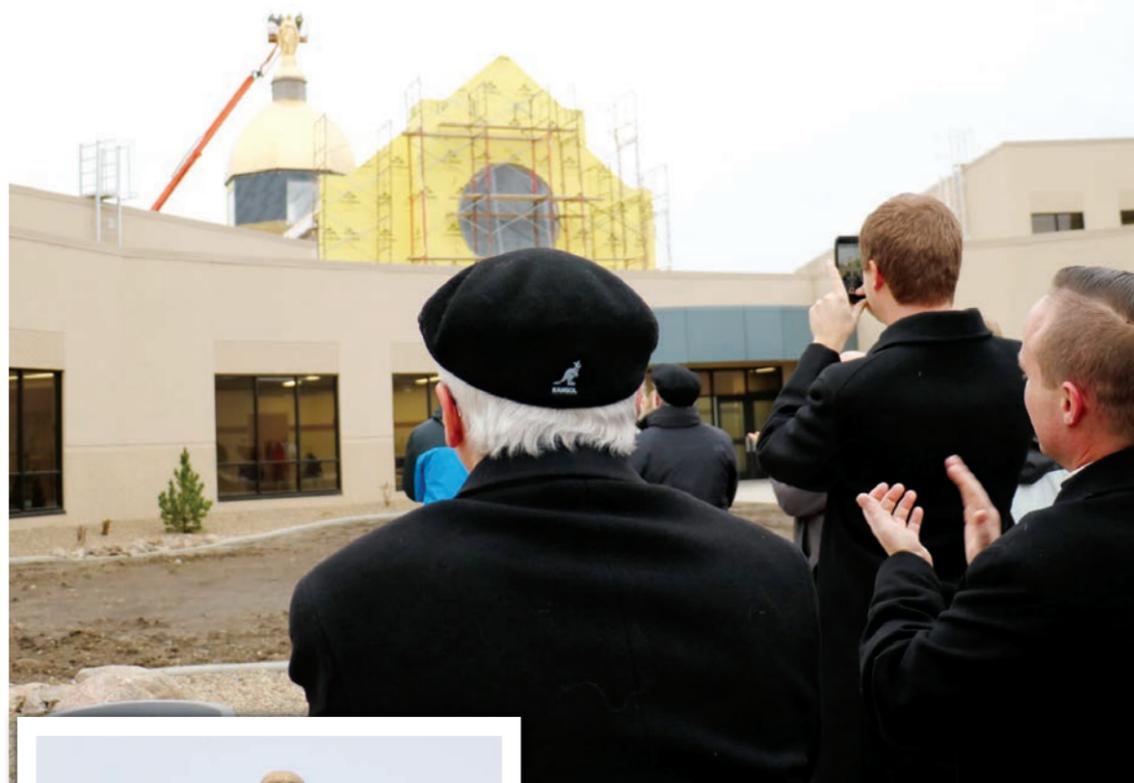




Dakota Catholic Action

Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941

Watching over us



Our Mother Mary is the patroness of the Diocese of Bismarck so she's always been watching over us, but her likeness took over a new position atop the Our Lady of Victory Chapel at the new St. Mary's Central High School.

The 12-foot statue honors Mary, the mother of Jesus and the patroness of the first Catholic school in Bismarck. The statue is 90 feet above ground and sits on top of a golden dome. Light of Christ Catholic Schools students in grades kindergarten through 12, staff and parents witnessed the moment of unveiling the golden statue of Mary on Nov. 26.

Attending the brief program were students from the five Light of Christ Catholic Schools—St. Mary's Central High School, St. Mary's Academy, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit Elementary, St. Mary's Grade School and Saint Anne School. The program included: a welcome and opening remarks from Light of Christ Catholic Schools President Gerald Vetter, blessing by Bishop Kagan; praying of one decade of the rosary, led by Fr. Dominic Bouck, SMCHS Chaplain and the SMCHS choir sang "May the Lord Bless and Keep You."

The Our Lady of Victory Chapel is one of four centers of the new high school. The St. Thomas Aquinas Academic Center and the athletic center are currently open to students. The auditorium in the fine arts center and the Our Lady of Victory Chapel will open at a later date.



Catholic Schools
Learn. Serve. Lead. Succeed.

Spirited contest

By Patti Armstrong
DCA Writer

In the halls of every Catholic high school in North Dakota during Catholic Schools Week, there will erupt a tumultuous clamor of wild cheers and reverberating music during an intense competition rivaling any sport's event. Even before the competition begins, excitement erupts and re-erupts throughout until the final explosion from the winning team.

The "Know Your Faith" competition, where knowledge of the Catholic faith is the game, is just that intense. It's hard to imagine the level of enthusiasm if you have not personally experienced it. So, it was no surprise 16 years ago when the idea for a jeopardy-like competition between classes was met with skepticism by the administration at St. Mary's Central High School of Bismarck. It would take up class time and create extra work and expenses. And, what if it bombed?

