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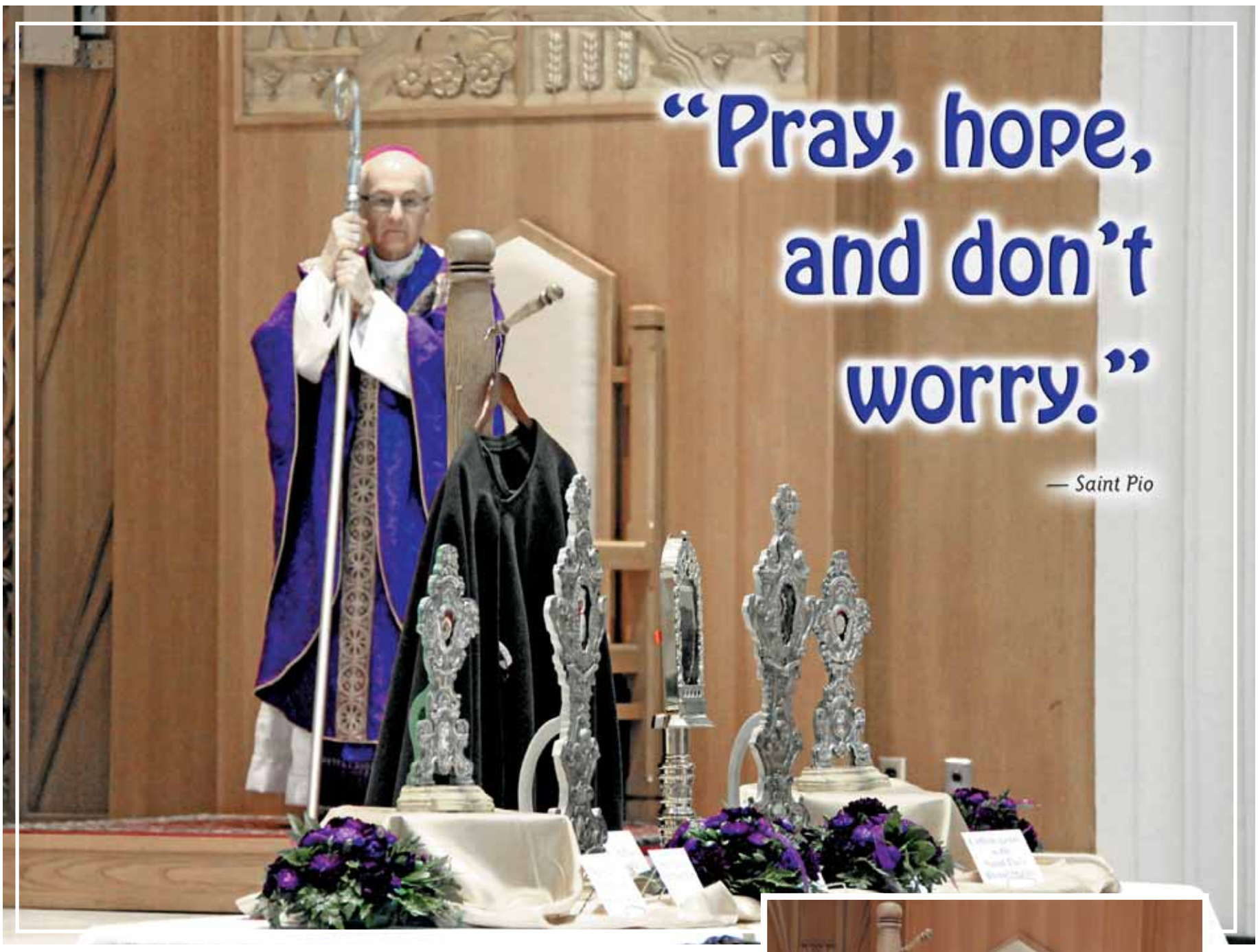
Dakota Catholic Action

Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941



Staff photos

Bishop Kagan listens to the reading of the Gospel during Mass to honor Saint Pio, whose relics (in the foreground) were on display at the Cathedral on March 12.

Cathedral of the Holy Spirit Elementary School student Cortland Eberle touches a rosary to one of the Saint Pio relics.

Saint Pio relics visit diocese

By Sonia Mullally
DCA Editor

The popular saint known as Padre Pio has gained "rock star" status since his death in 1968 and canonization in 2002, it's perhaps fitting that he's on an international tour.

The third stop on a 40-diocese spring tour coordinated by the Saint Pio Foundation was at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Bismarck on March 12. Thousands of the faithful, from across the diocese and beyond, showed up to venerate the six relics on display, attend Mass, and take part in Eucharistic adoration and the sacrament of reconciliation.

The relics, on loan to the foundation, included: his glove; crusts of wounds; cotton-gauze with Saint Pio's blood stains; a lock of hair; his mantle; and a handkerchief soaked with his sweat hours before he died.

"I am always motivated when contacted by smaller dioceses," said Luciano Lamonarca, who as founder and president of the Saint Pio Foundation in New York City organized the relics tour for the 50th anniversary of the saint's death. "It's a spiritual sign from Padre Pio to bring him to those who might never have a chance to visit him."

The former rector of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Msgr. Tom Richter, had visited with his friend, Fr. Marcel Taillon, St. Thomas More Parish in Rhode Island. That parish had hosted the relics last fall. From this, Msgr. Richter contacted

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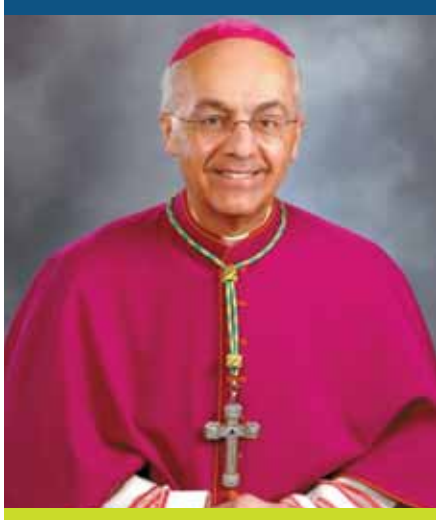
A LOOK **INSIDE**

100 years of service
The School Sisters of Notre Dame are celebrating 100 years in the Diocese of Bismarck. .....PAGES 8-9

Rare Bible on display
Heritage Edition of the Saint John's Bible will be on display at three locations in the diocese in April and May.....PAGE 11

Enjoy the peace only the Risen Lord can give

FROM THE BISHOP



Bishop David D. Kagan

We just celebrated the shortest but most spiritually intense liturgical season in our entire Church year, the great Paschal Triduum. As you know, the season of Lent ended when the Mass of the Lord's Supper began the evening of Holy Thursday and that began the Paschal Triduum.

The first day of the Paschal Triduum extended to the evening of Good Friday, the only day of the Church's year when Mass may not be celebrated. We celebrate the Liturgy of the Passion of the Lord, the veneration of the Cross, and receive Holy Communion, done in a beautifully solemn yet simple manner.

The second day of the Triduum extended to the end of the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday evening, when we celebrate the waiting with such profound hope and humble gratitude the longed-for Resurrection of Jesus. We do so with the blessing of the new fire from which is lit the new Paschal Candle, one of the preeminent symbols of Christ Who is the eternal Light, the recounting of God's fidelity to His promise to Adam and Eve to redeem them and all of their human offspring from their terrible sin which brought them suffering and death. We welcome to the Church, the Body of Christ through the sacraments of Initiation our newest Roman Catholics. And, we all are renewed and strengthened by the receiving of Our Lord, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity in the Most Holy Eucharist.

The third day of the Triduum extended from the end of the Easter Vigil to the evening of Easter Sunday, as the Fathers of the Church have called it, the "Sunday of Sundays." This is the day which every Sunday in our Church year commemorates. That is why every faithful Catholic attends and participates in Mass each Sunday, not only because the good God commands us to do so but because the desire to be so intimately united to Jesus in the Most Holy Eucharist, the Mass, which is the re-presentation in unbloody form of His sacrifice for us on Calvary, is what gives each of our lives its firm foundation and its real meaning.

It is a great and continuous moment of grace to be able to be with the Lord Jesus at the Last Supper, at Calvary, at the Tomb and to be able to greet Him with the joy and peace that only He, crucified and risen, can give you.

My sincere wishes that you all had a Blessed Easter and Easter Season! I promise to remember you and those whom you love and cherish at my Masses.

BISHOP IN ACTION

Staff photo

In his office, Bishop Kagan recently filmed segments of the video for the upcoming God's Share Appeal. The 61st annual appeal will take place on May 5-6.

BISHOP'S SCHEDULE

APRIL 2018

April 5	• Mass, St. Mary's Academy, Bismarck, 8:45 am
	• Mass for Legatus Chapter, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 6 p.m.
April 6	• Confirmation at Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 7 p.m.
April 8	• Confirmation for Churches of St. Agnes in Kenmare and St. Joseph in Bowbells, at Kenmare, 10 a.m.
April 9	• Priest Benefit Association meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 2 p.m.
April 9-12	• Spring Clergy Conference, Radisson, Bismarck
April 14	• Institution of Lectors, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 9 a.m.
April 15	• Confirmation for Churches of St. Charles in Bowman, St. Mary in Marmarth and St. Mel in Rhame, at Bowman, 10 a.m. MT
April 17	• Real Presence Radio interview, 9 a.m.
	• Celebration of New Life Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 6:30 p.m.
April 18	• Lumen Vitae event, University of Mary, 5:30 p.m.
April 20	• Confirmation for the Churches of St. Vincent de Paul in Mott, St. John the Baptist in New Leipzig and St. Henry in Regent, at Mott, 6 p.m. MT
April 22	• Confirmation for the Churches of St. Thomas the Apostle in Tioga, St. James in Powers Lake and St. Michael in Ray, at Tioga 11 a.m.
	• Confirmation for the Churches of Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in Stanley and St. Ann in Berthold, at Stanley, 2 p.m.
April 23	• Confirmation for the Churches of St. Joseph and Christ the King in Mandan, at St. Joseph, 7 p.m.
April 28	• Knights of Columbus Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 5 p.m.
April 29	• Confirmation at the Church of St. Wenceslaus, Dickinson, 9:30 a.m. MT
	• Confirmation at the Church of St. Patrick, Dickinson, 12 p.m. MT

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Catholic Press Association cpa Member

Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Visit our website at www.bismarckdiocese.com
Get news, photos, videos and more from around the diocese.

Search "Bismarck Diocese" on YouTube for videos from the Church in western N.D.

Follow the Diocese on Twitter @BisDiocese and follow Bishop Kagan @VescovoDDK

Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/Bismarck Diocese
Get status updates, photos, videos, and links and share them with your friends.

My Life Before the Priesthood

Drawn in by the Eucharist

Father Terry Wipf reflects on his life before the priesthood

By Patti Armstrong
DCA Writer

Editor's note: This is part of a series of feature stories about the lives and careers of our diocesan priests before they answered the call to their true vocation—proving that God calls from all walks of life.

Father Terry Wipf's faith journey has taken him from Presbyterian to Catholic; and his vocational journey from music teacher to the priesthood.

Father Terry is currently parochial vicar at the Church of Corpus Christi in Bismarck where he has been for eight years. Although he was born into a Baptist family and grew up Presbyterian in Cavalier, North Dakota, he became a Catholic priest 18 years ago at the age of 42.

The attraction began with Jesus. "It's because of the Eucharist especially," he said. "As Christians, we are all about Jesus and the Eucharist is the maximum amount of Jesus." The first 42 years of his life, were a journey of faith and sometimes challenges, that ended up bringing him to where he is today, "feeling privileged to be a priest."

Born in 1958, Wipf was one of four children raised by parents who were originally Baptist and later became Presbyterian. His father went to a Baptist seminary, but became a Presbyterian minister after he decided he liked their theology better.

