in front of us, we learn how to put others first. We learn how to serve our baby before ourselves. We learn more about sacrificial love—denying oneself for another. The late-night feedings, thousands of diapers, and last-minute changes of plans all teach us how to put our own desires aside and instead serve others.

This service is something that we've heard before from Pope Frank. He is constantly encouraging his flock to serve others, to help the poor, to reach

out. And here, he brings it home by using yet another example in our everyday lives. It just goes to show that his desire for us to serve others can be done in a million different ways each day.

Interesting how God designed adults to learn so much from innocent babes. And He decided to be the child to lead his own mother Mary to holiness, so that we might follow in her footsteps. As a married person with a new baby, I know that I am experiencing exactly what Pope Frank is trying to tell us, only I didn't realize it so much before. When I began writing this article,

I never expected it to be more about the vocation of marriage and children than about the vocation of consecrated life. But then again, I suppose that's part of the beauty of the two vocations. They mirror each other and have so much insight about the opposite vocation. That's why we need both. But then I suppose that's a topic for another day.

Nagel is the executive assistant to the bishop at the Diocese of Bismarck. Her column on the words and actions of Pope Francis appears bi-monthly in the DCA.

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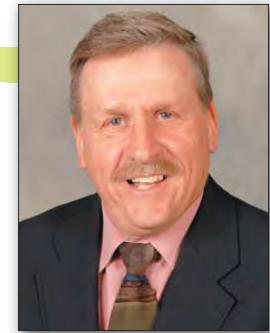
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Ag Attitudes

JAMES ODERMANN



Lent: create an outward sign of commitment to God

If you believe the horror stories about shrinking oil prices, North Dakotans are in a bind. The money for the needed dollars to supplement highway transportation, rural water development, urban street improvement and social services needs is decreasing—at least for the short term.

The typhoon speed alterations in the past five years were not sustainable if North Dakota was to maintain a quality of place. A course correction was needed and the drop in oil prices may

be the tipping point for a new lease (or look) at how to manage change, how to positively combat issues like drug, sex and human trafficking.

Our state—and mostly within the borders of the Bismarck Diocese—had one of the largest increases in the number of millionaires per capita. Mineral ownership on any sizeable tract of land where a producing oil well was drilled meant a revenue stream never before realized. Demand for consumable goods exceeded supply and prices

for almost every commodity (especially land) increased nearly exponentially.

There are many new issues to face. One issue deals with the protection of the resources needed to feed the world: the air, water and land. As an agricultural producer, I get to witness these three resources interacting in an almost magical way.

A big concern, however, is the fact that only two percent of the United States' population is engaged in food production. There needs to be a firm commitment among food producers and the public to make sure land ownership and management remains with the farmers and ranchers: the stewards of the land, the front line environmentalists of the future.

I am proud to be an agricultural producer. In fact, I have the best seat in the universe, getting dirt under my fingernails, watching the wonders of the seasons and all that goes with that daily transformation. This responsibility is huge.

At the same time, a bigger

responsibility is to the need to protect, assist and love my sisters and brothers. This means clearing myself of the grudges, trash and prejudices that limit my ability to love unconditionally as God loves me.

The Lenten journey is underway. With increased fervor, I need to seek forgiveness and commit to God's will. Jesus made the march to Calvary because God thought I was worth saving. In the same vein, I need to foster an inner spirit that creates an outward sign of commitment to God's infinite mercy and love

This is God's way of calling me, allowing me to consciously choose the path that leads to eternal happiness. It is not easy; there are many temptations. I need to resist evil and choose to cling to God. I hope I am up to the task. Care to join me?

■ Odermann lives with his wife, Leona, on the family farm in Billings County. They are members of the Church of St. Patrick in Dickinson and assist with eucharistic celebrations there as well as at the Churches of St. Bernard (Belfield) and St. Mary (Medora).

Diocese Roundup

Fr. Deichert promoted

Chaplain, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Deichert has been promoted to the rank of colonel in the United States Air Force.



Deichert has been a priest of the Diocese of Bismarck for more than 30 years. He was ordained on June 29, 1984 by Bishop John Kinney and served in several parish assignments for the next 10 years. He was released for full-time military service as an Air Force Chaplain on January 1, 1994. He has continued full-time military service to the present, currently stationed at Joint Base Langley-Eustis in Virginia.