Monsignor James Shea, the school chaplain in 2005, had teamed up with Jerome Richter, a religion teacher and department chair, to propose the idea. They were undeterred by skepticism. "What we really wanted was to establish the study of the faith as a substantive, worthwhile, exciting thing to do," explained Msgr. Shea, now the president of the University of Mary. "Faith is about matters that are serious—life and death and the salvation of souls—and about how to live and laugh and be together. Good books and good instruction were in place, but enthusiasm was something that had to be nurtured and prayed for."

Go-ahead given

"I thought the idea was brilliant,"

Continued on page 12

A LOOK INSIDE



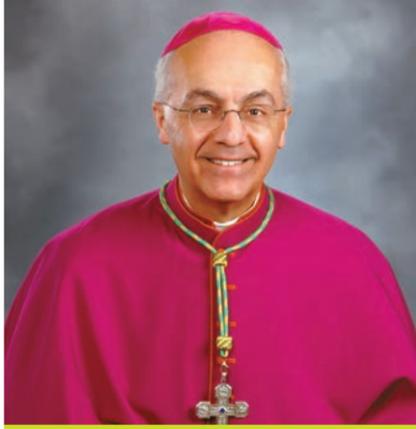
Greatness through virtue
Plan at the University of Mary focuses on inspiring virtuous student-athletesPage 6



Organ scholarship
A diocese program aims at reviving sacred music through organ scholarshipsPage 10

Pray for victims of abuse

FROM THE BISHOP



Bishop David D. Kagan

Brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus, with this first issue of our diocesan newspaper for the calendar year of 2020, I am including the information for all Catholics, of the list of those priests, both diocesan and religious, who have had claims of sexual abuse of a minor made against them and these claims have been substantiated by one of our bishops and those who assisted them at the time. This is not something any of us would want or expect of those in whom such great trust has been placed,

but not to be transparent about this mortally sinful activity would be wrong.

The information provided in this issue, I hope, will be helpful to all Catholics in our diocese but most especially to anyone who thinks he or she may have been sexually abused by a diocesan representative in the past or present. What is of the utmost importance is to report any such actions immediately to local civil authorities and then to the diocese. Information on how to do this is provided with the other information in this issue.

As I said in my letter to all of you back in the summer of 2018, mere words of apology are not enough, even though they are important. You have the right to expect that the Church will do all in its power to see to it that men are properly formed and prepared to be our deacons, priests and for some our bishops. You have the right to expect that they will always and everywhere conduct themselves as the faithful public ministers of our Church both in what they say and in what they do. You have the right to expect

that I, as your bishop, will do all in my power to make certain that this happens for you not just once or occasionally, but every day and always in our parishes, schools and communities.

Finally, and most importantly, I must make certain that every person who brings a complaint is heard and listened to and provided with whatever he or she may need to obtain healing and peace of mind and heart. I ask each of

you to pray for all the victims of this terrible and sinful activity of sexual abuse of minors.

Please pray for our deacons and priests that they will be good and faithful servants of the Lord's holy Church. Know that I pray for all of you every day at Mass. May we grow in our faith, hope and charity as brothers and sisters in Jesus and may we help each other achieve life's hope which is Heaven.

BISHOP'S SCHEDULE JANUARY 2020

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Jan. 1 | • Mass for the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 8:30 a.m. | Jan. 25 | • Mass for Troops of St. George, Christ the King, Mandan, 8:30 a.m. |
| Jan. 7 | • Real Presence Radio interview, 9 a.m. | Jan. 28 | • Dickinson Catholic Schools Week Mass, Church of Queen of Peace, 9 a.m. MT |
| Jan. 11 – 17 | • Ad Limina Visit to Rome, Italy | | • Catholic Charities Board of Directors Meeting, 12 p.m. |
| Jan. 19 | • Rally for Life, State Capitol Steps, Bismarck, 2 p.m. | Jan. 29 | • Bismarck Elementary Catholic Schools Week Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 9 a.m. |
| Jan. 20 | • March for Life Departure Mass (High School Group), Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 9:30 a.m. | | • Know Your Faith Competition, St. Mary's Central High School, Bismarck, 10:30 a.m. |
| Jan. 21 | • March for Life Departure Mass (Diocesan Group), Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 3:30 p.m. | Jan. 30 | • Bismarck Catholic Schools Week Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 9 a.m. |
| Jan. 22 | • Catholic Foundation Member Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 10 a.m. | Jan. 31 | • Minot Catholic Schools Week Mass, Bishop Ryan, 1:30 p.m. |
| | • Right to Life Mass, Church of St. Mary, Bismarck, 7 p.m. | | |

BISHOP IN ACTION



Submitted photo

Bishop Kagan was on-site with the students to offer the blessing of the 12-foot Mary statue that sits 90 feet above ground atop the golden dome of the Our Lady of Victory Chapel at the new St. Mary's Central High School in Bismarck.

Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for January



Promotion of World Peace

We pray that Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote peace and justice in the world.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Visit our website at www.bismarckdiocese.com

Get news, photos, videos and more from around the diocese.



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



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



Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BismarckDiocese

Get status updates, photos, videos, and links and share them with your friends.

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

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Center for Pastoral Ministry - Diocese of Bismarck USPS0011-5770
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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.



**Diocese
of Bismarck**

PUBLICATION OF ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The sexual abuse scandal in the Catholic Church has called forth greater accountability and transparency of bishops and dioceses in the resolution of cases of substantiated claims. While one claim is one too many, the Church acknowledges her brokenness because of the action of a few and recognizes our responsibility for healing and reconciliation.

The Diocese of Bismarck remains committed to reaching out to victims of childhood sexual abuse within our diocese as well as doing all that we can to protect our youth from harm.

This commitment means that no diocesan clergy member against whom there has been a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is currently in ministry. Any diocesan employee or volunteer (clergy or lay) who is found to have a substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor is permanently

removed from ministry and employment. There have been no substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor alleged to have occurred after 1989 – a period of 30 years.

In the interest of transparency and accountability, I have chosen, as part of our ongoing process of reaching out to the diocesan community, to publicly identify those priests who have carried out ministry in the Diocese of Bismarck, and against whom there is a substantiated claim of sexual abuse of a minor.

A substantiated claim is an allegation that a priest, deacon, Monsignor or bishop sexually abused a minor during his appointment within the Diocese of Bismarck which the diocese determined is likely true.

— Bishop David Kagan

Diocesan Clergy with Substantiated Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor

NAME: EARL J. BECWAR *

Ordained: 12/21/1944
Died: 9/5/1991

NAME: NORMAN J. DUKART

Ordained: 6/2/1967
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 3/20/2002

NAME: ROBERT E. FEENEY

Ordained: 5/21/1956
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 4/17/2002
Died: 4/3/2006

NAME: THEODORE F. GUSTIN

Ordained: 6/2/1957
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 6/18/2002
Died: 12/27/2006

NAME: EUGENE J. HASPERT *

Ordained: 5/27/1947
Died: 7/3/1979

NAME: DONALD W. HILL

Ordained: 5/25/1967
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 1/6/2003
Died: 11/21/2004

NAME: MICHAEL T. KRANK

Ordained: 6/2/1952
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 3/11/2004
Died: 11/28/2010

NAME: JOHN H. KUHN

Ordained: 11/23/1943
Died: 3/15/2006

NAME: HUGH C. MCGOVERN *

Ordained: 7/26/1950
Died: 7/22/1988

NAME: MAURICE MCNEELY

Ordained: 6/7/1958
Incardinated into Diocese of Honolulu: 1982
Died: 7/29/2017

NAME: FREDERIC J. NELSON *

Ordained: 5/29/1950
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 2/20/1984
Died: 8/13/1988

NAME: JOHN J. OWENS

Ordained: 6/4/1960
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 4/13/2010

NAME: JAMES W. POMMIER

Ordained: 6/7/1954
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 12/18/1977
Dismissed from the Clerical State: 12/21/2007
Died: 1/28/2012

NAME: JAMES E. REARDON

Ordained: 3/13/1965
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 4/16/2002
Died: 3/11/2007

NAME: ARMOUR R. ROBERTS *

Ordained: 6/4/1955
Died: 12/8/1989

NAME: ALOYSIUS P. SIMON

Ordained: 5/29/1950
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 6/18/1985
Died: 10/31/1991

NAME: LAURENCE R. TALTY

Ordained: 11/30/1945
Died: 8/22/1989

NAME: STEVEN R. ZASTOUPIL

Ordained: 5/20/1961
Faculties for Priestly Ministry Permanently Removed: 3/20/2002
Died: 7/2/2018

Extern Clergy with Substantiated Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor¹

NAME: VICTOR J. HEINEN, OSB *

Ordained: 6/6/1936
Died: 6/24/1953

NAME: CHARLES MEYER, CPPS

Ordained: 5/14/1931
Died: 12/16/1997

NAME: MICHAEL A. SPEGELE, CPPS *

Ordained: 6/14/1941
Died: 3/16/1998

NAME: ROBERT WUEST, CPPS *

Ordained: 4/21/1940
Died: 3/26/1988

¹Extern clergy refers to clergy members who were attached to another diocese but served in the Diocese of Bismarck for a period of time.

* Allegations reported after priest was deceased.

By the numbers...

0 diocesan priests in active ministry with known substantiated claims of abuse of a minor

20 of the 22 priests with known substantiated claims of abuse of a minor are deceased

16 the number of third-party audits that the diocese has participated in since 2003, each of which has confirmed compliance with the Charter

1989 there have been no substantiated allegations of sexual abuse of a minor to have occurred after this year

30 the number of years since there was a known substantiated incident of sexual abuse of a minor by any clergy of the diocese

15,000 number of adults for which criminal background checks and safe environment training have been conducted by the Dioceses of Bismarck and Fargo since 2003

Questions and Answers

Q: What information are you releasing and whose names are on this list?