Journey to the Church

In 1981, Father Wipf earned a degree in music from North Dakota State University with a major in voice and minor in band. He taught in a couple of high schools, at Dakota Boys Ranch, and then at Cardinal Muench Seminary High School before it closed. It was while teaching band and helping out with choir at Cardinal Meunch's in 1986 that the Catholic faith began to enter his mind and heart, almost through osmosis.

"I got exposed to the Catholic faith there," Wipf explained. "The Presbyterians were getting radical and were pro-choice—although my dad was not—but the more I learned about the Catholic faith, the more sense it made to me." In addition, some of his favorite political writers and commentators were Catholics such as William F. Buckley and Pat Buchanan.

Although the logic and the history of the Catholic faith drew him in, it was ultimately the Eucharist that Father Wipf could not resist. "I wanted the Eucharist," he said. "Jesus said, 'This is my body,' and He meant, this is my body. Why wouldn't you want to have that?"

Another attraction for Father Wipf was belonging to the Church that goes back to Jesus and is the same anywhere in the world—one, holy, Catholic and apostolic.

Father Wipf entered the Church in 1989. At that time, he felt called to be a priest. He was drawn to the thought of presiding at the liturgy. "But I thought it would be presumptuous to convert and say here I am," he said. "I wanted to be sure it was not just the newness of being Catholic, so I decided to wait five years and see where I was at then."

Treatment and healing

After Cardinal Muench high school closed in 1991, Father Wipf found another teaching job, but soon lost it. It was at that point when he had to confront the fact the he had a drinking problem.

"It was either move under a bridge or go to treatment," Father Wipf said. "I was hiding my empties in my trumpet case; it was bad. I did not realize that I had depression and was self-medicating, but in treatment it came out."

Looking back, he said that when he was younger, he always knew something was wrong. "I wasn't very social and had a hard time getting things done," he said. "It would go up and down, but since then, I had to deal with my depression and I am better."

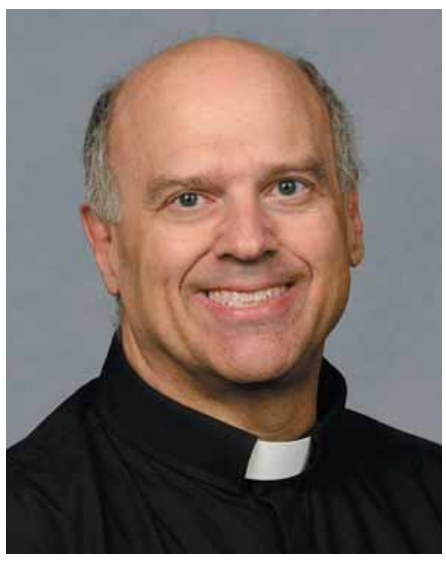
After treatment, Father Wipf took a job in Minot working with developmentally disabled adults at the Minot Vocation Adjustment Workshop as a residential trainer. "It was a place where I learned to love people for who they were," he said. "It was a very good experience for me and helped prepare me for the priesthood. It was about giving and not getting, although I did get back in many ways."

When his self-imposed five-year wait was up, Father Wipf still felt called to the priesthood. He was accepted and attended Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio and was ordained on May 25, 2000. His family was supportive and attended his ordination and first Mass, although his father had since passed away. "I think my father and I would have had fun discussing things when I went to the seminary had he still been alive," Father Wipf said. "He had friends who were priests. I like to think we could have brought him home to Rome."

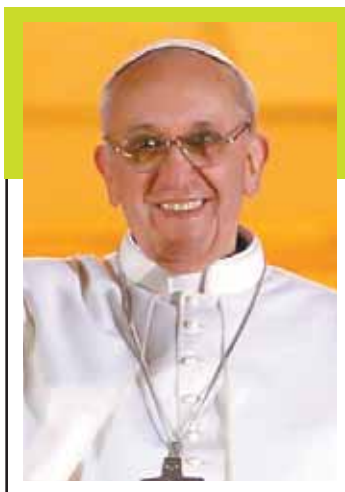
About 10 years ago, Father Wipf had a relapse and spent time at Guest House, in Lake Orion, Michigan, a center specifically for religious. After treatment and returning to his duties as a priest, he said he has learned to handle his depression when it comes on. "I intellectualize it," he said. "I know what I should be doing so I'll do what a non-depressed person would do and it gets easier. One person who heard one of my talks said, 'We call that fake it till you make it.'"

Father Wipf said that his love of the priesthood has brought him much happiness. "I always thought the liturgy would be the most enjoyable part—and it is great—but the people of God are just incredible. People keep me going, it's been a very rewarding part of my priesthood."

Working for Jesus as a priest has been a privilege, according to him. "I love Him more every day," he said. "After Communion, I always thank God for letting me be a priest, and I ask Him to help me to be a good priest for the people.



Fr. Terry Wipf



Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for April

Universal:
For Those who have Responsibility in Economic Matters
That economists may have the courage to reject any economy of exclusion and know how to open new paths.

A gift of Sacred Art

Please join us for a North Dakota tour of *The Saint John's Bible* Heritage Edition.

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Call for special viewing times and events.

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The Saint John's Bible

The Heritage Edition *Saint John's Bible* is brought to your community with support from Benedictine Health System and Benedictine Health System Foundation.

Serra Club promotes vocations

Three Bismarck-Mandan charter members still active today

By Amanda Evinger
DCA Writer

Often, some of the most beautiful works of God begin by planting little seeds of faith with humility and hope. Such is the case of the Serra Club, which is a flourishing ministry of prayer that works to promote vocations to the religious life and the priesthood in our diocese and beyond.

The Serra USA was founded in 1935. This group of Catholic lay leaders is named in honor of St. Junipero Serra, an 18th century Franciscan friar and missionary disciple who founded missions across California.

Soon after he came to our diocese in 1962, Bishop Hacker recognized the need for actively promoting religious vocations in our sparsely populated diocese. Coming from the Diocese of St. Paul, he had an intimate knowledge of the Serra Club, which had numerous groups in the Twin Cities area. Knowing how dedicated Serrans are to fostering vocations, he desired a Serra Club chartered in Bismarck.

The Bismarck-Mandan chapter is blessed to have three of their original members still active today—Deacon Ray Grabar, Jerry Spaedy and Bob Rausch.

"In the beginning, only a few of us would meet together to pray," said Deacon Ray Grabar. "At one point, we had trouble getting enough members to have an official charter, so we did some recruiting. We were sitting at about 16 to 18 members, and today we have about 90. In fact, at one time we were the largest or the second largest charter in the United States. Women are now admitted, and I really appreciate their participation."

On Jan. 5, 1964, the Bismarck-Mandan Serra Club achieved their goal and received the charter which was presented by District Governor Harvey Seipp. As his personal gift to the Serra Club, Harvey presented the official Serra meeting bell and gavel, which continues to be used at their meetings.

Currently, there are Serra Club groups in Bismarck and Minot, plus other active vocations groups in other cities. Its members stay true to the original intention of the club, which was to prayerfully promote vocations and give a means of fellowship to its members. In addition to prayer, Serra Club members do fundraising to help seminarians, such as putting on annual breakfasts or collecting pocket change at their meetings.

Submitted photo

The Bismarck-Mandan chapter is blessed to have three of the original members still active today— (l-r) Deacon Ray Grabar, Jerry Spaedy and Bob Rausch.

When Deacon Ray first joined the Serra Club in the early 1960's, he was just a "Sunday only" Catholic, but it didn't take long for that to change.

"My spiritual life mainly consisted of just going to Mass on Sundays, except for some daily Masses during Lent," he shared. "But, being a member of the Serra Club made me want to be more active with my faith. It brought me to pray daily for vocations, which then inspired me to pray for other intentions, such as for my family, and all of their struggles in life."

Ultimately, it kindled a desire to open his heart to God's call upon his own life in a radical way.

"My wife Loretta and I have eight children, and I thought that being a member of the Serra Club would be a great way to pray for their vocations," he said. "But it ended up backfiring on me, and now I am the one with a vocation as a deacon!"

Looking back, Serra Club members are grateful that they were courageous and persistent in founding the charter. The Diocese of Bismarck and the world beyond is now reaping the "harvest" of their efforts.

"Having the Serra Club has really increased the prayers for vocations in our diocese," said Jerry Spaedy, who has been a member since 1964 and was recently joined by his wife, Sharon. "Some of the years, we have persevered in prayer, even when there wasn't anyone being ordained, or only one or two men. Now, we have 27 seminarians. I would like to think that our prayers have made a difference. It truly is God's work."

And, because this ministry has proven to be such a grace, Jerry and Sharon would love to see it branch out all the more.

"We are blessed and privileged to even have a Serra Club in our diocese," Jerry said. "When our son David tried to get one started in another diocese, he didn't have enough support to do so. We club members are constantly trying to get our organization's name out to local parishes, so that it can grow further."

Jerry and Sharon have also found that belonging to the Serra Club has enriched their journey as Catholics.

"It is a very prayerful group," he added. "We not only pray for vocations, but we increase our own personal prayer life as well. Both Sharon and I also feel that doing a ministry together has helped us grow in our faith together as a married couple."

Other members have found themselves blessed in return for their generosity in giving their time and talent to the Serra Club. In 1997, Bob Rausch wrote the following about his enriching experiences as a member: "One of the highlights of my life as a Serran was representing our club at the Chicago International Convention where Bishop Sheen was a major speaker. I could hardly believe I was seated within about ten feet of the podium from which he spoke. Another, of equal importance, was a trip to Serra International Convention held in San Francisco. Serra has been a great gift in my life! I get inspiration from my fellow Serrans when I witness their dedication to leading a good Christian life. I'm so grateful for their companionship on our faith journey together."

Those who would like to join the Serra Club can contact any member and sign up. In Minot, contact Chapter President Mike Ruelle at 701-839-4365 and President Chuck Huber at 701-391-9575 in Bismarck.

World Day of Prayer for Vocations

The World Day of Prayer for Vocations is observed on "Good Shepherd Sunday" – April 22, 2018. The purpose of this day is to publicly fulfill the Lord's instruction to, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into his harvest" (Mt 9:38; Lk 10:2). It affirms the primacy of faith and grace in all that concerns vocations to the priesthood and to the consecrated life. This year marks the 55th anniversary of this celebration.

Discovering the master plan for your life

Introduction to the Theology of the Body study offered April 21

If you're wondering if there's more to life than just "getting by" and are ready to focus on what really matters, then discover the Catholic teaching known as the Theology of the Body.

In *An Introduction to the Theology of the Body: Discovering the Master Plan For Your Life*, an adult faith formation program, renowned author and theologian Christopher West unfolds God's extraordinary plan for all of humanity.

This DVD series will be held on Saturday, April 21 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Mary's Parish in Bismarck. The cost is only $10 plus $15 if you would like to order the workbook. Order for workbooks will be placed on April 2. For more information and to register, contact Diane Huck at 701-223-5562 or dianeh@stmarysparishfamily.net.

Given to us by Pope John Paul II, the Theology of the Body is renewing marriages, awakening vocations, healing deep personal wounds, and setting people free to live the life of greatness to which we are all called. This introductory course is an eight-part, four-hour study designed to give you a solid understanding of God's plan for humanity—a plan stamped right into our bodies.

Most people have heard the "whats" of Catholic teaching, but very few have ever heard the "whys." The course presenter will demonstrate that the Church's teaching on human sexuality makes sense, and, in fact, is the very "logic" of Christianity—because it corresponds perfectly with the deepest stirrings and desires of the human heart. This study is for everyone searching for their ultimate purpose in life.

Theology of the Body
An introductory DVD series
Saturday, April 21
8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
St. Mary's Parish, Bismarck

About the presenter

The speaker on the DVD series is world-renowned author Christopher West offering the tools needed to lay a firm foundation for those who desire to learn and incorporate the Theology of the Body into their daily lives. He serves as a research fellow and faculty member of the Theology of the Body Institute near Philadelphia.