Area retreats focus on enriching the Lenten season

"The Signs of the Times" is the topic for this year's Lenten women's retreat at St. Joseph in Mandan on Saturday, March 21 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fr. Thomas Grafsgaard, associate at St. Wenceslaus and chaplain at Trinity High in Dickinson, will address the issues of our times through a Catholic lens. Early bird registration, due March 5, is \$25. For more information, contact Theresa Waltz at 222-2752 or Patti Armstrong at 471-9633.

A men's Lenten retreat will be held at the Church of St. Anne in Bismarck on Saturday, March 28 beginning with Mass at 8 a.m. Featured speakers are Msgr. Richter, Fr. Sattler and Dr. James Link. Registration fee is \$25 and pre-registration is required. Contact Mike Bichler at mnbichler6@gmail.com or 471-0985.

Mandaree parish seeking team to run camp

Church of St. Anthony, located four miles east of Mandaree, will be hosting a summer camp July 13-17 and needs assistance building a team of volunteers to run the event. The search is on for adult and youth ministers, as well as counselors, cooks, teachers, nurse, prayer support and coordinators.

Each year the Church of St. Anthony provides three five-day camps called Christian Life Camp

for youth grades 1-7 during the month of July. A new facility has been built for these camps and a local workforce is needed to provide children an extra opportunity to grow in their relationship with God. Anyone interested these ministries, can call the parish at 701-759-3412 in Mandaree or email the parish at STAMandaree@restel.com.



The Dakota Children's Advocacy Center reminds you that it takes all of us to help keep our children safe, healthy and happy. Together, we can create safe communities where sexual abuse is stopped before a child is ever harmed.

So how can you help? Keep your eyes open to unusual or inappropriate behavior between an adult and child.

Warning signs to watch for include:

- Refusing to let a child set any of his/her own limits or ignoring the child's limits by insisting on hugging, tickling, or wrestling, or using teasing/belittling language regarding the limit
- Frequently interrupts the child in the bathroom by walking in on him/her
- Has secret interactions with the child or spends excessive time with the child via texting, calling, or social media
- Insistent on or manages to spend uninterrupted alone time with the child
- Is "too good to be true," which may be evident by free, frequent babysitting, taking the child on frequent outings, or buying gifts for no apparent reason
- Frequently makes dirty or suggestive jokes while the child is present
- Frequently points out sexual images in the presence of the child

Keep a watchful eye: Help prevent child sex abuse

March Events

March 11, 4-8 p.m.

Safe Environments at Ascension Church
Bismarck

- Exposes the child to adult sexual interactions or images
- Overly interested in the sexuality of a particular child/teen by talking about the child's developing body or by interfering with normal teen dating
- Shares personal and private information with the child and treats the child like a confidant

If you see warning signs, it is important to take action. This may involve developing a safety plan, or standing up and speaking out.

To learn more about what you can do to stop child sexual abuse, go to stopitnow.org.



Dakota Children's
Advocacy Center

SANFORD
HEALTH

Questions I was afraid to ask

FR. KEITH STREIFEL



Q: Why do we pray to the saints?

Many people wonder why we pray to the saints. Perhaps it's easier to understand if I say that we pray through or with them, when we ask them to pray for us.

But let's start with a more basic question, "What is prayer?" I think this is where people get hung up. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (2558) puts prayer in the context of faith: This mystery [of faith], then, requires that the faithful believe in it [Creed], that they celebrate it [Liturgy], and that they live from it in a vital and personal relationship with the living and true God. This relationship is prayer.

Since prayer is a relationship with the living and true God, we can think of it like Christmas at grandpa's house. In my grandfather's house at Christmas, there is always an abundance of food and activities and, most of all, people! Grandpa loves to have a houseful of people and is happy when we all talk to each other and play with each other. What were all those people doing there? Well, they were related to grandpa and so were related to me. One was grandma, others were aunts and uncles, and lots of others were cousins. They are a part of my relationship with grandpa.

Sometimes, when we think of a personal relationship, we want to limit it to only spending time with that person. We've all seen couples (usually young, but even some old ones can be like this) who seem attached at the hip and entirely exclusive. And we've seen how unhealthy they are. This doesn't happen at grandpa's house. Even though there will always be a time when I will be able to sit and talk to grandpa directly—to say hello, to catch

up, to ask for a favor, and even to express admiration. For a vital relationship, prayer must connect our whole life to God and connect us to all of God's life and relations.