A: This list contains the names of the clergy members against whom a substantiated claim of sexual abuse of a minor has been received by the diocese. The accused might have been a priest of the diocese, a priest of another diocese assigned to work in the diocese, or a member of a religious order assigned to ministry in the diocese.

Q: How do you define child sexual abuse?

A: It is the subjection of a child by any church minister or employee, to any sexual act that is in violation of the North Dakota Century Code.

Q: What are the criteria for inclusion on the list?

A: Clergy members are on this list if there was a substantiated allegation of child sexual abuse against them. This does not necessarily mean they were found guilty of a crime or liable for civil claims. Many of the allegations received by the diocese are from decades ago and were reported to the diocese many years after the alleged abuse, sometimes after the death of the accused.

Q: How is a substantiated allegation determined?

A: It is an allegation that a priest, deacon, monsignor or bishop, after considering all the available facts, sexually abused a minor during his appointment within the Diocese of Bismarck that the diocese determined is likely true.

Q: What should I do if I know of a child that is being abused or if I've been abused by a representative of the Diocese of Bismarck?

A: If you know of a child who is in immediate danger, call 911. Contact the appropriate law enforcement agency, which can help determine your options for making a criminal complaint. Complaints should be reported to the social services agency, Child Protective Services Department, in the county in which the abuse is alleged to have occurred or call the North Dakota Child Protection Program at 800-472-2622.

Additionally, make a report to the diocese. You can report online at: www.bismarckdiocese.com/complaintform, or by calling these numbers:

Contact the Diocese Chancellor Dale Eberle, Diocese of Bismarck, PO Box 1575, Bismarck, ND 58502-1575 or call toll-free 1-877-405-7435 or 701-223-1347 to file a formal complaint of abuse to the diocese. Complaint forms should also be available at your parish.

If you are an adult and have been abused by a representative of the diocese in the past, then you are encouraged to contact the diocese, no matter when the abuse occurred.

Q: What happens when an allegation of child abuse by a member of the clergy is received?

A: The diocese will conduct an investigation in the manner provided by canon law and diocesan policy. The diocese's investigator will seek as much specific detail as possible in the initial meeting with the accuser to determine when and where the abuse took place, whether the alleged perpetrator is still in ministry and any other details. If available, additional individuals that can corroborate the allegation are interviewed, including the accused. If relevant, documents and other evidence is gathered and evaluated.

Q: What is the Diocesan Review Board and who is on it?

A: The review board has been established by the diocese to assist in reviewing matters pertaining to sexual misconduct. The board consists of at least seven people of outstanding integrity and good judgment,

the majority of whom are in full communion with the Church. The vicar general and the chancellor serve ex officio. The lay members are not employed by the diocese and they represent professional expertise in psychology, psychiatry, social work, nursing and law enforcement.

The review board advises the bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse and in his determination of ministry for the alleged abuser. This mainly takes the form of reviewing the allegation and the report of the investigator and subsequently providing recommendations to the bishop.

Q: Is this list complete?

A: This list is a complete and accurate representation of the substantiated allegations that have been made to the diocese against clergy for whom we have files. The list is based on an extensive file review. If substantiated claims are received in the future, the list will be updated.

Q: What files were reviewed and what time period did they cover?

A: The review included all the individual clergy files going back to when the diocese was created in 1910.

Q: Why are you releasing this list now?

A: The Diocese of Bismarck takes very seriously its responsibility to be transparent about sexual misconduct and abuse of minors by anyone within the Church. We are releasing this list as part of that effort toward our commitment to greater transparency.

Q: What does "faculties for priestly ministry permanently removed" mean for the priest or deacon?

A: The status of the priest or deacon changes. He now has the status of a lay person, not a cleric. He also has other restrictions placed on him that might not apply to other lay persons. So, for instance, a priest who has his priestly faculties permanently removed or has been dismissed from the clerical state may no longer exercise priestly ministry, including saying Mass in public, present himself as a priest, use the title "Father" or "Reverend," hold pastoral and teaching positions in the Church, and receive the income he did as a cleric.

Q: Is dismissal from the clerical state the same thing as what is commonly called "laicization"?

A: Removal of priestly faculties or dismissal from the clerical state is a permanent penalty imposed in response to the commission of an ecclesiastical crime. This is what is often called "laicization" in common parlance, but which more properly should be referred to as a dispensation from the obligations of the clerical state. Among the consequences of his new status is the fact that he is not able to function as a priest or deacon or to present himself as one.

Q: What has the diocese done to ensure safety of minors?

A: As a Church, we should hold our clergy, staff and lay ministers to the highest standards. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) adopted the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People—in response to the reports of sexual abuse of children and young people by some priests and bishops—as a comprehensive set of procedures originally established by the USCCB in June 2002. In June 2003, the diocese produced a manual entitled Establishing Bonds of Trust. This manual, with revisions, contains documents pertinent to the protection of children and youth including the Diocese of Bismarck Sexual Misconduct Policy and Code of Conduct.