—Submitted information

Showering God's love on the most vulnerable

Children's Advocacy Center provides support

By Amanda Evinger
DCA Writer

For the past 17 years, Paula Condol has been giving her heart to a higher purpose, and the joy it has brought her is like nothing else.

"I have been with the Dakota Children's Advocacy Center (DCAC) for the past 17 years and its mission has become a part of my heart," said Paula, who now serves as the organization's executive director. "I strongly believe in giving kids not only great childhoods, but also giving them the skills so they can grow up to be healthy, productive adults. We have such a wonderful opportunity at the DCAC because we are given the honor to intervene with people during one of the most difficult moments of their lives. We all have such a strong passion for the work we do."

Dakota Children's Advocacy Center staff, (l-r) Kayla Jones, advocate; Shannon Hilfer, forensic interviewer; Laura Stringer, office manager; and Paula Condol, executive director, provide assistance and support for children and families affected by abuse.

The mission of the DCAC is to provide a safe, family friendly environment that promotes hope, health, and healing to traumatized children and their families. They serve children and their families that have been affected by abuse. They also provide education to prevent abuse from occurring and to improve intervention if or when it occurs.

Dakota Children's ADVOCACY CENTER

Time and time again, DCAC employees prove to have a tremendous impact on those whom they serve. With willing hearts, they lift the children they work with up from their sorrows, and show them that they are not alone.

"We help people in many different ways," Paula said. "For some, it is helping them feel safe when safety isn't something that they've known, for others it is providing a listening ear when they feel like their whole world is falling apart. At times, we help them by empowering them to take a stand and to take back control. Sometimes it's as simple as giving them a cozy blanket to hold as they fall asleep in a new place, or helping them find their smile again as they learn to deal what has happened to them."

The DCAC opened in the spring of 1997 and became a full member of the National Children's Alliance in 1998. For 20 years, they operated under an umbrella organization. In November 2017, they became an independent non-profit. In 2008, they partnered with the Diocese of Bismarck to help develop and present Safe Environment Training sessions to kids and volunteers across the western half of North Dakota. Over the past 10 years, they have provided these training sessions to over 10,000 people.

They have partnered with many faith-based organizations over the past 20 years helping to make child safety a high priority. The Diocese of Bismarck has embraced education for both children and its volunteers to educate them and prevent abuse of any kind. Each year, out of the 2,500 people that DCAC trains, over 75% of them are associated with Catholic churches throughout the Diocese of Bismarck.

"Even though the DCAC is a secular organization, I myself am a Catholic, and every day I hope that I do my job with God's love and a servant's heart," Paula said. "We have helped thousands of individuals over the years. Many of their stories have been ingrained in my soul and will always stay with me. That's why we do what we do—to start people on a new, better path in life, and give them resiliency so they can face the bumps they will meet head on, with strength and courage."

Looking back, Paula can't help but be impressed by the ground that the DCAC has covered over the years.

"Since its opening, the DCAC has experienced tremendous growth," Paula shared. "We have gone from seeing 60 kids a year to over 500. We have served all of the counties in North Dakota, including the state's Native American reservations, as well as northern South Dakota and Eastern Montana."

Shannon Hilfer, who has worked with the DCAC as a forensic interviewer for nearly 12 years, is grateful to be a source of consolation to her clients and their families.

"After a child has made a report, they come to the DCAC to be interviewed so they don't have to talk to social services or law enforcement representatives," she explained. "They tell their story to me, in one place, at one time. It is important that they can tell their story to someone who is trained in talking to them so that the information is accurate and reliable."

Over time, Shannon sees the children and families she works with grow stronger, more assertive, and confident in dealing with their personal situations the best that they can.

"I tell our families that unfortunately I can't ensure that bad things won't happen again, because that is the way life is, and I have no control over that," Shannon said. "But what I can do is give them skills so that when bad things do happen, they can take a deep breath and know that they have built a strong support system and a resiliency within themselves."

Shannon also sees glimpse of the joy and freedom her clients can have with the help of people who care.

"That is why I keep doing what I do, because I get the unique experience of being with people in their darkest hours and walking with them to a place where I am no longer needed because they are strong and vibrant and whole," Shannon said. "They've gotten their smile back, and that's what keeps me going."

The fruits of this careful, gentle approach are evident in many ways.

"It is very important that when kids have these difficult things happen to them, we don't re-traumatize them with our professional response," Shannon said. "With the DCAC's help in interviewing them, we see better outcomes for the kids, both health-wise and prosecution-wise. People need to understand that children can't protect themselves, and that they rely on adults to protect them. They are totally vulnerable."

The DCAC is always in need of donations, and at times, of volunteers. The DCAC events would not be able to happen without the generosity of volunteers. Special events volunteers join event-planning committees and are needed the day of events to help with set up, registration and clean up. Volunteers also needed to assist with the Giving Tree Project during the holidays, which provides necessary gifts for children seen at the DCAC. The monthly sponsorship program, providing snacks and other items for the children served at the DCAC, also relies on the contributions of volunteers.

Those who would like to join the mission of the DCAC may contact info@dakotacac.org or call 701-323-5626. Prospective volunteers can set up a time to come in for a short visit so that a staff member can explain the various programs offered and help determine the best volunteer role for them. Volunteers need to complete an application and background check, sign a pledge of confidentiality, and attend a volunteer orientation. The Dakota Children's Advocacy Center is located at 1303 East Central Ave. in Bismarck. More information is available at www.dakotacac.org.

Saint Pio relics visit diocese

Continued from page 1

the Saint Pio Foundation to request the relics come to the Bismarck Diocese. Once that was set into motion, the details were arranged with Bishop Kagan and Lamonarca.

In Italy, Lamonarca explained that most every Catholic home has a photo of Padre Pio hanging on their wall. But, his personal devotion to the saint came years later after he had come to the United States in 2008 to pursue a career as an opera singer.

After his wife, Valentina, suffered a miscarriage in the fifth month of pregnancy, the couple went through some dark times. On the first anniversary of the loss, they visited the tomb of Padre Pio to ask for his intercession. "Like everyone does, we asked for some sort of sign from him," Lamonarca said.

On their visit to Italy they met a monsignor who had been a friend of Padre Pio. He showed them a handkerchief soaked with the blood of the saint. Lamonarca said that when that handkerchief was pulled out of its storage bag, "it was as if the room was filled with 1,000 roses."

A flowery odor is associated with certain saints like Padre Pio. The blood that flowed from his stigmata was reported to have smelled like roses.

"[The smell] was so strong; my wife and I started to cry," he said. "The monsignor said that we would have many challenges and sacrifices, but we would be parents and that Padre Pio had a big vision for me."

In 2013, Lamonarca began making connections with people working to promote Padre Pio's legacy. Then in 2014, he started the foundation. And, on Sept. 3, 2015, he and his wife had their son, Sebastian.

"My mission, all my efforts and direction with the foundation are to thank God for the blessing of a healthy, beautiful child," he added.

He said that he continues to pray to Padre Pio for himself and others that this is what the saint would want for his legacy. From Bismarck, Lamonarca boarded a plane for San Bernadino, Calif. to display the relics continuing the 40-diocese tour.

The six relics of St. Pio were on display at the front of the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

Many faithful followers touched sacramentals, such as rosaries, scapulars and prayer cards to the relics of St. Pio.

About Padre Pio

St. Pio was born on May 25, 1887 in Pietrelcina, Italy, and baptized Francesco Forgione. He first expressed his desire for priesthood at age 10. To pay for the preparatory education, his father, Grazio Forgione, emigrated to the United States in 1899, where he worked for several years.

The future saint entered the Capuchin order at age 15, taking the name Pio. He was ordained a priest in 1910 at the age of 23. During his lifetime, Padre Pio was known as a mystic with miraculous powers of healing and knowledge, who bore the stigmata. Stigmata is the term the Catholic Church uses to speak about the wounds an individual receives that correspond to the crucifixion wounds of Jesus Christ. They can appear on the forehead, hands, wrists, and feet.

His stigmata emerged during World War I, after Pope Benedict XV asked Christians to pray for an end to the conflict. Padre Pio had a vision in which Christ pierced his side. A few weeks later, on Sept. 20, 1918, Jesus again appeared to him, and he received the full stigmata. It remained with him until his death on Sept. 23, 1968. Pope John Paul II canonized him in 2002.

Those devoted to St. Pio regard these wounds as signs of holiness and miraculous fact that they never became infected, though they did bleed. So much so, that St. Pio is said to have changed his fingerless gloves twice a day.

As Catholics, we pray for the intercession of the saints to help us become good and holy people in our mission to live eternal with Our Lord. We venerate their relics as recognition of a true and intentional disciple of God and to hopefully imitate that type of discipleship.

Bishop Kagan celebrated Mass with several diocesan priests.

A large crowd attended the Mass to commemorate the presence of the relics.

A large number of students from the Catholic schools came to venerate the relics.

North Dakota night at D.C. seminary

By Ryan Martire
Diocesan Seminarian

We, Bismarck seminarians, are very proud of our great diocese and state.

Recently, we were blessed to host something called "North Dakota Night" at our seminary, Saint John Paul II, in Washington, D.C. It was a wonderful night, and all the guys from the six other dioceses on the East Coast really loved the night.

Thank you for your commitment to Christ and His mission within our diocese! My fellow seminarians here are: Grant Dvorak, Isaiah Fischer, Jake Magnuson and John Windsor.

Showcasing our home state

"God of freedom, all victorious,
Give us souls serene and strong,

Ryan Martire

Strength to make the future glorious,
Keep the echo of our song;
North Dakota, North Dakota,
In our hearts forever long."

These are the words of the North Dakota State Hymn which exuberate within the hearts of seminarians from the Bismarck Diocese.

During our time in the District, we have been blessed to be surrounded by the great priests, seminarians, and lay people of the hustling and bustling Archdiocese of Washington. But, at times, we grow homesick. We come to miss the wide prairies, the serene silence, and the hearty souls of our motherland.

To compensate for our homesickness, we have Bismarck night once a week so that we can talk about North Dakota stuff. You know… farming, hunting, ice-fishing, buffalo, and the like. But, this still did not fully satisfy our North Dakota homesickness. So, North Dakota night was born.

Knoephla, kuchen, lefse, deer jerky… all of these German-Prussian and Norwegian words are foreign to the native seminarians of D.C., so we decided to give them a little taste of the earthy culture of North Dakota.

"Ope," "you betcha," "oh for cool," and "bag" (pronounced bayg) were terms plastered over the walls of St. Joseph's common room at the first-ever North Dakota night of SJPII Seminary. Our good mothers and vocation director, Fr. Josh Waltz, sent us the finest cuisine that North Dakota has to offer for the event. From caramel rolls, to knoephla soup, to the deer that our vocation director shot this fall, the seminarians of St. John Paul II seminary did not leave unsatisfied.

To accompany the cultural depths of North Dakota, our talented seminarians provided entertainment for the night. Diocese of Baltimore's Francis Lyons gave a long list of jokes about North Dakota such as, "If your snow-blower has more miles than your car… then you might be from North Dakota." JPIII, the band at the seminary, played a rendition of the John Denver song "Take Me Home, Country Roads", replacing the words "West Virginia" with the beloved words "North Dakota," to the dismay of West Virginia Seminarian Daniel Callahan. Former Police Officer Conor Hardy, of the Archdiocese of Washington, played a humorous jig on his guitar poking fun at the ungentleness of North Dakota game. And, Kyle Vance and Leon Gilmore of Washington entertained us with a rap-roast of the North Dakota seminarians.

Bismarck seminarians, (l-r) Ryan Martire, Grant Dvorak, Isaiah Fischer, Jake Magnuson and John Windsor, recently held a North Dakota night at Saint John Paul II, in Washington, D.C.

