



Dakota Catholic Action

Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941



School partnership

Mandan Catholic schools both on the foundation of Catholic Montessori

By Sonia Mullally
DCA Editor

When Fr. Josh Waltz arrived as the parochial administrator at St. Joseph's in Mandan in the summer of 2018, it wasn't long before he took a hard look at the status of the elementary school connected.

For the past several years, enrollment has been dwindling and finances were critical leading him to realize that the school needed a change to survive. He didn't have to look too far for that change—just across town at neighboring Christ the King School.

After visiting with fellow pastors and observing the Montessori program that Fr. Nick Schneider had implemented four years ago at Christ the King, Fr. Josh found the answer.

Father Waltz was impressed by the awe the children had developed for learning and their Catholic faith through the hands-on approach of the Montessori system where the student dictates the pace and direction guided by the teachers.

In response, administrators implemented the Montessori program at St. Joseph's for children ages 3-6 last fall. Both the atrium (a classroom for religious instruction) and Children's House learning center for young children are full. The goal was reached to mimic the growth experienced at Christ the King that has gone from dwindling enrollment to doubling their numbers with a waiting list.

Letter outlined changes

A partnership among the Mandan Catholic schools on the foundation of Catholic

Montessori was announced in a letter to parishioners released in December, signed by the three parish priests at St. Joseph's (Fr. Waltz), Christ the King (Fr. Fred Harvey) and Spirit of Life (Fr. Todd Kreitinger).

The implementation, the letter stated, of the partnership will take place over the coming year and some of the details will emerge with time. Three major points were outlined.

The pastors will remain administrators of their respective schools. Father Nick Schneider will serve as an advisor as the partnership of the two schools develops. In the coming school

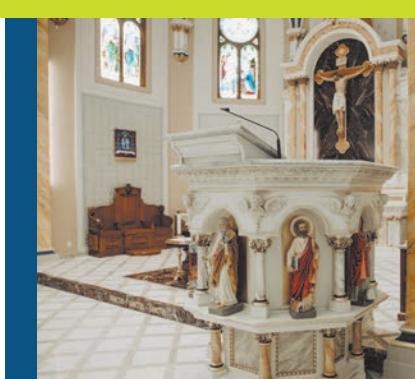
year, he will continue to teach in the upper elementary classroom of Christ the King as well as assist St. Joseph's to build their program.

Administrators are considering opening a Catholic Montessori middle school in the fall of 2020. The letter cited that, in a recent survey, 94% of respondents with children enrolled at Christ the King School expressed high interest in a Catholic Montessori middle school.

At St. Joseph's, major changes taking place will be: Montessori offerings for 3-6 year olds, the traditional daycare will be closing; and the current K-5 school will be

Continued on page 8

A LOOK INSIDE



Renovation of St. Leo's

The church interior of St. Leo the Great in Minot recently underwent a renovation Page 4

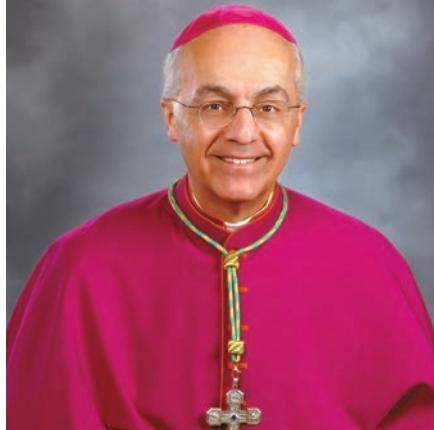


Running for life

The N.D. chapter of LIFE Runners are raising awareness of pro-life causes Page 11

Bishops' pilgrimage to Rome

FROM THE BISHOP



Bishop David D. Kagan

With February here, I would like to speak with you about two things, the first looking back to last month and the second looking to the end of this month.

In mid-January, my brother bishops and I made our Ad limina Apostolorum pilgrimage to Rome to report to Our Holy Father Francis about our dioceses in Region VIII of which there are ten—six in Minnesota, two in North Dakota and two in South Dakota. This pilgrimage takes its name from the very ancient practice of bishops traveling to Rome to offer Mass and pray at the tombs of the Apostles of St.

Peter and St. Paul, and to have a visit with the Pope. Our visit this year began on Monday, Jan. 13 and went until Friday, Jan. 17. It is to be done about every five years and is to be a personal visit for each bishop.

The highlight of my visit was to be able to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass at the tombs of Peter and Paul and we also offered Mass at the Basilicas of St. John Lateran and St. Mary Major. At each Mass, my intention was for you, God's holy people of the Diocese of Bismarck. The next most important moment for me was the two- and one-half-hour conversation we bishops had with Pope Francis. It was a great blessing for me to be able to speak to him as he said, "as brother bishops." I described, for him, our Diocese of Bismarck and he asked several questions about all of us, the clergy, religious and laity and he was very interested in three things: our vocations work, our Catholic education system of schools and programs and our charitable works and how we reach out to all those who come to our diocese from other countries. Pope Francis was most thoughtful both in his questions and in his responses. He did the same with each of the bishops in our group.

BISHOP IN ACTION



Photo by Deacon Joe Krupinsky

Bishop Kagan visited with two of the diocesan seminarians, Greg Hilzendeger and Ben Franchuk, at the annual Christmas Serra Club gathering in late December at the Municipal Country Club in Bismarck. Both men are in priestly formation for the diocese at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis and attended the event while home on holiday break.

Dakota Catholic Action

Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941



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

Editor: Sonia Mullally, smullally@bismarckdiocese.com
Center for Pastoral Ministry - Diocese of Bismarck USPS0011-5770
520 N. Washington Street, PO Box 1137, Bismarck, ND 58501-1137
Phone: 701-222-3035 Fax: 701-222-0269
www.bismarckdiocese.com

The Dakota Catholic Action (0011-5770) is published monthly except July by the Diocese of Bismarck, PO Box 1575, Bismarck, ND 58502-1575. Periodical postage paid at Bismarck, ND, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to address below.
Dakota Catholic Action, PO Box 1137, Bismarck, ND 58501-1137

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

What he advised all of us to do was to pray often each day for you and ourselves and then to be faithful and courageous to preaching and teaching the Truth of the Gospel to everyone. He said forcefully that it is fidelity in our prayer and works that pleases God and changes hearts. How true that is!

We saw Pope Francis on Monday and then after celebrating our Masses on the following days, we had appointments to visit with the prefects and staffs of many of the congregations and councils in Rome. These visits were helpful as we could ask specific questions about things in our dioceses and we received very good advice in many practical matters. It was a very good week and it was a blessing for me personally to have my faith and hope and charity strengthened by Peter's successor.

The second thing I want to

speak with you about is the season of Lent which will begin the last week of this month with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 26. This is the Church's great season of reconciliation and renewal through fasting, prayer and good works or alms giving. Please make the decision to fully participate in Lent this year. Make the commitment to frequent or daily Mass, weekly confession, fast and abstain on the days appointed, be charitable by giving not from your surplus or extra but from some of your substance to the poor. Be intentional about your renewal as a beloved son or daughter of the Father, Who loved us so much that He gave up His Son for us.

You will find in this issue the regulations for fast and abstinence. Above all else, commit to daily prayer in Lent. We cannot live without it.

BISHOP'S SCHEDULE

FEBRUARY 2020

Feb. 6	• Director's Staff Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 10 a.m. - Legatus meeting, 530 p.m.	Feb. 20	• Real Presence Radio interview, 9 a.m.
Feb. 8	• Annual meeting with deacons and wives, Church of Saint Anne, Bismarck, 10:30 a.m.	Feb. 22	• Mass of the Rite of Consecration to a Life of Virginity of Women Living in the World, Church of Saint Anne, Bismarck, 10 a.m.
Feb. 10	• St Hildegard Lecture, University of Mary, Bismarck, 10 a.m.	Feb. 24	• Blessing of St. Mary's Central High School Fine Arts Center, Bismarck, 10 a.m.
Feb. 13	• Episcopal ordination and installation of the Most Rev. Donald E. DeGrood, Bishop of Sioux Falls	Feb. 25	• Presbyteral Council, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 10 a.m.
Feb. 18	• Priest personnel board meeting, Chancery, Bismarck, 10:30 a.m.	Feb. 26	• Ash Wednesday Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 9:30 a.m.



Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for February

Listen to the Migrants' Cries

We pray that the cries of our migrant brothers and sisters, victims of criminal trafficking, may be heard and considered.

Fasting and abstinence during Lent

During the season of Lent, Catholics are called to take part in certain days of fasting and abstinence. **Ash Wednesday** and **Good Friday** are the **two days of both fasting and abstinence**. In addition, **all Fridays during Lent are days of abstinence.***

• **Fasting:** The norms on fasting are obligatory from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal. Two smaller meals may also be taken, but not to equal a full meal.

• **Abstinence:** The norms concerning abstinence from meat are binding upon members of the Catholic Church from age 14 onwards.