The charter mandated policies and protocols regarding the church's response to allegations of sexual abuse of minors by clergy as well as standards for safe environment programs aimed at preventing future abuse. No other institution in our country has undergone such a comprehensive review and reform. We are grateful to victims who called the Church to exercise greater accountability in this area. At the same time, federal and state laws as well as government investigations must apply equally to all individuals and institutions that serve young people.

Q: What training do seminarians, or new employees, clergy and volunteers of the diocese receive regarding the diocese's Safe Environment program?

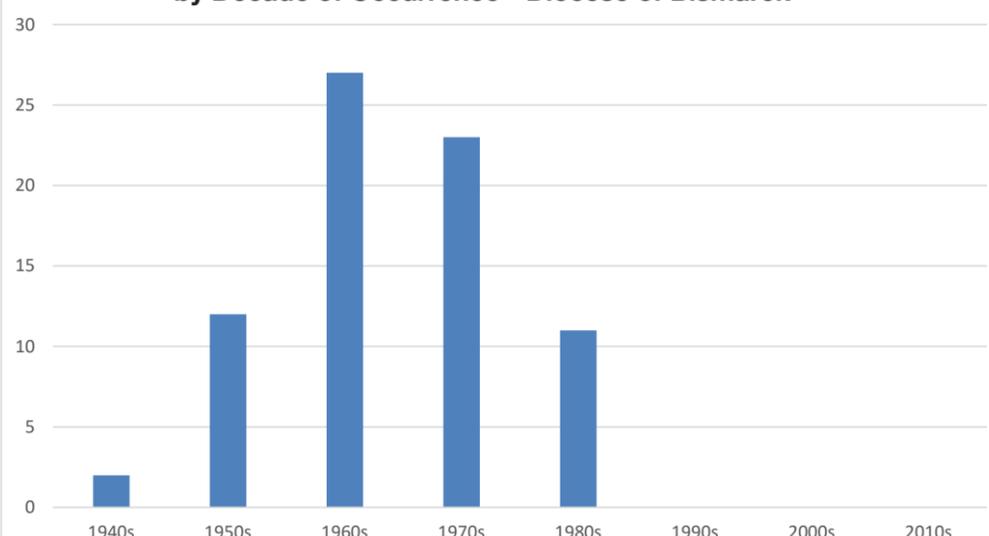
A: All adults — employees, volunteers and clergy — are required to undergo Safe Environment training. Developed around the USCCB's Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, the Diocese of Bismarck's Safe Environment Program is intended to make sure that our children and young people enrolled in Catholic schools or those who participate in church-related activities in our parishes are safe.

Students sponsored by the diocese who are studying for ordination to the priesthood to serve the Diocese of Bismarck and candidates for the order of permanent diaconate, are to receive appropriate screening, academic courses and components in their human formation. Such screening and training will be designed to assist the seminarians and deacon candidates on making moral choices in accord with church teaching appropriate to the order to which they will be ordained.

Q: How does the diocese ensure that priests from other dioceses, ministering here either short or long-term, are not a threat?

A: Every cleric from another diocese seeking to provide and practice ministry in our diocese is required to present to the bishop (through the office of the Chancery) that he is a priest or deacon in good standing with no known prior substantiated allegation of sexual abuse of a minor.

Substantiated Allegations of Sexual Abuse of a Minor by Decade of Occurrence - Diocese of Bismarck



Fighting for the cause of life

Reviving McKenzie County Right to Life group

By Amanda Evinger
DCA Writer

“Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use violence to get what they want. That is why the greatest destroyer of love and peace is abortion.”

– St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

During a dark time in her life, Watford City resident, McKenzie McCoy, chose a tragic path and had an abortion.

“I knew it was wrong when I was doing it, and I really didn’t want to do it, but I just didn’t feel like I had any other option,” she said. “I was deceived into thinking it was the best choice to make.”

Soon after the decision had been made, however, McKenzie began to feel the traumatic effects of it, and desperately searched for guidance and consolation.

“I began to suffer from a lot of consequences of my decision—consequences which I still suffer from today,” she said. “When I took an honest look at what I had done, it really began to affect my life negatively, so I went back to Planned Parenthood for help. Sadly, the only sort of response they gave me was, ‘I am sorry you are so weak.’”

Sinking even further into despair, she turned to God’s infinite mercy for help, and He proved His love for her in amazing ways.

“I reached out to the Catholic Church for help, which was the only place where I truly found healing, counseling and love,” she said. “The amazing thing is that their help was all free of charge—unlike that of Planned Parenthood. I have also found a lot of healing by being involved with the pro-life movement itself.”

Reviving pro-life ministry

Years later, she is now choosing the right path, and generously opening her heart to the marvelous workings of God’s grace by helping to revive the McKenzie County Right to Life (MCRL) ministry, which has been in existence for about 30 years.