In short, it was a truly blessed night, and we, North Dakota seminarians, were so tremendously grateful. Now living in D.C., we are filled with gratitude for the opportunity to be here for formation, and the least we could do was share a little bit of our home state with our fellow brothers in Christ Jesus. North Dakota night was a blast and we will forever remember it as a tribute to all our loved ones in D.C. at St. John Paul II seminary.

Our Lady of the Prairies – Pray for us!

Martire is studying Second Pre-Theology at St. John Paul II Seminary in Washington, D.C. His home parish is the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Bismarck.

How Can You Protect Your Child?

Sexual abuse can happen to children of any race, socioeconomic group, religion or culture. There is no foolproof way to protect children from sexual abuse, but there are steps you can take to reduce this risk. Below you'll find some precautions you can take to help protect the children in your life.

Be involved in the child's life.

- Being actively involved your child's life can make warning signs of child sexual abuse more obvious and help your child feel more comfortable coming to you if something isn't right.
- Show interest in their day-to-day lives. Ask them what they did during the day and who they did it with.
- Get to know the people in your child's life. Know who your child is spending time with, including other children and adults. Talk about these people openly and ask questions so that your child can feel comfortable doing the same.
- Talk about the media. Incidents of sexual violence are frequently covered by the news and portrayed in television shows. Ask your child questions about this coverage to start a conversation. Questions like, "Have you ever heard of this happening before?" or "What would you do if you were in this situation?" can signal to your child that these are important issues that they can talk about with you.

For more information on keeping kids safe, call (701) 323-5626.

Encourage children to speak up.

When someone knows that their voice will be heard and taken seriously, it gives them the courage to speak up when something isn't right.

- Teach your child about boundaries. Let your child know that no one has the right to touch them or make them feel uncomfortable — this includes hugs from grandparents or even tickling from mom or dad.
- Teach your child how to talk about their bodies. From an early age, teach your child the names of their body parts. Teaching a child these words gives them the ability to come to you when something is wrong.
- Be available. Set time aside to spend with your child where they have your undivided attention. Let your child know that they can come to you if they have questions or if someone is talking to them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Let them know they won't get in trouble. Many perpetrators use secret-keeping or threats as a way of keeping children quiet about abuse. Remind your child frequently that they will not get in trouble for talking to you, no matter what they need to say. When they do come to you, follow through on this promise and avoid punishing them for speaking up.

Dakota Children's ADVOCACY CENTER

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School Sisters of Notre Dame mark 100-year history in the diocese

By Sister Ann Schoch, SSND

The School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) are celebrating 100 years in the Diocese of Bismarck.

Sr. Ann Schoch, SSND

Along with the Benedictine Sisters, the School Sisters of Notre Dame were trailblazers in education. My sketchy sharing hardly does justice to each place where we ministered, but may jog a memory or simply make us grateful for the early pioneers, sisters and parents who sacrificed, struggled and persevered in their efforts to provide Catholic education for the children.

The SSND are members of an international congregation of more than 2,500 women religious in 30 countries. Our congregation, founded on Oct. 24, 1833, by Blessed Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger in Bavaria, is in its 185th year as a congregation. Today our headquarters are in Rome.

In 1847, the SSND came to the United States. In 1865, the first sisters arrived in Mankato, Minn., and in 1912, the Province was established there. After repeated appeals from Bismarck's Bishop Vincent Wehrle for teachers for his schools in North Dakota, Mother Isidore, Mankato's first provincial superior, opened schools in New Hradec and Scheffield. In the years that followed, the sisters answered the call to teach at many other schools.

When the sisters arrived at each location, especially in the early 1900s, they were greeted by the harsh prairie weather and lacked necessities. They taught, cared for boarders, raised livestock, and planted a garden to provide food for themselves and the boarders.

For years SSND, like all religious across the nation, worked for small stipends that did not include retirement benefits, leaving congregations with insufficient savings to meet today's retirement and health-care needs of aging members. A board member, in one of the parishes, shared that they were paying 18 sisters each, $1,667.00 per year.

Many of the schools underwent changes when on June 29, 1948, North Dakota voters passed an initiative, the Anti-Garb Law, prohibiting Catholic sisters from wearing their habits while teaching in the parish school that was of a public school status. This drastically changed the role and influence of the SSND in these schools.

SS. PETER AND PAUL, NEW HRADEC: 1917-1969

In the dead of winter, Dec. 20, 1917, four SSND arrived in New Hradec, a town with only one building, the church. Bishop Wehrle was happy to greet the sisters who opened the school after New Year's Day in the church basement with approximately 23 students, including two boarders. There were no books, desks, or beds because of a blizzard that halted delivery.

Parents often made payment for tuition and boarding fees with meat, garden produce and even coal.

The original building, with many alterations and additions, served all purposes for many years. A coalbin, turned into a classroom, later served as a dormitory.

Increased enrollment in January 1935 forced the upper grade classroom to become part of the public school district, providing the SSND teacher with a district salary.

When only 70 students registered in 1967, the State Inspector of Schools recommended that the public school classrooms return to parochial status as the school was public in name only and really a parochial school operated on state funding. With the closing of the school year in 1969, the parish could no longer support a totally parochial school and the sisters withdrew. Sixty-five sisters had served at our first school in the diocese and in North Dakota.

ST. PIUS, SCHEFFIELD: 1918-1968

Two weeks after SSND arrived in New Hradec, Mother Isidore brought four sisters to St. Pius Parish in Scheffield. A week later, 49 students including nine boarders appeared for class in the partitioned church hall. Within six months the enrollment reached 110 and classrooms were added in the church basement.

St. Mary Band, New England (Courtesy of School Sisters of Notre Dame North American Archives).

For the first ten years, the sisters and boarders lived in crowded and impoverished conditions. Crop failures as well as the 1924 tornado prevented the people from building as they had initially planned. In 1928, with the best crop ever, the parish built a three-story brick school/convent. As a public school, they were able to add a high school in 1935 which operated until 1947.

In 1968, the school district asked Msgr. Dahmus to operate one classroom as a public school to prevent the dissolution of the district. That same year the SSND withdrew from the school. During the school's 50-year existence, 80 sisters ministered at St. Pius.

ST. MARY, NEW ENGLAND: 1924-2000

The school was founded by Father Poettgens who envisioned a parochial boarding school that would provide Catholic education to the children in New England and the surrounding area. He bought an unused hardware and grocery store and requested Mother Isidore to send her sisters as teachers. She arrived in 1924 with eight sisters.

School opened for 106 students including 46 boarders. It faced many challenges but gained a fine reputation for its education, sports and music. By November, 80 music students comprised the orchestra that became a main attraction at civic and school activities. Native American students from reservations in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Montana enrolled. The school flourished and a commercial class was added. By 1927, with an enrollment increase, a high school was constructed and a dormitory built out of a coalbin.

A new high school was built as early as 1948 but not until 1978, a new grade school. The peak enrollment for both schools was in the 1950-1970 era. Although the high school opened its doors to foreign students in an effort to increase enrollment, dwindling population, along with escalating costs for upkeep of buildings and educational needs, forced the closing of St. Mary High School in 1992. With only 21 students, the grade school closed for the same reasons in 1997. The original hardware and grocery had served as convent for 42 years and as the elementary school for 54 years.

After 76 years of dedicated service by 226 sisters, the last SSNDs left in 2000.

New Hradec Church and School constructed in the early 1900s (Courtesy of the School Sisters of Notre Dame North American Archives).

ST. BENEDICT, STRASBURG: 1943-1998

The wood-frame church built in 1893 by German-Russian Catholics was moved across the street in 1910 to make room for a new church. By 1912, it served as a convent for the Ursuline Sisters who, at the invitation of Bishop Wehrle, had arrived two years earlier from Switzerland to conduct classes in the new church basement.

A new school was built in 1917 and, in 1923, high school classes were added to the curriculum. Financial difficulties forced both schools to become part of the public school district in 1931. The Ursuline Sisters remained until 1943. Eight SSND arrived in Strasburg that summer.

Enrollment increased and an addition was completed for a high school, allowing grade school expansion in the old building. Once the parish felt it could again afford to do so, the grade school reverted to its parochial status in 1959 and the high school in 1960.

The two Catholic high schools in the area, St. Anthony of Linton and St. Benedict of Strasburg, consolidated in 1966 as Emmons Central High School. Housed in the St. Benedict building, the school was staffed by four SSND, three Precious Blood Sisters, and a diocesan priest as superintendent.

With the withdrawal of SSND from Emmons Central in 1982 and from St. Benedict in 1989, another SSND came as parish minister and religious education teacher for Strasburg and St. Mary's in Hague and ministered there until 1998. Ninety-four SSND had worked in "Welk country." The famed band leader Lawrence Welk attended St. Benedict School during the time of the Ursuline Sisters. He was a faithful alumnus and remained a friend of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

ST. WENCESLAUS / TRINITY ELEMENTARY EAST, DICKINSON: 1951-2008

Although the Bohemian parish of St. Wenceslaus was organized in 1912, no school existed in the parish until 1951.

Appointed in December 1949, the pastor quickly made plans for St. Wenceslaus School. By August 1951, four SSND were welcomed to Dickinson by the pastor, parishioners and Benedictine sisters who had established schools in the city.

When enrollment reached 263 in 1957, construction began on a four-classroom addition to the school and lay teachers were hired to assist the sisters.

The Dickinson parishes entered a consolidated school arrangement in 1968, placing students in one of the three elementary schools according to grade levels. By 1979, each of the three schools functioned as kindergarten through grade six schools as all seventh and eighth graders had been moved to Trinity High School.

St. Wenceslaus was under a lay principal and teachers from 1984 until 1991.The convent had been converted to a parish office complex. SSND returned to the school from 1991 until 1997, after which a Presentation Sister from Valley City came for three years. Beginning in 2000, all three elementary schools became part of the Dickinson Catholic Schools. St. Wenceslaus was administered by an SSND until 2008, and St. Wenceslaus was renamed Trinity Elementary East.

Boarders with Cooks at St. Pius, Scheffield (Courtesy of School Sisters of Notre Dame North American Archives).

For 57 years, 23 SSND were part of St. Wenceslaus or Trinity Elementary East, including a sister who ministered in the parish.

ST. PATRICK / TRINITY ELEMENTARY WEST, DICKINSON: 1975

For some 20 years, children from St. Patrick Parish attended St. Joseph School, which entailed crossing dangerous train tracks. In 1921, when St. Joseph could no longer take "non-resident" students because of their large enrollments, children from St. Patrick Parish went to public schools. The pastor felt a strong need for a Catholic school in his parish. The St. Joseph, Minnesota Benedictines were its first teachers and served for 46 years.

The School Sisters of Notre Dame had a teacher at St. Patrick as early as 1975, two parish ministers by 1981, and a principal in 1987. St. Patrick was administered by an SSND until 2008. Six SSND had served at St. Patrick, now known as Trinity Elementary West. Sr. Rosemarie Dvorak, SSND, continues to minister there as librarian and paraprofessional.

ST. JOSEPH, DICKINSON: 1981-2004

St. Joseph, the first school in the Dickinson area, started in the church basement in 1904 for 93 students between ages 14 and 16. Taught by three lay teachers, a large number were not able to read or write. Four Sisters of St. Benedict from St. Joseph, Minn., arrived in 1905 to serve these children of German immigrants.

The first SSND came to St. Joseph Parish in 1981 as a pastoral minister. The following year, an SSND arrived as a special needs teacher and, in 1985, the first SSND administrator. For 22 years, five SSND carried on the tradition of excellent education by the Benedictines and their lay staffs. Sister Gladys Reisenauer, SSND, taught at St. Joseph for 16 years, leaving in 2004 when the school closed after 100 years.

ST. ANNE, BISMARCK: 1957-1989

ST. JOSEPH, BISMARCK: 1957-1973

The story of SSND coming to St. Anne and St. Joseph Schools in Bismarck began in 1953, four years before the schools were built. Three priests from the diocese had made the trip to Mankato to ask Mother Bernardia for sisters for St. Mary's High School. When told she could not help with high school teachers, they were quick to inquire about elementary teachers. Mother promised "four in four years."