*Exceptions to these guidelines include those who are physically and mentally ill (including chronic illnesses like diabetes) as well as pregnant and nursing mothers. The Church teaches that common sense should prevail so that a person does not further jeopardize his or her health because of the fasting requirements.

Diocesan seminarians receive Ministry of Lector



Diocesan seminarians, Josh Hill and Steven Vetter, were among 35 seminarians at the Pontifical North American College in Rome to receive the Ministry of Lector on Jan. 12.

Diocesan seminarians, Josh Hill and Steven Vetter, were among 35 seminarians at the Pontifical North American College in Rome to receive the Ministry of Lector on Jan. 12, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis Bernard Hebda conferred the rite in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception at the college.

In his homily, Archbishop Hebda stressed the “great drama of the event recalled today, as the Word comes to be baptized by the Voice.” John the Baptist, said the Archbishop, “proclaimed himself to be unworthy to untie the strap of his cousin’s sandal.” Yet, through the persistence of Jesus, John responds to Jesus’ request for baptism with a humble “yes,” continued the Archbishop, “is the prelude to one of the great manifestations of Jesus’ identity” as the Son of God, and it is through the example of John that the Gospel reminds us of the “amazing consequences when we say ‘yes’ to Jesus.”

Archbishop Hebda continued by stating that like John the Baptist, these “young men will stand before us and offer their ‘yes’ as Jesus asks them to embrace “in a

new way the mission of preaching the Gospel to the whole world, as readers and bearers of God’s word.” Confronted with such a sublime task, he asked the men to be instituted, in spite of their own sense of unworthiness, if they were “willing to bring the message of salvation to those who have not yet received it, enabling them to come to know God our Father and his beloved Son Jesus Christ.”

Before Archbishop Hebda concluded, he exhorted the men to meditate on the word of God constantly, so that each day they “will have a deeper love of the Scriptures,” and be able to “show forth to the world Jesus Christ, radiating him” rather than themselves. Concluding, Archbishop Hebda encouraged the men, like John, to allow themselves “to be voices that faithfully proclaim the Word.”

As part of the rite, the Archbishop placed the Holy Scriptures in the hands of each candidate and said, “Take this book of Holy Scripture and be faithful in handing on the word of God, so that it may grow strong in the hearts of his people.”

The seminarians currently in their first year of theological formation for the priesthood, will



Like each man receiving the Ministry of Lector, diocesan seminarian, Josh Hill, had the book of Sacred Scripture placed in his hands during the rite.



Diocesan seminarian, Steven Vetter (right), celebrated receiving the Ministry of Lector on Jan. 12 with his brother and fellow diocesan seminarian, Nick Vetter. Both are studying for the priesthood at the Pontifical North American College in Rome—Steven in the Theology I year and Nick in Theology III.

have three additional years of theological, spiritual, and pastoral formation before being ordained to the priesthood in their home

dioceses.

—Information provided by the Pontifical North American College

PRAY FOR THE PRIESTS, RELIGIOUS, DEACONS SERVING OUR DIOCESE AND THOSE IN FORMATION AND LAY MINISTERS

An invitation from the Bismarck-Mandan Serra Club

- | | |
|---------|-----------------------------------|
| Feb. 1 | Fr. Wayne Sattler |
| Feb. 2 | Deacon Robert Bohn |
| Feb. 3 | Br. Michael Taffe, OSB |
| Feb. 4 | Sr. Patricia Schap, OSB |
| Feb. 5 | Sr. Carol Axtmann, OSB |
| Feb. 6 | All Lay Ministers |
| Feb. 7 | Sisters Ministering at Fort Yates |
| Feb. 8 | Fr. Dennis Schafer |
| Feb. 9 | All Religious in Formation |
| Feb. 10 | Fr. Henry Schneider |
| Feb. 11 | Br. Jacob Deiss, OSB |
| Feb. 12 | Seminarian Paul Gardner |
| Feb. 13 | Deacon Dan Brooke |
| Feb. 14 | Sr. Hildegarde Urlacher, OSB |
| Feb. 15 | All Lay Ministers |
| Feb. 16 | Fr. Nick Schneider |
| Feb. 17 | Deacon Dallas Carlson |

- | | |
|---------|--|
| Feb. 18 | Br. Charles McDaniel, OSB |
| Feb. 19 | Seminarian Jacob Degele |
| Feb. 20 | Sr. Hannah Vanorny, OSB |
| Feb. 21 | Msgr. Patrick Schumacher |
| Feb. 22 | All Seminarians & Religious in Formation |

- | | |
|---------|--------------------------|
| Feb. 23 | Fr. Frank Schuster |
| Feb. 24 | Deacon Lynn Clancy |
| Feb. 25 | Sr. Madelyn Louttit |
| Feb. 26 | Fr. Joseph Senger |
| Feb. 27 | Deacon David Crane |
| Feb. 28 | Fr. Boniface Muggli, OSB |
| Feb. 29 | Liturgical Ministers |



Photo credit: Quinnlyn Nelson/Paper Hands Media

Former pastors now enshrined in renewed St. Leo the Great Church

By Grace Fisher
Special Contributor to the DCA

Parishioners and those with ties to St. Leo the Great in Minot celebrated like never before on Dec. 20, 2019, dedicating anew the 111-year old structure that has virtually been rebuilt after decades of decline. Brilliant in its new glory, St. Leo's has long been known as the mother church of northwest North Dakota. Two of its famed, deceased pastors were permanently enshrined there as part of the dedication.

Bishop Kagan presided over the event that had some sentimental touches mixed with the reverent. That included the presence of former St. Leo's pastor Austin Vetter, now bishop of the Diocese of Helena, Mont. With them, Fr. Justin Waltz, current pastor of St. Leo's. He and Bishop Vetter originally arrived together at the Minot parish in 2008, the newly ordained Fr. Waltz coming then as Fr. Vetter's parochial vicar.

When he was pastor, Father Vetter oversaw the restoration of the outer church in 2011. Father Waltz followed with the just-completed new church interior.

Father Waltz also made the arrangements for disinterring the bodies of Msgr. Joseph Raith, who built the existing church in 1908 and was St. Leo's pastor from 1901 to 1941, and of Msgr. John Hogan, pastor from 1941 until his death in 1959. Father Raith died in 1960. Both had been buried in Rosehill Memorial Park in Minot.

Thirty-eight diocesan priests, two deacons, and a number of seminarians participated in the Dec. 20 ceremonies.

William C. Schilling, director of music for St. Leo's, led a 23-voice choir and an 18-piece orchestra for the event. Sean Connolly of Sleepy Eye, Minn., was featured organist

and composed a Mass for the dedication. Also performing on the organ were Peggy Dahl-Bartunek and Anthony Mahler. Vocal soloists included Kim Arneson, Nan Jacobson and Casy Charley.

Daniel Young, a bagpiper from New Salem, played for the re-interment rites for Monsignors Raith and Hogan.

Their ashes now lie in permanent crypts created in two side altars of the church which have been transformed into shrines. Invited to Minot for the ceremonies were Peter H. Wells and his wife of Wiscasset, Maine. Wells is a grand nephew of Msgr. Hogan and the only relative located of either priest.

In his homily for the Mass, Bishop Kagan observed that "... this is God's building...and His church is presented to the world in every age...The church is where we are given every spiritual and corporal blessing."

He continued, "This church has been beautifully restored...Today is a great day for this parish and this building. Praised be Jesus Christ, now and forever."

He concluded with a prayer of dedication. Part of the prayer: "O God, sanctifier and ruler of your Church, it is right for us to celebrate your name in joyful proclamation; for today your faithful people desire to dedicate to you, solemnly and for all time, this house of prayer, where they worship you devoutly, are instructed by the word, and are nourished by the sacraments."

He then proceeded with the anointing and incensing of the altar and walls of the church.

Toward the end of Mass, Fr. Waltz said of his parishioners: "Today's Catholic faithful set a new course like the faithful of those early families of Father Raith's



Fr. Justin Waltz, pastor at St. Leo the Great, oversaw the just-completed church interior renovation.

day. We have done something great for God and His Son on this day."

As much as possible, Fr. Waltz sought to match the rededication of St. Leo's to its initial opening on Nov. 26, 1908. He expressed regret that the new tabernacle, the communion rail, and pipes for the organ had not arrived in time for the day's activities.

Seats on the main level of the church were reserved for clergy and for 376 invited guests who were donors to the project. Others filled the church basement. Some 450 people were guests at the dinner that followed at the Clarion Hotel in Minot.

The cost of the interior church makeover—the church basement (which included all the plumbing, heating, electrical work, and air conditioning), the main floor, the choir loft—currently is set at \$2.6 million. Reconstruction of the outer church in 2011 cost just under \$3.4 million.

The program for the Dec. 20 dedication included a kind of back story to the reconstruction of St. Leo the Great Church.