“Having experienced abortion first-hand, I want to do whatever I can to prevent even one woman from doing what I did to myself, and to my child,” she explained. “My husband, Jake, and I want to reach women who are considering having an abortion, and be there for them. We want to change the argumentative tone of conversation that typically surrounds pro-life issues; to steer people away from fighting about it, and instead show true love and compassion. We hope to show people the beautiful, beautiful gift of an unborn child.”

Last fall, McKenzie committed herself to pro-life work in a more profound way by volunteering at the annual McKenzie County Right to Life auction, which raises significant proceeds for North Dakota Right to Life as well as pregnancy centers around the

state. Getting involved with the auction inspired her to dive in further and work with MCRL.

“I realized that there are so many people in McKenzie County that want to help with pro-life efforts, but they just need to be mobilized,” McKenzie said.

“Therefore, my husband and I have been forming an official MCRL board and coming up with a strategic plan for the next two years.”

Efforts of local chapter

Featured in the plan is a direct service project called the mobile pregnancy center for the state of North Dakota. Nicknamed the “stork bus,” the mobile unit organizers will travel around the state full-time to various pregnancy centers and other locations upon request, offering free pregnancy tests and ultrasounds. The bus will be run by qualified staff members and volunteers, and will be purchased by McKenzie County Right to Life.

“We created a marketing campaign called ‘Unapologetically Pro-Life’ which raises proceeds for the mobile pregnancy center by organizing various fundraising events and collecting donations from individuals,” McKenzie explained. “We have received a lot of support so far. Bishop Kagan took the time to meet with Jake and I, and he has been very helpful to us. Even if we just reach one woman through the mobile pregnancy center, and change her heart and her mind, it will all be worth it.”

In addition to the mobile pregnancy center, MCRL is also working on the program known as “Teen Star,” a sexual education program for grades K through 12.

“Teen Star includes a Catholic component based on *Humanae Vitae* and St. John Paul II’s *Theology of the Body*,” McKenzie explained. “Although the Catholic component may not be permitted to be presented in the public schools, overall the program is based on looking at the value of each individual, as well as the value of life and the value of fertility.”

With the help of Divine Providence, Teen Star will serve as a guiding light to the truth about human sexuality for the young people of North Dakota.

“Currently, North Dakota has a sexual education program, but the public schools rarely use it, so Planned Parenthood is partnering up with North Dakota State University to offer sexual education classes for grades K through 12,” McKenzie noted. “We are hoping to present Teen Star to the school systems as an alternative to Planned Parenthood’s program.”



The MCRL is helping to send volunteers to be certified as Teen Star teachers. Dr. Lucinda, a primary care doctor at the Watford City-based McKenzie County Health Care System, has recently become the first official certified Teen Star trainer; she is now able to train other individuals to teach in classrooms and parishes.

In addition to working on Teen Star, McKenzie County Right to Life members are also working with state legislators on various pro-life issues. The MCRL group continues to be present at meetings and welcomed to speak at churches in the diocese. They have also been working hard on awareness by distributing pro-life t-shirts, hats and literature after Masses and at public events to garner further awareness of their efforts.

“I very much support their efforts,” said Fr. Russ Kovash, Pastor of St. Joseph’s in Williston.

“All life is sacred and comes from God. We who have a voice bear the responsibility to stand up for those who do not have a voice, such as the handicapped, mentally disabled and unborn. It is our duty. As the psalmist says, ‘Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you.’ We also need to remember that this is not just a ‘Catholic issue.’ We really need all Christians to band together and work for the cause of life in our nation, because there is such an attack on human life in all respects, especially on innocent life in the womb.”

For more information on how to volunteer or learn more about the Teen Star program or the stork bus, please contact McKenzie McCoy at 701-269-8781 or Dr. Lucinda Mundorf at 410-370-4582. To donate to Unapologetically Pro-life, visit their Facebook page.