At grandpa's house, I've noticed that cousin Timmy gets a drumstick every year. So I ask him how he does that, since grandpa carves the goose and Timmy has the technique down. At grandpa's house, I've always wanted to help milk a cow, but it seems like a pretty big deal, so I ask grandma, who is very close to grandpa's heart. She knows him better than anybody I know so I figured she could convince grandpa to let me help in the morning. All of this is, in fact, directed to and in my relationship with grandpa.

Some might ask, "Why don't you just go talk to grandpa about it directly?" Most of the time, I do. I ask grandpa and I ask for help. That's easy enough with the drumstick, but Timmy's got some insight that he can share with me. And as for helping with milking, grandma knows things about grandpa and milking and me that could make the whole process easier. I know that she's better at talking to grandpa than I am, and I know that she'll be awake with grandpa when I'm overcome by sleep.

So, why do we pray to the saints? If prayer is our relationship with God, then saints are our relatives. Sometimes they have special areas of understanding that we don't, and they are close to God in heaven so they can help by praying when we cannot. When we speak with the saints, we ask them to speak on our behalf. We never confuse the saints and God, though.

Fr. Streifel is pastor of the Church of St. Joseph in Dickinson. If you have a question you were afraid to ask, now is the time to ask it! Simply email your question to info@bismarckdiocese.com with the "Question Afraid to Ask" in the subject line.

Test yourself!

Who have been responsible for the personal safety of the pope since 1506?

- A. Italian Police
- B. Swiss Guard
- C. Vatican Officials
- D. French Army

What are the colors of the Papal flag?

- A. Red and yellow
- B. White and Orange
- C. White and yellow
- D. Red and Orange

Who was the first non-Italian pope since 1523?

- A. Paul VI
- B. John Paul I
- C. John Paul II
- D. Benedict XVI

CATHOLIC TRIVIA

1. (B) Swiss Guard 2. (C) White and yellow 3. (C) John Paul II

Balancing Church & State

CHRISTOPHER DODSON



Upholding the integrity of the vocation of agriculture

The North Dakota legislature is considering making radical changes to the state's corporate farming law to allow outside investors to own dairy and swine operations. The North Dakota Catholic Conference opposes the bill.

This position is not new. North Dakota's Catholic bishops, like bishops around the country, have for decades appealed for laws that preserve and maintain farm ownership and control in the hands of local family farmers. In fact, 76 years ago Catholic bishops of the United States, led by Fargo Bishop Aloisius Muench—the only bishop from North Dakota to be named a Cardinal—warned that investor ownership of farms would by its nature threaten families, communities, and our obligations as stewards of creation.

Some could argue that agriculture has changed since 1939, and they would be right. But who we are as human persons and what farming is to us as humans have not changed. That is why this is a religious issue. It is a religious issue, because it is a moral issue. It is a moral issue, because it is a human issue. It is a human issue because, as Pope Francis stated just a few weeks ago, farming is "characteristically and fundamentally human."

Indeed, Pope Francis' recent address on the vocation of agriculture is enlightening in that it illustrates precisely why investor-ownership of farms is so risky. Pope Francis explains that the relationship a farmer has with the land is "familiar." The Italian word he used was "familiare," which means not "familiar" as in "well known," but "of family." This is important to understand. Outside investors cannot be like family. Only human persons can relate "like family." Only human persons are capable of entering into a covenant with creation.

The pope went on to remind us that because farming is such a uniquely human vocation, how we engage in agriculture and how we

treat farmers affects who we are as humanity. Indeed, the position of the bishops is not based just on church doctrine. It also stems from what they and other bishops have witnessed in states that have repealed or weakened corporate farming laws. It used to be that the primary concern of bishops in rural areas was the health of the family farm. In states that have embraced corporate farming, the primary concern has shifted to the health and safety of farmworkers, most of whom are immigrants, undocumented and undocumented.

The bill introduced, SB 2351, is intended to help the dairy and swine operators. But the bill is not just about a small segment of the agricultural community. It is a radical upending of the foundation of our state's most widespread and permeating activity. Disrespecting the "familiar" relationship that should exist between the human farmer and farming will affect us all. If we truly believe that North Dakota is such a great place to live, why would we take that risk?

Some segments of agriculture are facing difficult times and we need to respond. Indeed, it is a moral imperative that we respond. North Dakotans, however, have always faced difficult challenges. Nevertheless, we have always found creative solutions without sacrificing our way of life and without succumbing to the temptation to reduce agriculture to a mere economic activity. Nor should we succumb to the temptation to want something just because other states have it. The Ten Commandments have something to say about that. In North Dakota, we have done, and can do, better.