First arriving in Minot in 2008, Fathers Vetter and Waltz had done their research of the parish and were well acquainted with the records compiled by Fathers Raith and Hogan. Both had spent their entire priesthood at St. Leo's. As Fathers Vetter and Waltz undertook the renewal projects, each suggested the work would reflect the theology and foundation upon which the older pair had led the church.

According to Book II of the history of the church, Fr. Vetter called the efforts of the parish governing bodies, "Restoration & Renovation." As plans for rebuilding the church exterior went forward, he made frequent references to Fr. Raith and how the parish might newly adapt the Raith church to contemporary needs, both physically and theologically.

Similarly, in leading the update of the interior, Fr. Waltz sought to replicate some of the décor and the fixtures of the Raith and Hogan years. He wanted it also to be a visible expression of the charism that St. Leo's was founded on.



Photo credit: Quinnlyn Nelson/Paper Hands Media



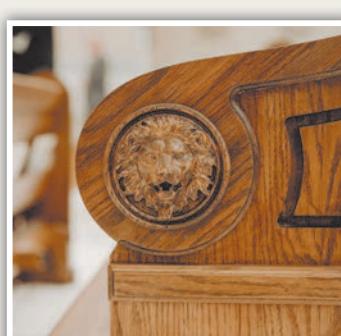
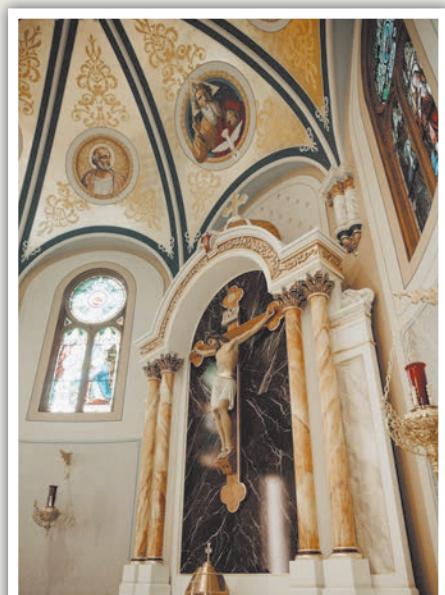
Bishops Austin Vetter of the Diocese of Helena and Bishop Kagan exited the church after Mass.



Fathers Josh Waltz, Gregory Crane, Adam Maus and Doug Krebs carry the remains of one of the two former St. Leo's pastors, Msgr. Joseph Raith and Msgr. John Hogan, which now lie in permanent crypts created in two side altars of the church.



Deacons Lloyd Krueger (left) and Chuck Kramer assisted Bishop Kagan as he anointed the altar with oil.



“Many people mistake our work for our vocation. Our vocation is the love of Jesus.”
— Mother Teresa



Vocations Jamboree

MARCH 17-19, 2020

Featuring messages from Fr. John Burns and Sarah Swafford. Fr. Burns is a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. He speaks at conferences, preaches missions, directs retreats, and is the author of *Lift Up Your Heart*. Sarah Swafford is the founder of Emotional Virtue Ministries and author of the book *Emotional Virtue: A Guide to Drama-Free Relationships*. She speaks internationally on a variety of topics and is the co-host of EWTN's 'At the Heart of Relationships.'

Join the University of Mary for its fifth annual Vocations Jamboree

Meet members of religious communities from around the country, ask questions, schedule personal meetings with vocations representatives, and learn more about opportunities to serve God and the community.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS (Open to the Public)

Fr. John Burns and Sarah Swafford
Wednesday, March 18, 7:30 PM
University of Mary

Investing in your marriage

Couples invited to marriage retreat in Williston Feb. 28-29

By Sonia Mullally
DCA Editor

As married couples, we invest in our homes, cars, possessions and our retirement accounts. When is the last time you made a real investment in your marriage?

Couples from across the diocese and beyond are invited to take part in a marriage retreat at the Church of St. Joseph in Williston Feb. 28-29 to do just that.

"We update everything in our houses—new shingles on our roof, appliances—our cars, but what have you done for your marriage lately?" asked Father Russ Kovash, pastor at St. Joseph and retreat host.

Marriage coaches, Matt and Mindy Dalton, will travel from Colorado to Williston to serve as retreat masters. The Daltons are the co-founders of Marriage Missionaries and have been doing full-time missionary work for the past eight years.

The couple will help others better understand the necessity of growing in intimacy with God, and with our spouse with the retreat theme: "20/20 Vision: Having a clear picture of God's plan for

marriage – a perfect vision of life and love." This is an invitation, in 2020, that no matter where you are in the vocation of marriage, you will learn how to invite God deeper into your union.

According to their website, marriagemissionaries.org, once Matt and Mindy invited Jesus to be at the center of their marriage and the primary source of their love, they've had a burning desire and passion to share God's glorious design with others. They do this through a process called marriage coaching; a mentoring friendship, one couple to another.

"God intended marriage to be beautiful, full of joy, so why do so many couples experience difficulties?" Matt stated. "Couples will discover how to tap into the grace available through the sacrament of marriage so that their marriage is a light to those around them."

Matt and Mindy have appeared on various shows on EWTN. Currently they write a monthly article for The Denver Catholic. The Diocese of Denver's Archbishop Aquila has them teaching future deacons and

their wives in the diaconate formation there at the archdiocese. They have been married 24 years and are parents to seven children, ages 22 to 5.

Mindy explained further, "Marriage is one of the 7 Sacraments. For years, it has been overlooked, undervalued and under-appreciated. So many of us know what marriage is—the 'for better or worse, richer or poorer, in sickness and in health'—but, few of us know why the Church teaches what it teaches, and then how we live it out. In other words, God wants to be a central part of our marriages. And, if we let Him, we will experience life and love in our marriages and families the way God intended from the beginning."

The retreat is open to everyone,



Submitted photo

Marriage coaches, Matt and Mindy Dalton, will travel from Colorado to Williston to serve as retreat masters on Feb. 28-29.

no matter if your marriage is thriving, you're newly married or have been married for years, even couples who are struggling will find benefit. Cost is \$25 per couple. The retreat begins on Friday evening and will conclude on Saturday after the 2 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph's. Register by calling the parish office at 701-572-6731 or go to their website at stjparish.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Lenten fish fry at Corpus Christi

Corpus Christi Fish Fry season is starting Friday, Feb. 28 and continues each Friday in Lent at the Church of Corpus Christi in Bismarck. The fish fry is held from 5 to 7 p.m. and features baked and fried fish, French fries, fried shrimp, noodles, fried green beans, applesauce, coleslaw, coffee, tea, milk and homemade desserts. All proceeds from the fish fry support youth participating in retreats, the Steubenville youth conference, and other youth ministry events. Prices are \$9 for adults, \$5 for children, \$30 for a family. The church is located at 1919 N. 2nd Street. Contact Melanie with questions at 255-4600.

Vocation event Feb. 8-9

The Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery in Bismarck are inviting single women to a "Come & See Vocation Discernment Weekend" at the monastery on Feb. 8-9 starting at 1 p.m. to 1 p.m. the next day. The weekend will include community prayer, meals, sharing with the sisters, group lectio, Mass and more. There is no charge to attend. Pre-registration is required. Contact Sr. Gerard at 701-425-9455 or at gerwald@umary.edu.

Giving Hearts Day is Feb. 13

The annual Giving Hearts Day is a chance to double your donation with matching dollars—a rare chance to double down. Giving Hearts Day is a 24-hour giving event for charities across North Dakota and northwestern Minnesota will be held this year on Thursday, Feb. 13. The event is sponsored by Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF), Impact Institute, and the Alex Stern Family Foundation. This is the 13th year for the Giving Hearts event. More than 450 nonprofits and charitable funds are part of Giving Hearts Day this year—including many Catholic organizations and schools and Catholic-based charities. It's important to note that 100% of the donations made on Giving Hearts Day go directly to the charities. The event runs for 24 hours and you can give from anywhere by going online to www.givingheartsday.org.

Mass for Rite of Consecrated Virgin Feb. 22

There will be a Mass of the Rite of Consecration to a Life of Virginity of Women Living in the World for Jacinta Evinger on Saturday, Feb. 22 at 10 a.m. at the Church of Saint Anne in Bismarck. All are invited to attend.

40 Days for Life campaign Feb. 26

One thing we can all do is pray to end abortion. 40 Days for Life has become a leader in turning the focus of pro-life people in that direction. Life

Matters Worldwide joins the effort by calling on constituents to personal and corporate prayer, as well as challenging them to gather peacefully with fellow church members outside local abortion clinics during the campaign. The next local campaign begins Wednesday, Feb. 26. Will you join me in praying for an end to abortion? Can you spare an hour a month? A week? A day? Who can you invite to join you? Do you belong to a group/parish who could fill a whole day? Sign up and find out more at www.40daysforlife.com/bismarck.