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

An invitation from the Bismarck-Mandan Serra Club

| | | | |
|---------|------------------------------------------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| Jan. 1 | Fr. John Pfeifer | Jan. 18 | Deacon John Bachmeier |
| Jan. 2 | Deacon Steve Young | Jan. 19 | All Liturgical Ministers |
| Jan. 3 | Fr. James Kilzer, OSB | Jan. 20 | Br. Llewellyn Kouba, OSB |
| Jan. 4 | Sr. Denise Ressler, OSB | Jan. 21 | Sr. Eleanor Stockert, OSB |
| Jan. 5 | Sr. Stephanie Dolyniuk, OSB | Jan. 22 | Seminarian Ben Franchuk |
| Jan. 6 | Sr. Lucille Heidt, OSB | Jan. 23 | Msgr. Tom Richter |
| Jan. 7 | Fr. Ken Phillips | Jan. 24 | Deacon Jim Baker |
| Jan. 8 | Seminarian Greg Hilzendeger | Jan. 25 | Benedictine Monks in Bogata, Columbia |
| Jan. 9 | Deacon Bob Zent | Jan. 26 | Sr. Susan Lardy, OSB |
| Jan. 10 | Br. Herman Kim, OSB | Jan. 27 | Sr. Janeane Klein, OSB |
| Jan. 11 | All Lay Ministers | Jan. 28 | Sr. Ivo Schoch, SSND |
| Jan. 12 | All Seminarians & Religious in Formation | Jan. 29 | Fr. Bill Ruelle |
| Jan. 13 | Fr. George Pruys | Jan. 30 | Deacon Dan Barone |
| Jan. 14 | Deacon Ben Auch | Jan. 31 | Abbott Daniel Maloney, OSB |
| Jan. 15 | Sr. Claire Schmitt, OSB | | |
| Jan. 16 | Fr. Dave Mormon & Kenya Mission | | |
| Jan. 17 | Fr. Dave Richter | | |

'Greatness Through Virtue' at the University of Mary

Strategic plan focuses on student-athletes

By Patti Armstrong
DCA Writer

Sports are not typically seen as the training grounds for saints, yet, that is exactly what St. Pope John Paul II often called it. As one who was athletic and loved sports, he referred to them as a potential "training ground of virtue, a school of inner balance and outer control, an introduction to more true and lasting conquests."



Dale Lennon, Director of Athletics and former head football coach at the University of Mary, explained the launch of the "Greatness Through Virtue" program at a news conference this fall.

The administration and athletic department at the University of Mary recognized that developing virtue and the discipline of sports were a natural fit. After two years of planning, they rolled out their "Greatness Through Virtue" program in August as an extension of their mission of holiness for all.

Greatness Through Virtue has already become a powerful force reaching from the athletic department and coaches down to players, recognizing unique opportunities for greatness. According to President Msgr. James Shea, "While the objective of the game is to win, the purpose of the game is to become what we are created to be."

The 31-page strategic plan recognizes how athletics can naturally develop six virtues: magnanimity, humility, prudence, courage, justice and temperance. "Our scholar-athletes at Mary will be emboldened to pursue greatness," it states, "and so they will not settle merely for competitive success. They will realize that to aspire simply to a championship is not to set a goal to high, but far too low, and that authentic greatness pursues much more."

A greater purpose

Jerome Richter, Vice-president for Public Affairs and Mission Advancement, explained that of their 450 athletes from 40 states and a few countries, less than half are Catholic. Greatness Through Virtue, although imparted through a strong Catholic presence, is a message for everyone regardless of denomination.

"An athlete's heart automatically recognizes the value of discipline," he said. "We are made for greatness for souls on the mat, on the field and in life."

Follow-up evaluations will measure the program's effectiveness. There is also a goal to hold training institutes for other schools in the future. "We want the world to know what we are doing here," Richter explained. "It's a call of every person to virtue. The

premise of this is that it should be happening at every level of sports at every game—remember why we do this to be better and more virtuous even when we lose."

As a former high school wrestling coach, Richter said that he has witnessed the power of using virtue in sports. One of his former wrestlers who now runs marathons, shared with Richter that the message to never quit rings in his ears during races. "This message relates to salvation," Richter said. "You never quit, and you never give up—like going to confession. Pick yourself up and keep going."

Chaplain for athletes

To fully integrate this plan, Fr. Craig Vasek was hired as a full-time chaplain in January as part of the athletic department. Father Vasek was ordained in 2010 in Crookston, Minn. and is a graduate of the Pontifical North American College in Rome. He has worked extensively with the Missionaries of Charity of Saint Teresa of Calcutta in Europe, Asia, Africa, as well as North America.

He also hosts an evangelism ministry through a blog and podcast called Evangelical Disciple and is a host for various shows on Real Presence Radio.



Fr. Craig Vasek

Father Vasek was a multi-sport athlete in high school. According to him, this new program simply taps into what sports already provides—discipline and a desire to succeed. "UMary exists for the salvation of souls and this program engages that in a practical way through sports," he said. "The understanding of virtue through the Gospel of Jesus Christ gives us what we need for spiritual formation."

Father Vasek explained that the processes of training and conditioning are ideal places to hone virtue. "It's in the repetition of doing things over and over that it becomes second nature," he said. "Athletes understand this."

Coaches let him know what they need, and he has complete access to the teams, doing team building exercises, talking with them and just hanging out. He also presided this fall at an all-athlete Mass with a social afterwards to bring everyone together.

Recently some of the girls from the volleyball team approached Fr. Vasek to thank them for teaching them how to pray in a way deeper than just asking for things. "Ultimately, I'm going help them win at life," he said. Ten students have been so attracted to this message that they have expressed a desire to Fr. Vasek to become Catholic.