By 1957, St. Anne parishioners had built two schools about two miles apart, St. Anne on the west end of the parish and St. Joseph on the east end. That September, not four but six sisters arrived in Bismarck to staff the schools for 307 students. The schools flourished and St. Joseph, intended as a primary school, added fourth through sixth grades. By 1973, with changing times and decline in enrollment, there was sufficient space in St. Anne School for all the elementary students. After a brief existence as the primary school associated with St. Anne, St. Joseph school was closed. In 1989, the last two of the 20 SSND who taught at St. Anne School left.

ST. GERTRUDE HIGH SCHOOL, RALEIGH: 1959-1987

In 1906, five Catholic families of German-Russian descent settled in the area of Raleigh. The nearest Catholic church, 18 miles away, was in Porcupine. In 1913, with 28 Catholic families in the St. Gertrude area, five miles from Raleigh, the first Catholic church was built.

For children to attend school closer to home, five school districts were combined into one at St. Gertrude. Franciscan Sisters arrived in 1945 from Milwaukee to teach.

Parents wanted a Catholic high school but knew their small community could not support both. They kept the grade school as a public school and constructed a high school.

When the Franciscan Sisters left, the pastor turned to Mother M. Bernardia in Mankato, and, in August 1959, three SSND arrived to teach in the high school.

Over the years, students from foreign countries helped boost enrollment but by 1986, with a population shift and loss of foreign students, closure was inevitable.

The SSND left Raleigh with the closing of St. Gertrude High School in 1987. Thirty-six SSNDs had enjoyed ministry in Raleigh.

Sister Bernardia at St. Benedict, Strasburg (Courtesy of School Sisters of Notre Dame North American Archives).

SSND in their original habit at St. Benedict High School, Strasburg (Courtesy of School Sisters of Notre Dame North American Archives).

TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL, DICKINSON: 1961

On Oct. 1, 2016, 55 years after the SSND arrived at Trinity High School, they were inducted into the Trinity Titan Hall of Fame. Fr. Hochhalter began the ceremony saying, "The School Sisters of Notre Dame have a long and storied history with Catholic education not only with Dickinson Catholic Schools but also in other areas of the Diocese of Bismarck.

However, their mark on the three parish schools here in Dickinson and at Trinity High is undeniable. The sisters played an integral role in the formation of Catholic youth here in our city. They served as teachers, cooks, bookkeepers, librarians, and administrators in the four schools and were an inspiration for the young people and faculty alike. Our Dickinson Catholic schools simply would not be the same without the steady guiding hands of the over 100 School Sisters of Notre Dame who have served us throughout our history."

The 67 SSND who were part of Trinity's 57-year history helped lay the foundation for its viability as a high school today. Sister Annette Dobitz carries on a SSND presence today in the junior high.

ST. BERNARD MISSION SCHOOL, FORT YATES: 1981-2014

A Catholic presence has existed on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation founded in 1873, long before North Dakota was a state and the Diocese of Bismarck existed.

Together with governmental agencies, Benedictine monks from Missouri, established the first a farm school in 1877 in Fort Yates. Four Benedictine Sisters from Indiana, arrived in 1878 to teach the girls while the monks taught the boys. In 1881, the South Dakota Benedictines came and taught in a government school and then helped establish a Catholic Day School in 1924.

In 1926, an addition to the school was constructed and served as the Catholic Indian Mission School until 1964 when the cornerstone of the present school was laid. In 1965, classes were held in the new building and the school was renamed St. Bernard Mission School in honor of Fr. Bernard Strassmaier, who served at the mission from 1886 until 1940.

Beginning in 1981 and over a 33-year period, 15 SSND, teachers, administrators, and pastoral ministers, worked with the Lakota/Dakota Sioux people and learned about their culture and spirituality.

Individuals from several other women's congregations ministered along with the Benedictines and SSND. The sisters from the Congregation of Teresian Carmelites arrived from India in 2013 and currently teach there. The last SSND left in 2014. Catholic sisters have been in Fort Yates for 140 consecutive years.

OTHER AREAS OF SERVICE

Places in the diocese where SSNDs also ministered include: Bismarck: St. Alexius Hospital, (now CHI St. Alexius Health) Mary College (University), Office of Superintendent of Schools, St. Mary's Parish, St. Mary's Central High School; Dickinson: Queen of Peace Parish,

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Dickinson State University; Mandan: Christ the King Parish, St. Joseph Parish; Mandaree: St. Anthony Mission School, Mandaree Public School; Max: Immaculate Conception Parish; Menoken: St. Hildegard Parish; Minot: Bishop Ryan High School, Our Lady of Grace Parish and School, St. Therese/Little Flower; Wilton: Sacred Heart Parish.

In our early history, sisters also taught two-week vacation bible schools for parish children in rural towns without a Catholic school.

SSND IN THE DIOCESE TODAY

Sister Annette Dobitz, born on a farm in the New England area, attended grade and high school at St. Mary. During the 1973-74 school year, she began her teaching career as a student teacher at St. Anne in Bismarck. Her first years of teaching were at five schools in Minnesota. Sister Annette is in her 13th year as 7th-8th grade math teacher at Trinity in Dickinson. She also teaches sixth grade CCD classes at St. Patrick Parish. For several summers, she assisted at the Christian Life Camp at St. Anthony's Mission near Mandaree.

Sr. Annette Dobitz, SSND

Sister Rosemarie Dvorak grew up on the family farm north of New Hradec. As a boarder, she was educated by the SSND at SS. Peter and Paul, New Hradec; St. Mary High School, New England; and Good Counsel Academy in Mankato, Minn. Sister Rosemarie taught at St. Anne, Bismarck; St. Benedict, Strasburg; St. Bernard Indian Mission, Fort Yates and St. Patrick, Dickinson. She is currently in her fourth year at Trinity West as librarian/paraprofessional. Sister Rosemarie celebrated her golden jubilee as an SSND in 2017.

Sr. Rosemarie Dvorak, SSND

Sister Gladys Reisenauer (formerly known as Sister Louis Ann) lived on a farm near New England. She attended St. Mary Grade and High Schools as a boarder. As an elementary teacher for 45 years, she ministered in Minnesota schools, at SS. Peter and Paul, New Hradec; St. Mary, New England; Mandaree Public Schools; St. Bernard, Fort Yates; Little Flower, Minot, and St. Joseph, Dickinson. She served as chaplain at St. Alexius Hospital, Bismarck, for two years and then returned to Rochester as chaplain for both Mayo hospitals. Since 2015, she has been an on-call chaplain at CHI St. Alexius Health Center, Dickinson. In July, Sr. Gladys will be an SSND for 60 years.

Sr. Gladys Reisenauer, SSND

Sister Ivo Schoch grew up on the family farm in the Scheffield area. She has been a SSND for 58 years. From 1966 until 1974 she taught at St Anne, Bismarck, eight of her 24 years either as an elementary teacher or principal in Catholic schools in North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota. Sister Ivo is in her 34th year in pastoral ministry with Corpus Christi Parish, Bismarck. She continues the ministry in which she has assisted some 800 families in planning funeral services and, for many, she has done the vigil/wake service. She also works with LOTUS (Looking Onward to Understanding and Serenity) grief-support groups.

Sr. Ivo Schoch, SSND

Sister Karen Warren was born in Bismarck. As a first grader, she was in the first class at St. Anne School. After graduating from Good Counsel Academy in Mankato, she entered the SSND and became a teacher. She taught grade school at St. Mary, New England, and in Iowa and Minnesota. In 2011, Sister Karen returned to Bismarck to care for her mom living with beginning stages of Alzheimer's disease. Sister Karen is also a wood turner.

Sr. Karen Warren, SSND

CALLED TO GOD'S WORK

Sixty-six young women became School Sisters of Notre Dame from the following places in the diocese: Scheffield (16), New England (12), New Hradec (10), Hague (7), Napoleon (7), Strasburg (5), Dickinson (3), Linton (2), Belfield (1), Bismarck (1), Gaylord (1), Grassy Butte (1), and Hirschville (1).

The SSND have always been educators in all that we are and do. In our document, You Are Sent, which guides us as SSND, we are encouraged: "Urged by the love of Christ, we choose to express our mission through our ministry directed toward education. For us, education means enabling persons to reach the fullness of their potential as individuals created in God's image and assisting them to direct their gifts toward building the Earth." Like our foundress, Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger, "we educate with the conviction that the world can be changed through the transformation of persons."

As we celebrate this century of mission in the Bismarck Diocese, we express our gratitude to God and the people of North Dakota who have been part of our endeavors during these past hundred years.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This year, I celebrate 60 years as an SSND. When I left my home in Scheffield, in 1956, I could not have imagined what God had in mind for me. Little did I dream that my first assignment as teacher would take me (then known as Sister Mary Ronald) to St. Mary, New England, just 12 miles from my home. I also had the opportunity, as teacher and administrator, to work with educators in Forsyth, Montana; St. Paul, Minnesota; Kisii, Kenya, East Africa; and Dickinson.

I served on our provincial council in Mankato, Minn., and as secretary at our Generalate in Rome. From Italy, I moved to the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, doing pastoral outreach to the elderly and sick in Fort Yates, Cannon Ball and Porcupine. Currently, I am a pastoral minister in Billings, Mont., giving healing support to Native Americans hospitalized and in rehab centers.

Visit www.ssnd.org, to learn more about the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

CREDITS

- *Information on the School Sisters of Notre Dame: Courtesy of the School Sisters of Notre Dame North American Archives*
- *Information on the Benedictine Sisters: Courtesy of Annunciation Monastery Archives, Bismarck, ND*
- *Information on St. Joseph School: Souvenir of the Centennial Celebration 1902-2002*

St. Joseph's Parish Centennial History Book Committee 2005 – St. Joseph's Parish, Dickinson, ND

- *Information on St. Patrick School: The Catholic Church in Western North Dakota, 1738-1960 (A History of the Diocese of Bismarck written for its Golden Jubilee Year, 1960); General Editor: Father Louis Pfaller, OSB*

Rare Bible on display at senior care centers

Benedictine Health System in Bismarck, Dickinson and Garrison to host special edition

The Heritage Edition of the *Saint John's Bible* will be available for public display at St. Gabriel's Community in Bismarck, St. Benedict's Health Center in Dickinson and Benedictine Living Center of Garrison in April and May.

This special opportunity was brought to life through a partnership between Benedictine Health System (parent organization of the senior care centers) and the College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, Minn., to honor the 125th anniversary of their sponsor, the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery.

The *Saint John's Bible* is the first handwritten and illuminated Bible commissioned by a Benedictine monastery since the advent of the printing press more than 500 years ago. Noted for its vibrant, colorful "illuminations" and elegant calligraphy, the one-of-a-kind Heritage Edition is a full-size fine art edition of the original manuscript created under the direction of Donald Jackson, the artistic director of the original manuscript.