Marriage retreat in Williston Feb. 28-29

Couples are invited to a marriage retreat at St. Joseph's Church in Williston on Feb. 28-29. Matt and Mindy Dalton, renowned co-founders of Marriage Missionaries will be coming to Williston to share their knowledge and passion for God's glorious designs for marriage. For more information on the retreat leaders, go to marriagemissionaries.org. The retreat is open to everyone, no matter if your marriage is thriving, you're newly married or been married for years, even couples who are struggling will find benefit. Cost is \$25 per couple. The retreat begins on Friday evening and will conclude on Saturday after the 2 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph's. Register by calling the parish office at 701-572-6731 or go to their website at stjparish.com.

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. Upcoming weekends for 2020 are: March 5-8 and April 16-19. More information can be found at www.bismarckdiocese.com/search1.

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 Feb. 7-9 in Buffalo, Minn. and March 6-8 in Fargo. Early registration is highly recommended. For more information, visit ndwwme.org or contact Rob and Angie at 701-347-1998.

Cursillo weekends

The Cursillo of the Bismarck Diocese will be holding their 2020 Cursillo Weekends at Trinity High School in Dickinson in March. The men's weekend is March 5-8 and the women's weekend is March 19-22. For more information or for applications,

go to bismarckcursillo.com, or call/text Jeremy LaQua (men's) at 701-590-2258 or Kim Kostecky (women's) at 701-590-4726. Seating is limited and early registration is recommended.

Women's Lenten retreat March 14

Area women are invited to the 13th Annual Women's Simple Lenten Retreat on Saturday, March 14 at the Church of St. Joseph in Mandan. Guest speaker is Fr. Craig Vasek, chaplain of athletics at the University of Mary. The day begins with morning Mass at 8:30 a.m. and includes a talk on healing and forgiveness and a guided healing exercise, confession, adoration and the rosary. A light breakfast and lunch (taco bar) will be served. Early registration is \$25. After March 1, it is \$35. Call Meikel Engelhardt 701-391-2805 or Patti Armstrong 701-471-9633 with any questions. Pre-registration is appreciated so organizers can plan for lunch. To pre-register online, go to the bismarckdiocese.com and click on the "Events" tab. Or, send your check to PO Box 1137, Bismarck, 58501.

Middle school conference March 20-22

The Diocese of Bismarck is offering a trip for middle school youth (grades 6-8) to attend the "Rise Up" Middle School Youth Conference in Plymouth, Minn. the weekend of March 20-22. Cost is \$300 per student and \$60 per adult chaperone (21+) which includes roundtrip transportation from Bismarck to the conference, hotel lodging for two nights, conference registration, and tickets for a fun activity. Go to bismarckdiocese.com/riseup to register or contact Chris Kraft at ckraft@bismarckdiocese.com or (701) 204-7208 with questions. Registration deadline is Feb. 28.

Two options for Steubenville Conferences

Youth currently in grades 8-12 will have two options for Steubenville Conferences this summer—June 17-21 in Denver and July 23-26 in St. Paul. Both conferences provide an opportunity for youth to encounter God through speakers, workshops, music, Eucharistic adoration and community with other Catholic teens. Details are still being finalized on these trips.

Rosary for the unborn every Monday

Come pray the rosary for the unborn at Spirit of Life in Mandan every Monday from 5 to 6:20 p.m. All 15 decades are prayed, stay for all or as much as you able. All are welcome.



School partnership



Mandan Catholic schools both on the foundation of Catholic Montessori

Continued from page 1

converted to combined classes of lower elementary (6-9-year-old) and upper elementary (9-12-year-old) Montessori environments.

The enrollment period is open now at St. Joseph's and parents are encouraged to contact school administrators with questions.

Changes at St. Joseph's

The changes might seem drastic to some, but Fr. Waltz and St. Joseph School Principal Dr. David Fleischacker are wholly invested in the success and viability of the school that was in dire need of a change to survive. While the Montessori method is foreign to many, once acquainted with it, most people see its value.

"The objective is to feed all the powers and potentialities of the child's soul through a motor-sensory rich environment with a guide who deeply respects the mystery of the child, letting all that is good unfold naturally and only hindering what is truly evil," Dr. Fleischacker explained.

He went on to discuss the multitude of benefits. "Children develop a deep sense of the mystery of their lives as children of God and citizens of the Church and pilgrims in the world. The natural desire to understand and to know the world is awakened in them so that they are alive to creativity, truth and beauty. They develop an inner sense about the life of virtue through activities and materials that draw out natural concentration, focus and self-discipline."

"Self-discipline and concentration are crucial for developing virtuous habits and becoming a virtuous person. A child moves themselves because the inner life of God is moving them. You see this in Catholic Montessori environments. They learn to run on their own and do not need to be constantly driven to work or to learn. When a child is running, he or she goes much further than a child that has to be pushed every inch of the way. In a Catholic Montessori school, they run."

Having joined the school last fall, Dr. Fleischacker has supported the process of transition from the traditional classroom to the Montessori method and appreciates the commitment it will take from parishioners and parents.

"For the parish, this will be a way forward in living out the century-old mission of this beautiful parish school, much as what happened at Christ the King a few years ago when

it switched to Catholic Montessori," he added. "It is a profound and effective education that will richly bless the parish and the families. When these children enter the workforce as citizens in our city, they will be effective contributors in building a just, faithful, creative and flourishing economy and political order."

Impact at Christ the King

The administrators and guides at St. Joseph's have confidence in their plan, with Christ the King paving the way for the success of the Catholic Montessori school.

A teacher in the upper elementary level at Christ the King, Fr. Nick Schneider facilitated the implementation of the Montessori model four years ago when he was pastor there. Now, he's the pastor at the Church of St. Vincent de Paul in Crown Butte, as well as the diocesan director of the Office of Worship.

"We really feel that Christ the King School can be a model and resource for other schools wanting to implement Catholic Montessori," Schneider said. "Our staff has a strong understanding and love of the Montessori Method, and we love sharing! Dr. Maria Montessori saw that the way to a society of peace and faith is through the child. We hope to contribute a small part in building that society."

In his training and time in the classroom, Fr. Schneider has seen the model at work and witnesses the difference it makes for the students. "There are so many benefits that come to Montessori kids. Some of the biggest include increased independence, self-reliance and problem-solving, self-regulation, the capacity to make connections and the growth of personal interest and involvement in education."

Christ the King and St. Joseph's could be viewed as cross-town rivals, but a partnership between the two is a major advantage as both continue to grow and evolve.

Father Schneider explained, "An immediate benefit is that having two schools working together will allow us to reopen education for adolescents in Mandan. Also, after years of competition between Christ the King and St. Joseph's, we can work together for a common goal. The sense of our faith and our mission in the Church being universal can be more clearly realized. Also, we have excellent staff at both campuses. Working together will allow us to share the many, many gifts our staff have."



Guide Alex Nearing helps students ages 3-6 in the Children's House environment.



Guide assistant Monique Ritter helps the students take a closer look at the items placed on the altar during Mass in the Atrium environment.



Opening ourselves to the healing grace of Jesus

Women's Lenten retreat with Fr. Craig Vasek on March 14

By Patti Armstrong
DCA Writer

Because of the fall of man, our intellect dimmed, and our will weakened so that we sometimes cleave to things that are not right. Yet, if we open ourselves to the healing grace of Jesus, we can become even better than our first parents were, according to Fr. Craig Vasek, this year's presenter for the 13th annual Women's Simple Lenten Retreat on Saturday, March 14 at the Church of St. Joseph in Mandan.

Father Vasek is the full-time chaplain for University of Mary's athletic department while also working on a master's degree in psychology. He is a graduate of the Pontifical North American College

in Rome, and has worked with the Missionaries of Charity in Europe, Asia, Africa and North America, and hosts a blog, podcast and various shows on Real Presence Radio.

"We have been redeemed in Christ," Fr. Vasek explained. "Redemption gives us access to all the grace of the Lord and His healing. His grace heals our nature so that it becomes reintegrated as it was meant to be in the beginning and even beyond what it was in the beginning. Those living in Christ can live even beyond what Adam and Eve had in the garden."

During the morning talk, Fr. Vasek will address the errors of our thoughts and deeds and the lies we've latched onto regarding God, the world and ourselves. He will show us, practically, what that looks like and help us to understand all the ways we have missed the mark.

"We are created good," he said. "We are not evil, but we are hurt and wounded. I will lay out the gentle truth of who we are." The talk will draw on the saints, Scripture, Christian

anthropology, theology and philosophy presented in a way that makes sense to our everyday life. It will end with points of reflection for people to take away and pray about on their own.

The afternoon session, he said, will be "performative" as a time of guided prayer. Father Vasek will lead women through meditation, drawing on what was covered earlier in the day.

"We will bring it to the merciful gaze of the Father so that we might receive an opening of the heart, an opening of the mind and an opening of the self for the Lord to show His mercy and redemptive care through the blood of Jesus."