Jesus asked, "What does it profit a man if he gain the world and lose his soul?" We must ask, "What does it profit our state if we gain some investors in agriculture, but lose the soul of agriculture?"

Dodson serves as executive director of the N.D. Catholic Conference, the official liaison for the dioceses of Fargo and Bismarck in matters of public policy.



Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for March:

• Universal: Scientists

That those involved in scientific research may serve the well-being of the whole human person.

• Evangelization: Contribution of women

That the unique contribution of women to the life of the Church may be recognized always.

Making Sense out of Bioethics

FR. TAD PACHOLCZYK



Medical assistance with the battle of the bulge

Bariatric surgery, which often involves banding of the stomach, is a widely used procedure for treating severe obesity. Another approach that relies on an implantable "stomach pacemaker" also appears poised to assist those struggling with significant weight gain.

Many people have already benefitted from these kinds of surgical interventions, enabling them to shed a great deal of weight, improve their health and get a new lease on life.

At the same time, however, it's important for us to examine such interventions from an ethical point of view. It's not simply a matter of weight loss, achieved by any means whatsoever, but a rational decision made after carefully weighing the risks, benefits and alternatives.

Bjorn Hofmann, a medical ethicist who writes about the ethical issues surrounding obesity-correction techniques notes, "Bariatric surgery is particularly interesting because it uses surgical methods to modify healthy organs, is not curative, but offers symptom relief for a condition that is considered to result from lack of self-control and is subject to significant prejudice."

The healthy organ that is modified is the stomach, which may be either banded or surgically modified with staples to create a small stomach pouch. This causes food to be retained in the small pouch for a longer period of time, creating a feeling of fullness, with the effect of reducing how much a person ingests at a single meal.

Like any surgical technique, bariatric surgery has risks associated with it: Mortality from the surgery itself is less than one percent, but post-surgical leakage into the abdomen or malfunction of the outlet from the stomach pouch can require further surgeries. Nearly 20 percent of patients experience chronic gastrointestinal symptoms. Wound infections, clot formation, vitamin deficiencies, cardiorespiratory failure, and other complications like gallstones and osteoporosis can also occasionally arise.

A new device, sometimes described as a "pacemaker for the stomach," was recently approved by regulators at the Food and Drug Administration. This rechargeable and implantable device blocks electrical nerve signals between the stomach and the brain and helps to diminish the feeling of being hungry. The cost for the small machine, along with its surgical implantation, is expected to run between \$30,000 and \$40,000, making it competitive with various forms of bariatric surgery.

Because the stomach pacemaker does not modify the stomach or the intestines as organs, but instead reduces appetite by blocking electrical signals in the abdominal vagus nerve, some of the surgery-related complications associated with modifying or stapling the stomach are eliminated. Other surgical complications related to the insertion of the device into the abdomen have sometimes been observed, however, as well as

adverse events associated with its use, like pain, nausea and vomiting.

Bariatric surgery, it should be noted, is not universally successful in terms of the underlying goal of losing weight and some patients ultimately regain the weight they lose either through enlargement of the stomach pouch or a return to compulsive eating patterns or both. Results have been similarly mixed for patients receiving the stomach pacemaker: some lose and keep off significant amounts of weight; others show only negligible improvements when they are unable to adhere to the needed life-long changes in eating habits.

Among the ethical questions that need to be considered with regard to surgically-based approaches are: Should an expensive, invasive and potentially risky surgery be routinely used for an anomaly that might be addressed by modifications in diet and eating habits? What criteria should be met before such surgery is seriously considered?

It is also of ethical importance that physicians and surgeons not be unduly influenced by device manufacturers to utilize their various stomach banding apparatuses or their pacemaker devices.

In 1991, the National Institutes of Health developed a consensus statement on "Gastrointestinal Surgery for Severe Obesity" that offers guidance for clinical decision making. The statement notes that, beyond having a serious weight problem, patients

seeking therapy for the first time for their obesity should "generally be encouraged to try non-surgical treatment approaches including dietary counseling, exercise, behavior modification and support."

These broad guidelines are intended to spark discussion on the part of patients and their medical team: How much support has an individual really received prior to looking into weight reduction surgery or stomach pacemaker insertion? Some patients may have tried diligently for years to lose weight, while others may have made only cursory, poorly-supported efforts. The need for support is also likely to continue following bariatric surgery or after the implantation of a stomach pacemaker.