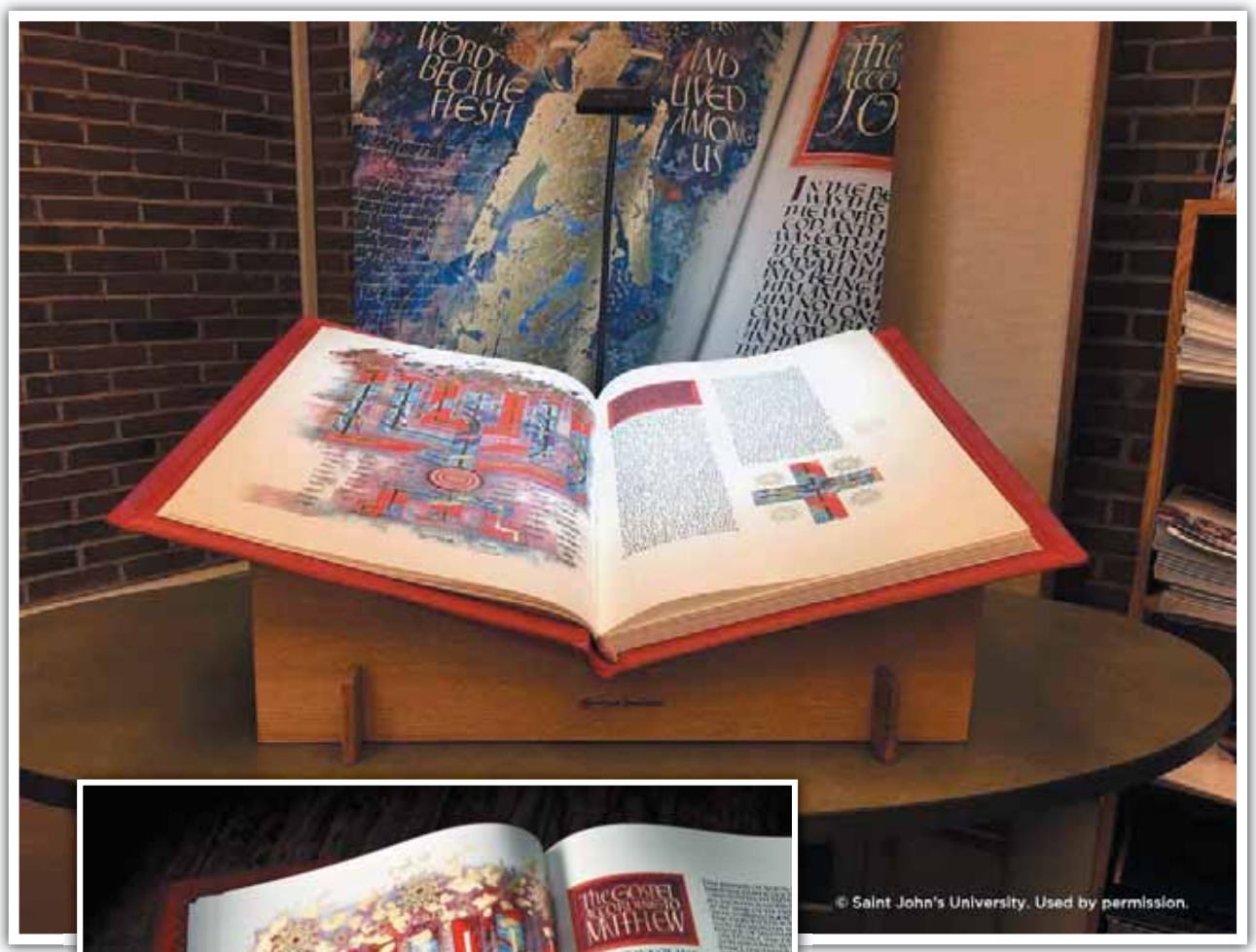
The making of the Heritage Edition revived a tradition that dates back centuries, and involved the finest printing experts and binders in the world to ensure faithful representation of the original *Saint John's Bible*. Utilizing ancient techniques and materials, its construction parallels that of its medieval predecessors—written on calfskin vellum and using turkey, goose and swan quills, natural handmade inks, hand-ground pigments and gold leaf gild—while incorporating modern themes, images and technology of the 21st century. Each letter was rendered by hand, and each page was scrupulously compared to its original counterpart to ensure fidelity to the original. Only 299 sets of the Heritage Edition were created.

In the tradition of great medieval Bibles, the *Saint John's Bible* is monumental, measuring two feet tall and three feet wide. The Heritage Edition was printed on 100 percent cotton paper using lightfast ultraviolet inks. Gold and silver treatments replicate the original gold, silver, and platinum used in the original illuminations. Because many of the illuminations required finishing treatments by hand, no two Heritage Edition sets are identical. Once the pages were complete, each volume was hand-bound using Italian calfskin, Welsh oak boards, and headbands hand-sewn in Pakistan.

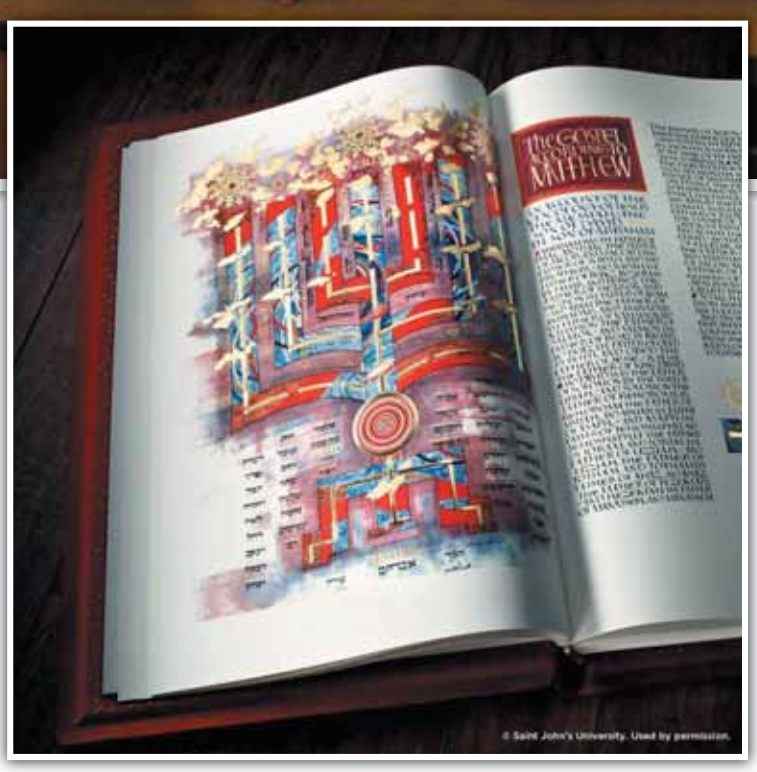
The goal of the *Saint John's Bible* is to ignite the spiritual imagination of people all over the world of all faiths, by commissioning a work of art that illuminates the word of God for a new millennium, in a way that is relevant to the 21st century. It is a prophetic witness to the word of God in our day and beyond, an opportunity for learning and scholarship and a dignified expression of the Benedictine vision: "That in all things God may be glorified," which aligns nicely with the work of their sponsor, the Sisters of St. Scholastica Monastery.

More information on *The Saint John's Bible* and the Heritage Edition can be found at www.saintjohnsbible.org.

—Submitted information



The Heritage Edition of the *Saint John's Bible* will be available for public display at the three Benedictine Health System centers in North Dakota in April and May.



A large number of students from the Catholic schools came to venerate the relics.

Tour Schedule and Contact Information

April 16 - May 2
St. Benedict's Health Center, Dickinson
701-456-7317
www.saint-benedicts.org

April 17 - May 4
Benedictine Living Center of Garrison
701-463-2226
www.blcgarrison.com

May 5 - 17
St. Gabriel's Community, Bismarck
701-751-5115
www.stgabrielscommunity.org

Mass, followed by a blessing of the Bible by Bishop David Kagan, Diocese of Bismarck, and reception will be held **Tuesday, May 8 from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.** Open to the public.

CDA Court celebrates at anniversary Mass

Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Immaculate Conception, #322, Bismarck, North Dakota, celebrated its 100th Anniversary December 10, 2017. The court was instituted October 9, 1917. The Most Reverend David D. Kagan, Bishop of Bismarck, celebrated Mass at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit with Court Chaplain Fr. Gregory Luger concelebrating. Among those attending was Past National Regent Claudia Bosch, Dickinson; Second Vice National Regent Vickie Feist; North Dakota state officers; local court officers and members. A luncheon and program followed Mass.

Photo by Deacon Joe Krupinsky

Ag Attitudes

JAMES ODERMANN

The innocence of children is a lesson for all

"In truth I tell you, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven." — Matthew: 18:3

"Let's take some time off," I chimed to my two-year old grandson. "I'll take a rest with you," I volunteered.

I learned that the "n" word (nap) is not something that is met with much joy and, in fact, it was the two-year old (I suspect with the help of his mother) who coined the family phrase "take some time off."

So, off to a quiet room we went but, like most of these situations where young and old "take some time off," the old guy has to be careful not nod off before the two-year old closes his eyes and starts to breathe deeply.

So, as we were resting, suddenly the young lad started to rub my head with his head, his short, soft blonde hair mixing with my longer, thinning, gray hair. "I want to nuzzle you Papa," he announced proudly. And, so we nuzzled, laughing and enjoying the moment.

This moment caused me to reflect on my good fortune, the love that God shows me through another person. This was a moment of joy, a cause for rejoicing, a certain joy that young people bring to older people.

As I reflected on the quotation from Jesus about becoming like a child, I especially appreciated the innocence of little children, their gift of unconditional love, trust and forgiveness that is so evident in their lives.

This is a quality that is so absent in today's adult world, where sharing of ideas, credit, work, or joy is many times non-existent.

"And so, the one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven." — Matthew 18:4

Jesus is really telling me to be as unassuming, as accepting, as modest as a little child. This means I must use the gift of God's grace, which is ever present in abundance, in a way that brings joy to family, friends—and those who choose not to like me.

I reflected on this as I enjoyed the euphoria of being "nuzzled" by my grandson. I felt the grace of God within me. I felt a calmness that was so extraordinary. Is this something that I can share? Will people I interact with recognize a childlike humility?

This requires my personal commitment to God. I am called to be God's child and to be innocent, loving, caring, meek and loving. This means I must not "take some time off" from God.

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).

UPCOMING **EVENTS**

Marriage encounter weekends

A Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend is a private weekend away from the distractions of daily life for couples in good marriages. Give your marriage this gift. The next available weekends in this area are April 20-22 in Fargo and Nov. 9-11 in Medora. Early registration is highly recommended. For more information, visit ndwwme.org or contact Rob and Angie at 701-347-1998.

Hannah's Hope support group to meet April 5

Hannah's Hope ministry, a diocesan spiritual support group for couples facing the struggles of infertility, will hold the first meeting Thursday, April 5 at 7 p.m., with plans to meet the first Thursday of every month. Meetings are available either on location in Bismarck or via GoToMeeting online video conferencing. For more information, contact Christie Collins at ccollins@bismarckdiocese.com or 864-354-5046. Find out more about Hannah's Hope ministry at www.bismarckdiocese.com/hope.

Living Chaplet of Divine Mercy April 8

The CCD students at Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in Stanley will present the Living Chaplet of Divine Mercy on Sunday, April 8 at 3 p.m. The public is invited to attend. Refreshments will be served afterwards.

Concerts at two churches

Catholic artist, Michael James Mette, will be performing music and testimony with his daughters, Gabby (13), Trinity (12), and Charity (10), at Our Lady of Grace in Minot on Monday, April 16 and St. Ann's Parish in Hebron on Wednesday, April 18. Both concerts are at 7 p.m. All are invited. Check with the parish offices for more information, 701-839-6834 in Minot or 701-878-4658 in Hebron.

Celebration of New Life Mass April 17

Come celebrate with expecting and new parents at the Celebration of New Life Mass with Bishop Kagan on Tuesday, April 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Bismarck. All are invited and families are encouraged; parents will receive a blessing. Questions can be directed to Christie Collins at Christie Collins at 864-354-5046. Find out more and register online here: www.bismarckdiocese.com/newlife.

Keynote address at Vocations Jamboree April 18

St. Gianna's daughter, Dr. Gianna Emanuela Molla, will share her mother's memory, example, testimony and spirituality with the public at the University of Mary's annual Vocations Jamboree. Her keynote address, Wednesday, April 18, 7:30 p.m., in the new Founders Hall inside the Lumen Vitae University Center, is free and open to the public. Those interested in attending are encouraged to register at www.umary.edu/vocjam or contact Ed Konieczka at (701) 355-8102 or erkonieczka@umary.edu.