Through this, Fr. Vasek said the hope is that women will access the grace Jesus makes available to us for an illumination of the intellect and a strengthening of the will as well as an increase in faith, hope, love and healing. "This is not just another talk," he explained. "Each person should leave given over more faithfully to the Lord."

The retreat begins at 8:30 a.m. with Mass and includes light breakfast, lunch (taco bar), talks, adoration and confession,



Fr. Craig Vasek

vendors, giveaway table, ending at 2:30 p.m. Registration opens at 7:45 a.m. To pre-register online, go to the bismarckdiocese.com and click on the "Events" tab. Or, send your check to PO Box 1137, Bismarck, 58501.

Early registration is \$25. After March 1, it is \$35. Call Meikel Engelhardt 701-391-2805 or Patti Armstrong 701-471-9633 with any questions. Pre-registration is appreciated so organizers can plan for lunch.



Protective Factors For Child Abuse

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. Email the victim assistance coordinator, Joyce McDowell, at victimassistance@bismarckdiocese.com.

CODE OF 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 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 Conduct at <http://www.bismarckdiocese.com>

Prevention programs have long focused on reducing particular risk factors, or conditions that research shows are associated with child abuse and neglect. However, increasingly, prevention programs are also recognizing the importance of promoting protective factors or circumstances in families and communities that increase the health and well-being of children and families. The following six protective factors have been linked to a lower incidence of child abuse and neglect:

- Nurturing and attachment. When parents and children have strong, warm feelings for one another, children develop trust that their parents will provide what they need to thrive.
- Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development. Parents who understand how children grow, develop, and know the typical developmental milestones can provide an environment where children can live up to their potential.
- Parental resilience. Parents who are emotionally resilient have a positive attitude, creatively problem solve, effectively address challenges, and are less likely to direct anger and frustration at their children.
- Social connections. Trusted and caring family friends provide emotional support to parents by offering encouragement and assistance in facing the daily challenges of raising a family.
- Concrete supports for parents. Parents need basic resources such as food, clothing, housing, transportation, and access to essential services such as childcare, health care, and mental health services, to ensure the health and well-being of their children.
- Social and emotional competence. Children with the ability to positively interact with others, self-regulate their behaviors, and communicate their feelings have relationships that are more positive with family, friends, and peers. Children without these competencies may be at greater risk for abuse.

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

Running for life

Pro-life chapter of LIFE Runners raises awareness

By LeAnn Eckroth

DCA Writer

A state pro-life running/walking chapter based in Killdeer is thriving nearly three years after its inception.

LIFE Runners' only branch in North Dakota boasts more than 60 members statewide, most generated from western North Dakota, said co-founder Mary Wheeling.

Nearly 14,000 teammates participate in the cause internationally, including 39 nations and 2,577 cities, according to the LIFE Runners website (liferunners.org). Not all supporters are required to run, but they are obliged to be sporting jerseys and shirts with the motto, "Remember the Unborn," on their backs during group activities.

Wheeling, 64, started the Killdeer branch of LIFE Runners about two and a half years ago after listening to a program on the Real Presence Radio network. "Pat Castle, who started the program, was being interviewed," she recalled.

Wheeling, had been an avid runner for 40 years before an injury and surgery prevented her from continuing that life-long passion.

LIFE Runners offered her the next best thing as it posed the opportunity to be physically active and raise awareness for pro-life causes. "It was exactly what I wanted to do," she said. "We wear jerseys and T-shirts that say: 'Remember the Unborn' on the back," she noted. "We try to do some activity at least once a month."

She pointed out that running isn't necessarily a prerequisite to being a member, not wanting to exclude anyone who says they can't run.

"It was started by a runner," Wheeling said. "We mostly do walks. It's for members ages 1-99...As long as they wear our jerseys," she said. "We walk about town, wearing our jerseys and then might have pizza or go to a movie."

The group has also done a BBQ in the park and a color fun run. Not all participants are members and everyone's welcome. Wheeling said the formation of the LIFE runners chapter was a natural fit for people at her church as many are tightly connected as a church family and community, and conscious of pro-life causes.

Most notably, at press time, at least five youth group members of the chapter and church were scheduled to represent LIFE Runners at the March for Life event on Jan. 24 in Washington D.C.

The Killdeer Chapter of LIFE Runners has proved a strong ally of the Badlands Right to Life group, based in Dickinson. The group, donning their jerseys with their message, held up candles with the Right to Life group during the Badlands Right to Life Vigil at St. Patrick's Church there. Chapter members can often be found assisting the Badlands Right to Life



Submitted photos

program in rummage sales and other fundraisers to raise awareness for pro-life-related causes, said Wheeling.

She and other members of the Killdeer LIFE Runners chapter previously joined and represented the national A-Cross America event. There as a participant and sponsor at the event, Wheeling prayed in front of North Dakota's only abortion clinic in Fargo.

The 5,400-mile A-Cross pro-life event involves runners or walkers creating a relay cross moving north to south and east to west which meets in Kansas.

"Our goal is to remember the unborn," Wheeling said. "We've done some good things. We run. We walk. We pray to end abortion. This brings out awareness."

The group always starts any activity by reciting their creed. Often leading the LIFE Runners in the creed is Wheeling's brother, Deacon Dan Tuhy of St. Joseph's Parish in Killdeer.

The creed emphasizes the dignity of all human life. It reminds participants, that as they run and walk, it is a prayer to defend children in the womb, for endurance in their mission, awareness of the value of human life, to discourage parents from ending the life and to end abortion.

Tuhy is quick to credit his sister for the chapter's startup and having it thrive early and insists his role is mostly to support her.

"She came to a youth group meeting at the church and asked if the youth group members were interested," he recalled. "She asked if I would be the chaplain for the group."



LIFE Runners group of North Dakota co-founder, Mary Wheeling, and her sister, Jane Perdue, raised awareness about the group at their vendor booth at the diocesan Thirst Conference this past fall.

Tuhy added, "It's a really good group to be identified with. It creates awareness about pro-life causes."

He likes engaging the teens in the group activities and events like the March in D.C. Tuhy likens it to a pilgrimage for the pro-life movement.

"The sooner you get younger kids involved with pro-life causes, the better," he said. Tuhy added it increases the youth's chances to remain involved with the cause.

Wheeling's niece Kelly Fritel has also been with the chapter since its startup. She oversees the Facebook page for the program. "It's been very positive. I have four kids and they have been to almost everything we do with the group. It helps them understand what's happening and why we're doing what we're doing."

Fritel said she frequently wears her LIFE Runners shirt in public and has received nothing but positive comments.

It's become a family affair for Wheeling and her husband, Bob, who are the parents to grown children, Mandy and Jacob, and grandparents to two. Her one regret is that the Killdeer LIFE Runners remains the lone chapter in the state, but she is working to change that by getting the word out.

For more information about the program, visit Liferunners.org.



Ag Attitudes

JAMES ODERMANN



Refugee resettlement: what would Jesus do?

Weather has perhaps the most direct impact on agriculture, maybe the biggest unknown. The discussions amongst producers ranges from "too hot, too cold, too wet, too dry . . ." And then, bring the debate about global warming into the equation and emotions have a good chance to get out of hand.

Emotions are reactions to situations, passion about a particular concept or idea. Emotions, I think, are usually termed "good" or "bad," depending on who is evaluating the belief.

So, it was only natural to reflect on the emotional ups and downs of the production year past. Across the Diocese of Bismarck, the extremes were the norm. "I never thought I would be harvesting corn on New Year's Day," I heard one

producer say. He was lucky—there are still many producers who have unharvested crop in the field.

The emotional drain on individual producers, spouses and families is straining sanity. For many, the start of 2020 could "optimistically" be called depressing.

Equally, I pondered another depressing problem—the emotion surrounding the hypotheses about refugee resettlement. The emotion on this issue runs strong and I pondered, "What would Jesus do?"

The answer, at least to me, seems clear. Jesus welcomed everybody, nurturing and caring for all with patience, forgiveness and love. Jesus did not have a list of those who were not welcome. Rather, Jesus highlighted two commandments: "Thou shalt love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind . . . And the second is thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

I thought about Ellis Island and how my grandparents were welcomed to the United States. They were refugees, seeking opportunity, a better way of life where conflict was not the status quo. They—and many others like them from across the world—arrived, accepted the rules of the country, professed their allegiance and became productive citizens, raising families, helping achieve a quality of place and quality of life unmatched anywhere on this earth.

I reflected on modern day immigrants who are some of the "strongest" United States citizens I know. Some are individuals

who work across the prairies of the Bismarck Diocese. Some are agriculture producers. Some are entrepreneurs, doctors, lawyers, laborers, providing support for many industries of agriculture, oil and gas exploration, construction, business, real estate, etc.

I wondered how I, as a Catholic, could draw a line in the sand and not extend a helping hand. The challenge for me is to embrace my fellow sisters and brothers as Jesus would do. 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).