In sum, there are notable differences between such surgical interventions and traditional weight loss techniques involving exercise and diet. With the surgical techniques, due diligence will be required both prior to and following such interventions, particularly in light of the ongoing discussions about the cost-effectiveness, safety, risks and outcomes of interventional surgery for the overweight patient.

■ Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.

Guest Column

SHELLY PRESZLER



Life in the fast lane

By Shelly Preszler

Hopefully by now, you've noticed we are about two weeks into the season of Lent. If you've decided to give up something, you're probably keenly aware of this time of sacrifice and reflection.

Last year I made the mistake of giving up chocolate for Lent. It took less than 23 minutes on Ash Wednesday morning to find the hidden stash of Hershey's Kisses. I huddled behind my family's sofa, quietly unwrapping them one by one. My daughter caught me red, I mean, chocolate handed. I retorted, "Look away, look away" as I hung my head in shame. Why was I hiding you may ask? Well, I had to hide. The previous night I had boasted to my whole family about giving up chocolate for Lent. They laughed and when the snickering died down all that was left of my "will," was well, my "maybe."

My love for food goes way back to my childhood and into my kids' childhood, as I loved to bake for them and their friends. I've had two KitchenAid mixers "cry uncle" and beg for mercy, heading to early retirement before the next batch of chocolate chip cookies could be lovingly mixed. I remember repairmen coming through the house when the kids were little to fix all the things those little tykes were

masters at breaking. I overheard one repairman remark to the other, "Yeah, this place may be a mess, but it smells like Heaven!" Heaven, hmm...isn't that the place where we all want to end up anyway? I remember the Bible referring to heavenly banquets. I'll admit thinking of this makes me a bit giddy. Christ setting a feast for us? Oh, please let it be true.

My other "successful" fast was the year I gave up baking and my family revolted, and even threatened to move out. It's good their threats never come to fruition, or is it? So, this year I'm giving up something different. This year for Lent I'm giving up eating between meals. This may sound easy for most of you, but you don't live at my house where counters beg to be cleaned off! They're ripe with yesterday's pies, and today's cookies, and tomorrow's cookbook recipes.

I should have never taught my kids to bake. Yes, all of them bake. Even my four sons can make pies from scratch. And my daughter, Katie, can whip up anything you ask for including treats in between meals like cookies. Thank goodness she's away at college. My daughter, Elizabeth, makes a mean Oreo shake. I may need to rent a motel room for the rest of Lent to make it through. Preferably a room without a sofa or counter, please.

On several occasions my husband has threatened to shut down our "Sugar Shack" but I can always coax him not to with a cupcake or two. Thank goodness the way to that man's heart is through his stomach. When it comes to baking, I just can't help myself. The calm, whirling hum of the mixer is music to my ears; like the sound of one of my teenagers running a vacuum over the living room carpet.

Whatever you've given up or added to your Lenten commitment, I hope your main goal is to get closer to Christ. This will surely make you a more joyful soul. The next thing you know, your friends and family will start asking you the source of your joy.

This is your chance to share. Some may call it evangelization. I like to think of it more in the terms of preacher D.T. Niles who stated, "Christianity is one beggar telling another beggar where he found bread."

Yes, with me it always comes back to food. Happy Lent! And if you're in our neighborhood, I just might race you to our fridge.

■ Shelly Preszler resides in Mandan with her stand mixer nicknamed "Betty" and a houseful of hungry people willing to sample her wares. In her spare time she enjoys writing and speaking about the blessings and pitfalls of parenting. She is happily married to her hubby, Todd, and can be seen circling the town with their six kids.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

The Diocese of Bismarck is firmly committed to the health and protection of our children, young people and vulnerable adults. With the hope of healing the pain and suffering from sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, we encourage anyone who has suffered from this abuse to please come forward and let us know. To report allegations of sexual abuse, please contact: Dale Eberle, Chancellor, Diocese of Bismarck, PO Box 1575, Bismarck, ND 58502-1575. Phone: 701.223.1347 or 1.877.405.7435. The complaint form and policies can be found on the diocesan web site at <http://www.bismarckdiocese.com>.

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The Catholic Church must be exemplary: Clergy, staff, whether diocesan or parish, and volunteers are held accountable for their behavior. To enable the highest level of accountability, there must be a clear and unambiguous definition of appropriate behavior. To this end, this Code of Pastoral Conduct is defined for the Diocese of Bismarck and it provides a foundation for implementing effective and enforceable standards for all personnel. View the Code of Pastoral Conduct at <http://www.bismarckdiocese.com>.

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