Search weekends

Search for Christian Maturity is a weekend retreat experience sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Bismarck. The weekends are for anyone of high school or college age (at least 15 years old). Search weekends are held at the Badlands Ministries Camp just south of Medora. The next weekend is April 20-22. More information can be found at www.bismarckdiocese.com/search1.

Father-daughter ball April 28

The third annual father-daughter ball sponsored by the diocese will be held Saturday, April 28 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Municipal Country Club in Bismarck. The event is for daughters age 4-18 and their fathers. Supper will be served with a dance to follow. Tickets are $50 per couple and $10 for each additional daughter. Register online at bismarckdiocese.com/ball.

Quilt show and sale May 5

The Church of Corpus Christi Quilters show and sale is Saturday May 5, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the parish center in Bismarck. There will be more than 100 quilts for sale. Refreshments will be served and there's no admission fee.

Caritas Award luncheon May 8

The Spring Caritas Award Luncheon is Tuesday, May 8 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. hosted by Catholic Charities North Dakota at Spirit of Life Church in Mandan. This year's honorees are Sr. Mary Michael, Sr. Amal Grace, and Sr. Josephine because of their outstanding service in their role in expanding the Mother Teresa Outreach program at Spirit of Life Church in Mandan. The sisters have ministered to others by cooking in the soup kitchen, distributing food in the food pantry, teaching faith formation in the parish, and in countless other ways. There is no cost to attend, but attendees are asked to RSVP no later than April 30 to dinner@catholiccharitiesnd.org or call Catholic Charities North Dakota at 701-235-4457.

Marriage retreat May 11-13

The diocese is sponsoring a retreat for couples wanting to grow in holiness while growing closer to one another. The retreat weekend is set for May 11-13 at the Assumption Abbey in Richardton. Enjoy silence together in prayer while Fr. William Ruelle leads you through "Marriage and the Spiritual Exercise of St. Ignatius of Loyola." Register at bismarckdiocese.com/marriageretreat. Cost is $200/couple. Contact Tara Brooke at tbrooke@bismarckdiocese.com or 701-204-7209 with questions.

Blue Mass May 15

The 7th annual Blue Mass will be held on Tuesday, May 15 at 5:30 p.m., at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Bismarck. Held during National Peace Officers Memorial Week, this special Mass with Bishop Kagan is an opportunity to pray for all active, retired and deceased law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel.

Big Smoke BBQ cook off July 9

The Serra Club of North Central North Dakota will once again present the Big Smoke BBQ cook off Monday, July 9 at St. John the Apostle Church, Minot. The public is invited to enjoy food, fun, games and silent auction. The club is looking for 10 grilling teams to compete. All cook off teams can have up to five members and must have at least one member who is a priest, deacon, religious, seminarian or represent a KC Council. Team registration deadline is May 31. For more information and team requirements, contact Corey Bohlig at 701-509-7877.

Women's THIRST Sept. 22

Ladies, mark your calendars for the THIRST 2018 Women's Conference sponsored by the Diocese of Bismarck and held at the Bismarck Event Center on Saturday, Sept. 22. Treat yourself to a wonderful day of uplifting presentations, confessions, Eucharistic adoration, music, a Vigil Mass with Bishop Kagan, and of course – support and conversation with your sisters in the Lord. Registration is free. Conference website and online registration are available at www.bismarckdiocese.com/thirst2018. Conference sponsorships and donations are also welcome.

Featured Columnists

Guest Column

CHAD PROSOSKI

A helpful resource for questioning Catholics

Our values statement provides that "Catholic Charities serves all people, regardless of faith. These values inspire the work that we do for and with those most in need: Our mission is sustained by hope, guided by charity, and rooted in Christian faith and the principles of Catholic social teaching."

Previously, I have discussed some of the resources available on the Catholic social teachings. These include the many papal encyclicals addressing different topics on charity and justice, the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, and of course Sacred Scripture and the Catechism. These are all very insightful sources, but over the past couple of years I have been searching for a more accessible guide to the social teachings.

This past fall, a mentor shared a newer resource with me called the "DOCAT: What to do?" The DOCAT (DO comes from the verb to do and CAT stands for Catechism) tries to do exactly what it says, that is to answer that question of, "What should we do?" Some of you may already be familiar with the YOUCAT, a catechism for youth that was prepared through a grassroots initiative and distributed to young people at the World Youth Day in Rio in 2013. The YOUCAT has grown in popularity since then, was followed by the DOCAT for World Youth Day in Krakow in 2016, and most recently the same team published a YOUCAT Bible as well.

The DOCAT was created in response to the vision of Pope Francis and others as a guide for young people on how to live out their faith in the world. In fact, the DOCAT includes a foreword from the Pope himself, inviting all of us to learn the social doctrine of the Church and participate in social action. He adds, "If a Christian in these days looks away from the need of the poorest of the poor, then in reality he is not a Christian!"

Addressed especially to our young people, the DOCAT contains a richness and depth to it that can benefit individuals of all ages and backgrounds. The social teachings are a great gift from the Church, and all people of goodwill should find many different ideas for consideration in how we can respond with love and care to problems we face in the world today. A companion DOCAT Study Guide is also available to help with individual lessons or group discussions. Copies of both are available at Catholic book stores, at a discount through the Fargo Diocese, or online.

Interestingly, the DOCAT is structured in a question and answer format similar to the way Saint Thomas Aquinas addressed common questions or objections with his responses in the Summa Theologica and other treatises. This method also hearkens back to the ancient philosophers and is still commonly known today as the "Socratic Method" after the Greek philosopher Socrates who was reported to have asked questions of his students or followers to teach them.

The DOCAT begins by explaining where the social teachings come from and their purpose. Over time, the Catholic social teachings have been developed through the Popes and Bishops (Q24-25). The purpose of the Social Teachings is: (1) "To set forth the requirements of just social action as they appear in the Gospel," and (2) "In the name of justice to denounce social, economic, or political actions and structures wherever they contradict the Gospel message." (Q23). Helpful summaries of the key themes or principles of the social teachings can be readily found from the USCCB and other sources.

In describing the DOCAT, Pope Francis says, "it is like a user's manual that helps us to change ourselves with the Gospel first, and then our closest surroundings, and finally the whole world." Through twelve chapters, the DOCAT answers tough questions about living in our world with others, on the individual level, locally and nationally, and on the international field. It explains concepts such as solidarity, subsidiarity, and the common good, and discusses the importance of family in society. Another great feature of the DOCAT are the digressions on different current topics. These include brief coverage of new media, bioethics, poverty, global goods and research.

Although the DOCAT is small, there is much to digest. It can be picked up and reflected upon as most people would not want to or be able to read through it all at one time. In my own experience, I could easily spend an hour on each of its 12 chapters, and may have taken much longer if I had the time. With substantial indexes of subjects and names of people quoted, the DOCAT can serve as a useful reference tool, as well.

Much of the beauty of this book is how well-researched it is with so many helpful quotes, stories, and examples to drive home its points. For this and the reasons above, I think the DOCAT hits a homerun!

Prososki is the Director of Development and Community Relations for Catholic Charities North Dakota (CCND). For more than 90 years, CCND and its supporters have been putting their faith in action helping people and changing lives. Chad can be reached at info@catholicharitiesnd.org or 701-235-4457.

Balancing Church & State

CHRISTOPHER DODSON

Be mindful of the source of your claimed rights

We live in a society of "rights" talk. In commerce, interactions with others, and especially public policy, people claim to possess rights to certain behaviors, items, and conditions.

How should we evaluate these claims? When should the law protect a "right?" When is a "right" really just a personal desire? How do we address competing rights? When are rights absolute?

Negotiating these questions is the function of law. We should start, therefore, by asking, "From where does this 'right' come?" If it does not come from any law, the "rights" claim is weak.

Laws come from three sources, some of them interrelated.

Divine law is revealed by God. Without divine revelation, it would be unknowable. For Catholics, this includes the "Old Law and the New Law" and is expressed and preserved by the church's magisterium. An example of a divine law is Jesus' words "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you." (Jn 6:53)

Divine law is eternal and universal, but it may not be known by everyone. It should not become a civil law because doing so would infringe upon a person's natural right to religious freedom.

Natural law is knowable through reason. It is universal and eternal. It applies to everyone, everywhere, and at all times, even if our grasp of it and application of it may be imperfect.

For example, a person does not have to be Christian or Jew, or to have ever read the Ten Commandments to realize that theft is wrong. Also, just as theft was wrong in the time of Moses, it is wrong today and will be wrong a thousand years from now.

Catholic teaching is very clear that certain rights exist because of the natural law. These are usually expressed as the right to: life from conception to natural death; establish a family; work, including a just wage, safe working conditions, and the right to form worker associations; migrate; basic education; peace and security; economic initiative; religious freedom; and the means necessary for the proper development of life, including food, clean water, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and necessary social services.

All of the natural human rights flow from the life and dignity of the human person and all of them are knowable by reason.

Rights under the natural law have their source in God's wisdom. As such, although they are knowable by other means, they are, like divine law, "God given."

The third source of law is the positive law. This is the law made by humans. It is the law enforceable by civil authorities and the courts. Think of it as what is written on paper. The North Dakota Century Code is positive law. So are the laws and regulations of the United States, your town's local ordinances, and the constitutions of the United States and North Dakota.

The positive law can change from place to place and time to time. They are not "God given." As much as one might think the Second Amendment is a good idea, it wrong to say it is a "God given right."

The task of society is to enact positive laws that reflect and further the natural law. When it comes to rights, we should enact laws that codify and protect natural rights.

Now that we have explored the sources of rights we can begin to examine rights claims by asking some basic questions.

Is the basis for the claim solely from divine law? If so, the claim should not be legally enforceable.

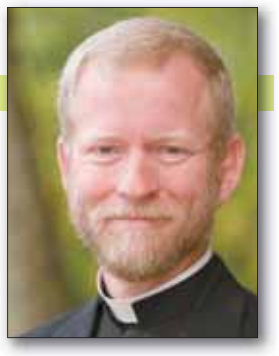
Is the right rooted in natural law? If so, it should be knowable by reason, even if people might disagree. For example, the fact that some people support abortion does not mean that we should surrender legal fight to protect unborn life.

Does the claimed right come from positive law? If so, so long as it is a just law, it should be respected. It should also, however, be examined, revised, or repealed if necessary.

What if it does not come from any of those sources but is just what somebody wants? We are seeing more and more of these types of expression of "rights." Beware that these kind of wants, like expectations to have children or desires to purchase whatever and whenever a person wants, could become positive law rights. Any that contradict the natural law must be resisted.

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.

Making Sense out of Bioethics



FR. TAD PACHOLCZYK

The wrong-headedness of "wrongful birth" lawsuits

At its core, the idea of a "wrongful birth" claim is unreasonable and ethically incoherent. Parents who bring these lawsuits against obstetricians and hospitals claim that medical professionals should have detected a particular disease or defect in their unborn baby through prenatal testing and informed them about it. Had they been given this information, their argument continues, they would have chosen to abort their baby, rather than spending years of their lives caring for a less-than-perfect, possibly infirm child. Wrongful birth lawsuits enable the parents to seek legal redress, often in the form of multi-million dollar settlements.

In 2013, for example, a jury in Washington state awarded a $50 million payout to a couple who claimed they would have aborted their five-year-old son Oliver if they had known he had an "unbalanced chromosomal translocation." Because of the mismatched chromosomes he received from his parents, he has an IQ of less than 70 and is unable to walk.

Rachelle Harz, a malpractice lawyer who spearheaded one of these lawsuits in New Jersey in 1999, expressed some of the tortuous thinking that goes into these cases during an interview for 60 Minutes. She noted that although the physician in this case, "didn't cause the child's retardation, what he caused was not giving the proper information to the parents to allow them the choice to abort the child." She concluded that the doctor "caused the birth of this very, very neurologically impaired child."