Catholic Charities

CHAD PROSOSKI



Supporting our farmers in need

America is a country based on farming. It's in our blood. And, while many of us no longer farm, most North Dakotans know others who do. That's why we care so much when factors such as the weather or crop prices hurt them. We ask how they're doing, but many farmers won't admit when they're hurting. So, what can we



do to help them?

There are many ways to reach out to our friends and families who farm. In fact, when farming is difficult it's not just the farmers who are affected. What about our seed companies, the insurance agents, the implements dealers and other laborers? What about the small-town businesspeople, the small shop owners and the restaurants and other services? They and their employees can all be negatively impacted when the farm economy is struggling. That's why it becomes "rural stress" and not just the farmers who may need our support.

Are you a farmer or rancher? Are your parents farmers or ranchers? Or, do you have family members or friends who live on a farm? If you are concerned that they may be struggling look for

common signs of depression or anxiety. In addition to noticeable mood changes, symptoms can include loss of appetite or interest in other activities. If you notice gradual changes, encourage them to seek help from others, either a support group or professional counselors as appropriate.

Catholic Charities North Dakota offers licensed clinicians that have years of experience in providing hope and healing during life's challenges. Unfortunately, fear gets in the way of talking to someone and, at Catholic Charities, the friendly and caring counselors will respect your faith and privacy, while offering hope and healing. They can be reached at 701-255-1793. Even if you aren't sure if you need counseling you can call, and Catholic Charities works with almost all insurances

and even offers a sliding fee scale so that no one has to be turned away from these services.

There are also free suicide prevention helplines such as 2-1-1 and National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. This goes not just for farmers but for anyone, in our rural towns or bigger cities. It is always worth it to seek help, and recognizing some of these warning signs of anxiety and depression could save a life—maybe yours, or maybe that of someone you love.

■ 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@catholiccharitiesnd.org or 701-235-4457.

A Blessing for our Farm Families

God of the earth we walk on and the heavens above,
Our state and our country were founded by farmers,
They are the foundation of our families and towns,
Their faith leads our churches and communities,
And we rely upon them as they rely upon You.

Lord of all please bless and protect our farmers,
Give them good weather to raise their crops,
And the grace to weather storms they face,

Give them plenty of rain but not too much,
Sun to warm their faces and their fields,
Your peace in their homes and schools,
The hope to never give up their dreams,
And the gift of faith to know You more.

Amen.

Written by Chad Prososki, JD
Director of Development & Community Relations
for Catholic Charities North Dakota

The Holy Face coming to Bismarck

The Holy Face of Jesus image from the Shroud of Turin will appear on billboards in Bismarck through The Holy Face Project.

Pope Saint John Paul II stated in 1980, "The Holy Shroud, the most splendid relic of the passion and the resurrection.... We become what we contemplate... Why don't we contemplate the Icon of Icons: The Holy Face of Jesus!"

Leo XIII (pope from 1878-1903) said that the image had the power "to stimulate everywhere a revival of the religious spirit."

Val Kelly, founder of the Holy Face Project, shares that vision of revival. She was nudged during adoration three years ago to bring the image of the Holy Face from the Shroud of Turin onto billboards around the United States after learning of such a campaign in Ireland. "I felt an urgent need to bring Jesus to the public and silently remind everyone He is still here," she explained.

On the billboard, there is just the image, the website: www.TheHolyFaceProject.com, and the photo's copyright. Visitors to the



website can learn more about the miraculous image by visiting the Shroud.com link.

Kelly partnered with the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry, a 501c3 tax-exempt corporation, which enables donations to be tax deductible.

We hope to bring the face of Jesus to Bismarck, for six months for a 12 x 24 ft. electronic poster

board switching locations every 30 days. A person or group could sponsor a month for \$870 or simply contribute \$25 or more. Once enough is raised for six months, it will go live.

Go to the TheHolyFaceProject.com and click on "North Dakota-Bismarck" or send a check made out to Holy Face Project to: "Bismarck Billboard Fund," c/o

Community Foundation,
P.O. Box 23019, Hilton Head
Island, SC 29925

To request a PowerPoint presentation about the Shroud of Turin, for groups, contact Mark Armstrong at markarmstrong2@mac.com.

— Staff report

Balancing Church & State

CHRISTOPHER DODSON



Even a hidden life is significant to God

Acclaimed film director Terrence Malick's "A Hidden Life" has brought renewed and needed attention to the life of Blessed Franz Jagerstatter, the Austrian husband, father and farmer whom the Third Reich martyred for his refusal to swear an oath to Hitler.

Malick's cinematic style is off-putting to some. Voices are detached from the actors, scenes are shown in out-of-sequence snippets, and the camera constantly sweeps in and around the actors like Malick attached cameras to guardian angels. Also, the movie is long—just a few minutes short of three hours.

All of this, however, is combined with incredibly beautiful and sometimes long shots of nature, farming, children and lovers playing, and towering mountains. I was reminded of a comment by a critic about another Malick movie. He said there was not a single shot in the movie he would not mind having framed and mounted in his office, even if he did not understand it. Fortunately, the story told in "A Hidden Life" is not difficult to understand, even if some viewers might struggle to understand why Jagerstatter acted as he did.

Franz Jagerstatter lived in Sankt Radegund, a small town high in the mountains of Austria near the German border. Even today the town has only a few hundred people. As a young man, his life was typical, though he had a child

out-of-wedlock. A few years later, he became more serious about his Catholic faith, perhaps in part due to marrying the deeply religious Franziska. The newlyweds spent their "honeymoon" making a pilgrimage to Rome.

Jagerstatter publicly opposed Germany's annexation of Austria in 1938. When a referendum on the annexation was held, Jagerstatter was the only person in the town to vote against it. Village authorities hid his vote and reported that the local vote was unanimous. Because farmers were needed to support the war effort, Jagerstatter was deferred for military service several times. He was finally called up in 1940 and completed basic training. He refused to take the oath to Hitler, but authorities apparently overlooked his refusal and sent him home under the farmer exemption.

His experience at basic training and reports that came in about the Nazi regime made him further question not just the regime, but the morality of the war itself, including the claim that the war and Hitler were necessary to stop the Communists. The village began to turn on him and his family. Meanwhile, they lived under the ominous threat that someday he would have to face authorities for his position.

In addition to his wife and three young daughters, Jagerstatter cared for his mother, a sister-in-law, and a godson whose father had died. He understood his obligations

to them and his responsibilities to his community. He asked his priest for guidance. The priest reminded Jagerstatter of his familial obligations, but arranged a meeting with the bishop. The bishop advised Jagerstatter of his "responsibilities" to civil authorities and his "far greater" responsibilities for his own life and his family's.

Jagerstatter was called for active duty in 1943. He refused combat duty and the Hitler oath. He was later deported to Berlin, far from the remote mountain village of Sankt Radegund. Within a month, he was sentenced for "undermining military morale" and executed by beheading.

When the course of history turns, so do opinions. When the war ended and the Nazi atrocities were revealed, people who had supported or made peace with the Hitler regime found ways to praise or at least acknowledge those who stood firm against the defeated Reich. Not so with Jagerstatter. In the eyes of the village and his fellow countrymen, Jagerstatter's "crime" was not that he refused to give an oath to Hitler, it was the fact that he abandoned his family and community. In addition, in their eyes, his actions—because he based them on the Catholic faith—implied that the rest of them had made the morally wrong choice.

In truth, like St. Thomas More before him, Jagerstatter did not judge his neighbors. He only

followed his own conscience. Nevertheless, he remained unpopular and relatively unknown. When Gordon Zahn set out to write a book about Jagerstatter in the late 1950s to early 1960s, many of the subjects interviewed still had bitter or ambivalent views about him. Why couldn't he just say the words and spare his family? Doesn't Paul tell the Romans to obey civil authority? What good did it do anyway? He didn't stop Hitler and the war continued.

This last question goes to the heart of Malick's depiction of Jagerstatter's life. Does a "hidden life" make any difference? Eventually, through the work of people like Zahn, Jagerstatter's story did become known. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI declared Jagerstatter a martyr and he was later beatified. His widow, still alive and living in Sankt Radegund, along with his four daughters—including the child born out-of-wedlock—were at the beatification ceremony.

Even if it had never become known, Jagerstatter's choice would still have mattered. To God, every "hidden" life is significant beyond our imagination. Jagerstatter trusted that what mattered in his life was obedience to God above all. The rest would be in God's hands.

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.

Guest Column

SHELLY PRESZLER



Just bring me, Jesus!

The text message to our bible study group came right before the 4th of July, asking, "Could you gals please pray for me? I did something to my back." The person requesting the prayer was our dear friend, Barb, a woman who seemed as strong and sturdy as a combat Marine.

The text that followed requested more prayer as she was hosting a crowd of 20 for the 4th and needed to be back on her feet. She didn't get back on her feet. Instead, she laid flat on her back for the remainder of the summer and then some.