The fundamental flaw in her argument, of course, is the claim that the doctor "caused the birth" of the baby, when, in fact, the birth was caused by an activity that took place nine months prior between the husband and wife. That action of the mom and dad, not an action by the doctor, resulted in the birth.

What the doctor actually "caused" by not discovering and sharing specific medical information with the parents was the preservation of the child's life. These lawsuits rely on fundamentally flawed logic: first, that it is wrong and illegal for a doctor not to know or to withhold medical information such that a life that would have been ended is saved; second, that a doctor is somehow obligated to facilitate or cooperate in harmful or lethal actions that parents intend to carry out against their own offspring. The medical profession, however, has long professed allegiance to the creed of "do no harm," so that doctors can serve uniquely as healers, not killers. For obstetricians in particular, the unborn children they track and follow during pregnancy count as that doctor's patients in the same way that the mothers do.

Whenever a couple sets out with the intention of aborting an imperfect child and requests that prenatal testing be performed for this purpose, the process of testing itself becomes immoral. In the same way, any physician or health care professional who arranges for such tests, if they have prudential certainty that a couple intends to abort an imperfect child, would be guilty of cooperating in evil when that abortion takes place.

To consider a parallel example, if a physician believed that a child arriving to the hospital emergency room had been physically abused or severely beaten by his parents, he would be duty-bound, not to mention legally obligated, to report that abuse to authorities. He would not be permitted to turn a blind eye, or otherwise cooperate in the ongoing harm to that child by his or her parents. Similarly, obstetricians who work with pregnant couples should not be expected to turn a blind eye and provide diagnostic information to parents that will encourage them fatally to assault their unborn child.

None of us is perfect. None of us is born into this world completely free of defects, whether physical or psychological. Those limitations, however, never entitle others to place our lives in the crosshairs and pull the trigger—especially our own parents! In sum, these wrongful birth cases promote catastrophic misunderstandings about parental duties and about the physician's obligations towards mothers and their children in pre-natal care settings.

Recognizing that some parents will face considerable expense, labor and difficulty in raising a child who requires special care and attention due to disabilities, it seems reasonable to promote a pro-life and supportive response on behalf of these families, rather than encouraging the corrosive practice of wrongful birth lawsuits. That supportive response should include the expectation of everyone chipping in and helping out, whether through insurance, taxes or crowd-funding, or through other forms of civic, societal or ecclesial outreach.

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. He also serves as a professor of bioethics at the University of Mary in Bismarck. See www.ncbcenter.org

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.

CODE OF PASTORAL CONDUCT

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.

Questions

I was afraid to ask

FR. FRANK SCHUSTER

Q: I can't seem to pay attention at Mass. Is it worth going?

A: Yes, it is worth going to Mass.

Do we ask this question in respect to all our relationships? Is it worth going home to see our parents? Is it worth going to see grandpa and grandma? Is it worth going to see a dear friend who longs to see us and be close to us; who misses our companionship, our presence in their life? Is it worth going to see someone who has "chosen" to love us, and has expressed and demonstrated that love to us in numerous ways, and numerous occasions?

Yes, there are those days we do not want to invest ourselves in a relationship whether it is with a family member, friend, co-worker, or probably God. We are imperfect beings, and all our relationships, also, are imperfect; meaning there is always room for improvement.

So, what is it then that compels us, nags at our conscience, to continue to invest ourselves in relationships? Could it be that what ties us together are those shared life experiences which lead to shared intimacy?

We go to Mass as an individual for personal prayer, with the community, the Church. And, it is within the community that we pray together, sing together, listen to the Word together and, if you will, get bored by the homily together. It is precisely at Mass that we come together as a community, the Church, where we find a common belief—common thread that unites us intimately.

During the Liturgy of the Word we listen to Scripture. Scripture is our story. It is not someone else's story. It is the story of God's family, His children, us. We hear of God's love for us throughout salvation history—our family history. At Mass, we come together as God's family, and are linked to each other in our local faith community, across the world and through the centuries by our common belief.

In the Liturgy of the Eucharist we receive the Eucharist, Christ, who chose to join His divinity to our humanity. Christ chose to share in our human experience, a shared intimacy of love. It is precisely at Mass that we recognize and acknowledge how God has loved His children throughout salvation history and how He continues to love us.

Often, I hear from parishioners, "Father, I get nothing out of Mass." My response to that statement is, "Well, what do you bring to Mass?" They look at me with the most quizzical look and state, "I come to receive."

But, how can we receive if we are not prepared to give? There needs to be an emptying of our very self if we are to receive God's love, His grace. How can I receive what I am unprepared, unwilling or simply do not know how to give? It is precisely within the Church we learn how to live as a child of God. Within the family of God, His Church, we learn how to be loved, and to love.

By "choosing" to attend Mass even though we may be distracted, preoccupied or think we're just too busy, we are making a statement of belief. We are choosing to reciprocate God's gratuitous love. Even an imperfect attempt of reciprocating God's love in attendance at Mass will lead to an awareness of the intimate union between God and us, His children. And, a deepening of the intimacy between a child and his/her Father. The Mass is an act of worship, an encounter with our God, the risen Lord

Fr. Schuster is the pastor at Church of St. Hildegard in Menoken and Sacred Heart in Wilton. 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.

Rethinking Youth Ministry

CARRIE DAVIS

There's no one-size-fits-all approach to passing on the faith

Parents, I know you've all heard your pastor or someone else tell you that "parents are the primary educators of the faith." This can be a very scary thing to hear and can often make us as parents feel like failures when we look back and think about what we have, or have not, done to try and pass on our Catholic faith to our children.

In the hustle and bustle of life, sometimes we can't even find time to look for matching socks out of the piles of laundry on the living room floor (okay, maybe that's just me), so this idea of being the primary educators of the faith to our children may seem overwhelming and impossible.

I understand, firsthand, how impossible this might seem when we have full-time jobs, are carting kids to and from activities every night of the week and traveling for sports on the weekends. It can be very difficult to "fit in" the faith in a way that is meaningful and valuable for our children. But, as parents, we can't disregard current statistics about our children and their faith. In earlier articles, I've shared that the average age at which teens are currently choosing to leave the Catholic Church is 13. And the "nones"—those claiming no religious affiliation, is the fasted growing subset of young adults in the country (currently 1 in 4).

I don't know about you, but these statistics keep me up at night. As a parent myself, I question whether I'm sending the right message to my kids and if I truly am passing on my faith. But research shows that the domestic church (the family) has the biggest impact on whether a child will stay Catholic and continue practicing the faith as an adult.

If you aren't currently bringing the faith into your home daily, getting started can seem very daunting and uncomfortable. And, if you are, but you want to go deeper, that too can be difficult. But, I want you to know that it's not too late. It's never too late!

Since every family and child is different, there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to passing on the faith effectively; however, I would like to share a few ideas that might be helpful for your family.

Communicate the faith throughout the day. This can be done verbally, but also through action. You can start small by praying together before meals or at night before bed. While watching TV or sharing the events of the day, don't be afraid to bring faith into the discussion and to approach things from a faith perspective.

Attend mass weekly as a family, if you can. It's easy to let other things take priority, but nothing is more important than receiving Jesus. And, doing so as a family provides an opportunity to connect with each other while connecting with God. If you are traveling out of town over the weekend for sports or a vacation, find a church nearby to attend (check out www.thecatholicdirectory.com).

Ask your pastor or parish director of religious education for information and tools to help you share the faith at home. They will have numerous family-friendly ideas and resources to share with you.

Choose to attend adult faith formation activities at your parish as much as possible, because faith formation doesn't end with confirmation, and we don't want our children to think that way either. And, maybe even encourage your parish to implement family faith formation opportunities, so the entire family can be formed together and at the same time.

Lead by example. I love to binge watch Netflix, so I must often remind myself that if I put away the remote and choose to spend some of my free time focused on God, maybe my kids will do the same. That time can be spent in prayer, reading a book or watching videos to learn more about the faith (Check out Fr. Mike Schmitz on YouTube for a lot of great, short videos).

I could go on and on, but these are just a few ideas I wanted to share for now. I encourage you to take time today to pray and ask God and Mother Mary to help guide you and lead you in your role as a parent. They are the best examples for us as we do the best we can with our children. And, on the days that you are struggling, remember these words from Mother Theresa, "God doesn't require us to succeed, he only requires that we try."

Davis is the director of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministries which promotes and advocates for youth and young adult ministries across the diocese; provides tools and resources to support youth and young adult ministries at the parish level; and provides workshops and training programs for youth ministers.

Family Focus

TARA BROOKE

Learning to speak the other's love language

As the season shifts from winter to spring, there is hope, there is new life, there is beauty.

In my work as the Director of Family Ministry, I am always looking for ways to stay hopeful in a world where the sacrament of marriage is often looked down upon and where relationships, be it with spouses, family, or friends, are too easily thrown away.

One of my favorite pieces of hope is the "golden nugget" found in Dr. Gary Chapman's book, "The Five Love Languages." I mentioned this book in my last article, but this month I want to take it a step further. As a quick review for those who missed the last "Family Focus" article, the five love languages are: physical touch, acts of service, words of affirmation, quality time and gifts.

In my work with engaged couples, married couples, struggling couples, or family dynamics, I often see just how easy it is to completely misinterpret the actions of our loved ones. Let me share a personal example.

When my husband, Dan, and I were first married, we knew nothing about the five love languages, but learning each other's love languages since, has been a great blessing. In the early years of our marriage, I thought the best way to show Dan I loved him was to give him my time, and not just my leftover time, but quality time. Dan thought the only way to show love was in the realm of physical touch. And, let me tell you, I am NOT a toucher!

When I declined Dan's physical touch advances, he heard, "I don't love you." When Dan played video games instead of spending time with me, I heard, "I don't love you." This kept going and even though we thought we were being very loving, we were acting out of our own love languages, leaving one another unintentionally feeling "unloved."

About three years into our marriage, Dan and I began working with a team of couples who assist in pre-marriage preparation within the diocese. A portion of the seminar had been changed since we had attended as an engaged couple and the love language profile had been added. That weekend, Dan and I took the profile for the first time and, even though we were not surprised by what our love languages were, we were surprised at how terrible we were at speaking our beloved's love language.

For instance, because my love language is quality time as well as acts of service, I would plan to spend time with Dan and I would make sure the house was clean and supper was prepared for him when he got home from work. I acted out of my own love language.

Though he appreciated these gestures, it didn't exactly say, "I love you" to him. I had to get better at speaking his love language, the "dreaded" physical touch. I had to allow him to sit close to me on the couch while watching TV. I had to be okay with running into him every time I turned around because he desired closeness. And, even though we had a king-sized bed (which I thought was glorious to have my own space), he needed to feel me breathing through the night, so I accepted that the two of us would only occupy half of the bed.

Once I began speaking his love language, he flourished. He felt loved. I know that when Dan feels loved, he better speaks my love language, too. Dan knows that the easiest way for him to say, "I love you" is when I come home to a clean kitchen and living room area. What we have learned is that if we take time to speak each other's love language and are conscience about doing so, the other feels love and more willingly and intentionally speaks the love language of their spouse.

This is the golden nugget I mentioned earlier, to find out your loved one's love language and begin to intentionally act out of that one, not the one with which you are most comfortable.

Love is sacrificial, but if you make that small sacrifice, think of the rewards. Dr. Gary Chapman then offers a suggestion to put this into practice in all relationships in your life.

He calls it the "tank check." You are to ask your spouse, child, friend, "On a scale from 1-10, how loved do you feel?" If that number is anything less than 10, you ask, "What can I do to get that number to 10?" You then must be willing to do whatever it is they say, even if it's to empty the dishwasher, or for me, the "dreaded" let me be so close that I'm breathing down your neck while you're trying to sleep.

These moments of sacrifice are not huge, but small things done with great love that make your relationships flourish. And, who doesn't want their relationships to reach the potential God has for them?

Brooke is the Director of the diocesan Office of Family Ministry that provides resources for marriage and family life, as well as respect life and natural family planning.

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