She had a herniated disk and other injuries to her back as well. When I asked her how she became injured the story took 20 minutes. She began by telling me how she had taught four classes at the YMCA in one day. If you have taken one of her classes they begin with, "Oh, my... What have I gotten myself into?" Then move on to, "I'm never doing this again!"

She then listed 15 other activities, and this is where I lost her. I picked up her story when she stated, "By the time I made it to a gas station, I couldn't get out of my car."

I knew I needed to help my friend. No, I wanted to help my friend. Barb has been there for me through thick and thin. She was the first friend I made when we

moved to town. At her spin class at the "Y," I was impressed with her and her positive attitude. I soon found out we both had a bunch of kids and loved Jesus; He always seals the deal for me.

I love to bake, but sugar-laced food would not be helpful to my health-conscious friend. I missed her and longed to see her. I thought of how active she was and how tortuous it must be to be bedridden during our beautiful summer.

That's when it hit me; I'm going to bring Jesus, to Barb. She must be missing Mass terribly by now, and as a daily communicant, she had to be hungering for Christ.

I had become a Eucharistic minister several years before as I watched my precious friend, Geri, be overtaken by cancer. I never felt worthy enough to hold Christ in my hand or offer Him to another Christian. That's when Deacon Tony reassured me that none of us are worthy, but we are all called to serve Him. I wept at the truth of this statement.

So, I called Barb asking her if she wanted me to bring her Jesus. She replied immediately and enthusiastically, "Yes!"

Finally, something I could do for my friend. It wasn't as easy as it might seem, as we had grandkids staying with us throughout the summer. Bringing Jesus to Barb, meant waking a

couple toddlers for early-morning Mass. I'd carefully cradle Christ in the pyx around my neck with a toddler or two in tow. In one instance, the Lego set my three-year old grandson, Pio, was carrying broke into what seemed like a million pieces. Instantly, Barb's dog came to us. Pio fears dogs and, by now, was crying over the broken Legos and the dog licking his face. Pio was clinging to my neck next to Christ. I looked upward asking Jesus, "Where does my help come from?" At that moment, Barb's grandsons came helping to reconstruct the Lego set and rescue Pio from the dog.

I listened to Barb and learned how she was offering up her suffering for her children. The only time she ever lamented her situation, which was painful to say the least, was when she cried about not seeing her grandchildren. My grandchildren were also able to witness their grandmother bring Christ to a sick friend in need—a teachable moment indeed.

I learned so much from my friend. I watched how she bore her suffering in silence and, at times, in thanksgiving. She had so lovingly cared for her family over the years and now watched each one of them lovingly care for her. It was a beautiful testimonial to witness.

Two scenes will forever stay

etched in my heart. One day, my three-year old grandson, Samuel, helped me bring Jesus to Barb. She laid on her stomach doing her exercises, and facing him, she asked him to show her his muscles. Samuel proudly showed his muscles and they smiled at one another.

On another occasion, her adult-aged son Andrew, came to my door to pick her up from Bible study. He greeted his mother with such love and care. You could see, in his eyes, the love he had for his mother. I thought of all the times Barb must have picked Andrew up over the years and here he was doing the same for her. Once again, a beautiful witness of love to ponder.

I am in awe of my friend and her perseverance through this grueling recovery and healing process. She has truly waited upon the Lord and thanked Him along the way. Yes, even for the struggles. She made a perfect offering of herself for others. Giving Him all the glory and honor. I learned much from my friend this summer through her simple request, "Just bring me, Jesus." In the end, He's all she really wanted. In the end, He's all she really needed.

■ Preszler and her family reside in Mandan.

Questions I was afraid to ask

FR. GREG LUGER



Q: Did God literally create the world in seven days?

A: As a priest, this is a question I get with some frequency and, given our understanding of the sciences these days, it's important to answer it. In fact, we've all met people who've abandoned faith because of this particular question.

To ensure that this article is as effective as possible, let's frame the issue as its most commonly understood. Many people understand that the earth is about four billion years old and that the universe as a whole is much older than that. People are also aware that dinosaurs once roamed the earth and possess at least some understanding of the theory of evolution.

None of this is found in the book of Genesis in the Bible. Add to this that many Christian denominations take Genesis absolutely literally. Weighing that against the scientific knowledge we now have, the Genesis narrative seems totally absurd.

So, then, did God create the world in seven literal days? This is the wrong question to ask. Why? Because the exact age of the earth, evolution, etc. are all scientific questions and Genesis is not trying to answer scientific questions. We need not read Genesis 1 literally, nor should we.

A little-known fact is that Genesis actually contains two different stories of creation and reading them both literally would lead us into contradictions. For example, in each story the order of creation is different. In Genesis 1, we see that birds, fish, and animals are created and then man and woman. In Genesis 2, man is created first, then all

the animals, then woman. That should tell us something about how to read these stories.

We need to read them according to genre, just as we would for any other type of literature. Just as I would be a fool for accusing J.R.R. Tolkien of thinking hobbits were real, so would I be a fool for thinking that Genesis 1 is a book about science (note: some parts of the Bible should be read literally, for example, the four Gospels). So, what about Genesis 1, then? Genesis 1 is a poetic narrative, meaning it uses poetry in order to tell us truths about God, the nature of creation, and man.

You might be wondering, then, what truths are contained therein. Given the brief nature of this article here are just a few things: We see God commanding things into being showing that he is all-powerful ("Let there be light! And there was light"). We also see that man is made in the image and likeness of God.

And, what about the seven days? In the Old Testament, seven is a symbolic number, indicating completeness. Taking a closer look, we can discern a noticeable pattern. I can't draw a chart in a newspaper article, so you'll have to use your imagination. Here are the things created on each day: day 1 - light and darkness; day 2 - sky and sea; day 3 - land; day 4 - sun and moon; day 5 - birds and fish; day 6 - animals, man, and woman; day 7 - God rests. Now compare day 1 with day 4, day 2 with day 5, and day 3 with day 6. See the pattern? This was done on purpose and is a poetic way of telling you that the earth God created is orderly (as opposed to chaotic like Israel's neighbors believed).

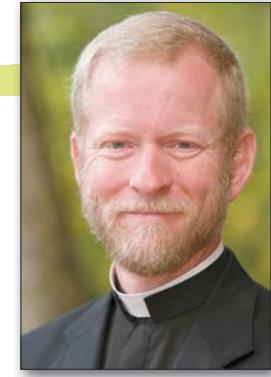
That said, there is no contradiction between the creation stories of Genesis and the sciences since they are concerning themselves with different aspects of the truth. We simply must believe what Genesis is actually telling us and have no fear of the truths of science (after all, science tells us about the world God created).

As the great St. Augustine put it: "Let every good and true Christian understand that wherever truth may be found, it belongs to his Master." Let us, then, dive into the Scriptures and the sciences and be caught up in wonder and awe of creation and of God who created it.

■ Fr. Greg Luger is parochial vicar at the Churches of St. Joseph in Williston, St. John the Baptist in Trenton and St. Boniface in Grenora. 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.

Making Sense out of Bioethics

FR. TAD PACHOLCZYK



The foxes and the henhouse

Probably the biggest bioethics story of 2019 involved Dr. Jankui He (known to his associates as "JK"), a Chinese scientist who employed a new technology called CRISPR/Cas9 to produce the world's first gene-edited babies. JK made genetic changes to two little girls, Lulu and Nana, when they were early-stage embryos, attempting to modify a receptor for HIV to confer resistance to a possible future infection from the virus. He publicly announced the birth of the girls at an international scientific conference near the end of 2018, and as the news rapidly spread, many scientists and commentators expressed shock and dismay over his "designer baby" experiments.

Chinese provincial authorities quickly became aware of his activities as well, and he was placed under house arrest upon his return from the conference. In the closing days of 2019, a secret trial was held, and he was sentenced to three years in prison for producing the CRISPR babies. The trial proceedings concluded that JK had "rashly applied gene editing technology to human assisted reproductive medicine."

The verdict reached by the Chinese court raises complex questions that must be confronted: What does it mean to "rashly apply" a new technology like human gene editing? Who should determine if a particular use is "rash" or "reasonable?"

Dr. Rita Vassena, a member of the Executive Committee of the European Society of Human Reproduction and Embryology, framed the ethical concerns around JK's case this way: "As the current scientific consensus indicates, the use of CRISPR/Cas9 in human embryos destined to give rise to a pregnancy is, at this stage, unjustified."

She couches her ethical analysis, as many scientists do, in terms of the "current scientific consensus." But such "consensus"

is an extremely malleable concept. It also conveniently implies that scientists themselves can set up their own ethical rules and provide regulatory oversight for scientific research, so that they, in effect, become the foxes guarding the henhouse. The saga that has unfolded during the last year surrounding the gene-editing experiments of JK has demonstrated, if nothing else, how self-serving and ineffective a community of scientists can be as they try to exercise the role of lawyer, judge and jury of their own ethical standards.

Even though we should be justifiably alarmed at Chinese courts meting out jail time in secret to scientific researchers, the fact remains that it was a government-controlled court that finally put some teeth into ethical regulations. In the West, to have governments, courts or major institutions take any action whatsoever in a case like JK's seems at present inconceivable. Instead, in American and European universities and industrial settings, we often encounter feeble, meandering discussions about research ethics, along with a proliferation of rubber-stamping "ethics review panels." These often consist of hand-picked members devoid of strong ethical or religious training and viewpoints. Such panels give increasingly systematic cover for an ever-expanding range of unethical research practices.

Whether it's giving a green light to use stem cells derived from human embryos or tissues from intentionally aborted fetuses for research, or to employ cloning technology to produce new human life, or to manufacture three parent embryos, many biomedical researchers have come to rely so much on ethical rubber stamps that they just venture ahead, confident that they won't be "fenced in" by ethical considerations.

JK's gene-editing experiments and China's strong reaction have at least managed to bring

the ethical concerns momentarily back into the spotlight. "I think a jail sentence is the proper punishment for him," said Wang Yuedan, a professor of immunology at Peking University in comments he shared with the New York Times. "It makes clear our stance on the gene editing of humans — that we are opposed to it... signaling that there is a bottom line that cannot be broken."

Yet this is precisely the difficulty in biomedicine today: namely, that there are few, if any, "bottom lines" when it comes to research ethics. The lines have become exceedingly flexible, if the price is right or if a particular political administration is amenable to re-drawing them.

While there isn't any perfect solution to ensure scientists never engage in unethical research — and the involvement of communist secret courts is certainly far from ideal — we clearly need to promote, fund and regulate modern biomedical research in a way that prioritizes ethics over expediency.

This means establishing significant sanctions and funding restrictions when ethical violations by researchers occur. It also means including alternative viewpoints on ethics review panels, especially those informed by longstanding religious and philosophical traditions, like that of the Catholic Church, which offer the important perspective that certain ethical lines are not able to be moved or redrawn. This kind of input can contribute much to the kinds of discussions that need to occur, and can afford an important counterbalance to any foxes who desire to keep guard over the ethical henhouse.

■ 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

Catechesis Begins in the Home

CHRIS KRAFT



Providing youth an environment to flourish

In our shared responsibility to re-gift the gift of faith to our young people, where might we find a viable source to provide an environment that bears the fruit of the next generation of life-long lovers of our Lord? Is it within the excellent religious education taught in the parish or school? How about on a transformative weekend retreat or a life-changing youth ministry event?

Although these continue to prove extremely important in the cultivation of faith within our young people, our beginning place in developing the next generation of saints is a force much more powerful and, in fact, the very fount of providing youth the opportunities above. It is you, parents, who are the beginning. You have been chosen to provide youth an environment to flourish.

Due to your "yes" to becoming co-Creators with the God of the universe, parents, you are responsible for the very existence of our young people. What a marvelous gift is the opportunity to participate in the creation of life! As those responsible for bringing into the world and providing for our young people, it follows that Christian parents are also primarily

responsible for ensuring youth are raised in a distinctively Catholic way within a distinctively Catholic home.

Let us recall the words of the Church to parents during a child's Baptism. Dear parents and godparents: through the Sacrament of Baptism the child you have presented is about to receive from the love of God new life by water and the Holy Spirit. For your part, you must strive to bring him (her) up in the faith, so that this divine life may be preserved from the contagion of sin, and may grow in him (her) day by day. If your faith makes you ready to accept this responsibility, then, mindful of your own Baptism, renounce sin and profess faith in Christ Jesus, the faith of the Church, in which children are baptized.

How great it is that you have accepted this responsibility! Realize you were created for this endeavor, that God has set you aside for this very task. I encourage you to continually thank God for entrusting you with such a weighty responsibility and remember that God is always active at each moment of your and your family's life. Never cease to trust that God will carry to completion the work He

has begun.

Lean into the Church that God has created to unite His people and draw all to Himself. The Diocese of Bismarck, with its parishes and many catechetical leaders, is readily present to help you as a parent fulfill and understand your responsibility to serve as the primary educator of your child. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you desire assistance in preserving and growing the divine life within your child.

Opportunity for Strong Catholic Families

I extend an open invitation to participate in the growing initiative within our diocese to help empower and equip parents and families to develop (as the initiative is called) "Strong Catholic Families." There is a parent meeting scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 27 at St. Mary's parish in Bismarck from 7–9 p.m. Please reach out to me if you desire to be a more active participant in this initiative at ckraft@bismarckdiocese.com or (701) 204-7208.

Upcoming youth events

Below are opportunities for our young people to come to grow in their love, knowledge and service of God:

- Registration is now open for youth in grades 6–8 to attend the Rise Up Conference in Plymouth, Minn. on March 20–22. Registration includes activity tickets, a service project and more.

- There are two SEARCH for Christian Maturity retreat weekends left for this school year on March 6–8 and April 17–19 presenting an opportunity for youth to experience the Lord through peer to peer ministry.

- Steubenville Youth Conferences this summer are Steubenville of the Rockies in Denver on June 17–21 and Steubenville St. Paul on July 23–26.

- The Cor Christi Institute will again offer two separate weeks of crash-course Catholicism for youth in grades 9–12 on July 13–17 and July 20–24.

For more information regarding these opportunities please visit the website at: <https://bismarckdiocese.com/catechesis-youth>.

■ Kraft is the director of the Office of Catechesis and Youth which serves as a religious education resource for parishes; provides annual events for all ages promoting faith formation; and offers training, workshops and retreats for pastors and parish staff.



Rise Up
TWIN CITIES

A CONFERENCE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS & THEIR LEADERS
at Providence Academy in Plymouth, MN
MARCH 20-22, 2020

featuring
Katie Hartfiel Jimmy Mitchell Kory LaCroix Sonar Worship

We are never too young to strive for holiness. This conference for middle school youth (grades 6-8) challenges them to "rise up" to live their faith radically, confident that they are known and loved by God the Father. Young people will be strengthened in their relationship with Christ through keynote speakers, praise & worship, Adoration, Reconciliation, and lots of fun activities. The trip will also include a service project and Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Paul.

Cost: \$300/student

with \$100 non-refundable deposit due at registration

\$60/Adult chaperone (21+)

with \$30 non-refundable deposit due at registration

Contact Chris Kraft at (701) 204-7208 or ckraft@bismarckdiocese.com with any questions!

Registration deadline is Friday, February 28th.

Register now at:

bismarckdiocese.com/riseup



Catholic Charities
North Dakota
Forever Grateful Since 1923
www.CatholicCharitiesND.org

Thousands of North Dakotans helped through our programs:

- * Adults Adopting Special Kids(AASK)
- * Counseling for individuals, couples and families
- * Guardianship for adults with intellectual disabilities
- * Pregnancy, Parenting, and Adoption Services(PPAS)

Bismarck Office: (701) 255-1793

Minot Office: (701) 852-2854

ProximoTravel

Pilgrimages for Catholics and people of all faiths

Prices starting at \$2,499 ~ with Airfare Included in this price from anywhere in the USA

Several trips to different destinations: the Holy Land; Italy; France, Portugal, & Spain; Poland; Medjugorje, Lourdes, & Fatima; Ireland & Scotland; England; Austria, Germany, & Switzerland; Greece & Turkey; Budapest; Prague; Our Lady of Guadalupe; Domestic Destinations; etc...

We also specialize in custom trips for Bishops, Priests, and Deacons.

Call us 24/7

Hablamos Español

508-340-9370

855-842-8001

www.proximotravel.com

anthony@proximotravel.com



Mike Klabo, FICF

Linton

701-580-9036

michael.klubo@kofc.org



Carter Fong, FIC

Dickinson

701-300-2551

carter.fong@kofc.org



Jeremy Vidmar, FIC

Mandan/Dickinson

701-690-8372

jeremy.vidmar@kofc.org

A Portfolio of Protection



Our signature product.
Insure your life for life.

Affordable protection
for temporary needs.

Retirement income you
can count on. Guaranteed.

Protect your assets. Get quality care.
Prepare for the future.

Receive an income even when you are
sick or can't work.



Don Willey, FIC

Bismarck

701-202-9089

don.willey@kofc.org



Sam Owan

Williston/Minot

701-609-1918

sam.owan@kofc.org

The Knights of Columbus offers a full-line of quality, flexible products
backed by our highly-rated financial strength* to help protect your Catholic family.

* As of 01/2018, rated A+ Superior by A.M. Best



LIFE INSURANCE • DISABILITY INCOME INSURANCE
LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE • RETIREMENT ANNUITIES

Pat Dolan, FICF

General Agent, Fargo

701-298-9922

patrick.dolan@kofc.org