Part of the University's mission

Dale Lennon, Director of Athletics and former head football coach at UMary, has 31 years of coaching under his belt. He explained that the



Photo credit: University of Mary

The University of Mary hockey team in the locker room saying prayer before a home game.

commissioner of the Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference (NSIC), had challenged the presidents of conference institutions in 2017 to draft an athletic strategic plan linked to their respective university's strategic plan. The Greatness Through Virtue is UMary's response.

"I've always coached on a virtuous level, but the process of working on identification and implementation was enlightening," Lennon said. "It's not a cookie-cutter approach. Coaches all have their own personalities and way to implement this." He also pointed out that every team is different with strengths and weaknesses, number of athletes, how long they've played together and the level of their successes. For instance, a team experiencing

great success will want to keep humility and temperance in mind.

Student reaction

James Mason from Nebraska City, Neb., a defensive back on the football team, credited Fr. Vasek with influencing the team. "He's such a positive energetic guy," Mason said. "He's gotten people to be open about their faith. He's a fun guy to hang out and play pool with, so we see that Christianity is about more than being staunch and a prude."

He added, "Father Vasek explained the strategic plan at fall camp, talking about greatness and being the best you can be. He talks in a way that's easy to grasp and apply to our lives. He's explaining virtue in a way they that makes sense."

NEWS BRIEFS

Safe Environment Program in full compliance

Each year, the Diocese of Bismarck is required to undergo an audit to ensure compliance with the articles of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. Bishop David Kagan is pleased to announce that, for the audit year 2018-2019, the Diocese was found to be in full compliance with the requirements in the Charter.

Ascend Sexual Risk Avoidance course offered

Social workers, educators, parents, those in the healthcare field and others are tasked with talking or teaching about sexual health? The Ascend Sexual Risk Avoidance course is being offered in Minot to assist people with clear guidance on how to offer evidence-based, relevant information to others.

This specialist certification is being brought to North Dakota for the second time by Dakota Hope Clinic. The program will be held at the Grand Hotel in Minot on March 10-11. The program has been approved for 12.5 nursing contact hours, 10.5 social work contact hours, and 2 education credits through Minot State University.

Sexual risk avoidance (SRA) is an educational approach based on the public health model of primary prevention to empower youth to avoid all the risks of

sexual activity. Ascend is the nation's leader in the sexual risk avoidance field. For over a decade, they have helped thousands of America's youth make smart, forward-thinking choices about their sexual behavior, and is committed to supporting parents in their role as educators of their children.

Pre-course reading is required that is estimated to take 25-40 hours to complete. There are 9 modules with quizzes that must be completed prior to the training. The goal is that the certified SRA specialists will increase the overall quality and reach of school and community sexual health education. Everyone, including parents, policymakers and clergy, are invited to attend.

The certification is good for two years and can be renewed by online coursework. Ascend will provide ongoing consultation support for the specialists as needed. The cost of the course is \$125 for N.D. residents, \$200 for non-N.D. residents, and includes breakfast and lunch. A discounted lodging rate of \$79 per night is available at the Grand Hotel if reserved by Feb. 20 in the Dakota Hope Clinic block of rooms.

For more information or to register, call Dakota Hope at 701-852-4675, or click on the partner with us tab at www.dakotahope.org. Registration deadline is Feb. 18.

Varsity Catholics on Marauder campus

Program is part of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students

By Patti Armstrong
DCA Writer

College athletes are admired and praised for their accomplishments in their sport, yet they face unique pressures from peers, teams and the culture. In addition, long practices and traveling to games can make attending Mass inconvenient and low priority. Despite this, they are typically among the most underserved Catholics on campus.

The situation created “a glaring need” according to Thomas Wurtz, founder of Varsity Catholics which was launched in 2007 as part of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS). Wurtz has served with FOCUS since 2001 after having played a semester of football and then rugby while in college.

He realized that athletes are influencers, but are often not actively encouraged in their own faith. Varsity Catholic missionaries seek out athletes and draw them deeper into their faith, through praying together, attending their games and developing friendships. The goal is to help athletes realize that their deepest identity is in Christ and that they can glorify Him in their sport and in their daily lives.

“Athletes are the influencers of the influencers and many will go on to be coaches and will form athletes for our future formators,” Wurtz said. “If we reach college athletes and if they are in love with the Catholic Church, it will have a powerful effect on the high school teams.”

For the 2019–2020 academic year, FOCUS trained 197 Varsity Catholic missionaries serving on 146 campuses, including the University of Mary. They inspire students to develop virtuous characteristics and deepen their faith through campus events, Bible studies, mentoring and active participation in the sacraments. They also encourage student-athletes to evangelize and share the joy of the Gospel with peers through daily interactions and by hosting Bible studies with teammates.

Chris Bordiuk, a Varsity Catholic missionary at UMary was on the track and field team at Belmont University in Nashville before joining FOCUS. “I understand what the culture of athletics looks like,” he said. “Athletes get very involved in their sport and can lose track of their faith. If they are not trying to make Christ the center of their life, it’s very easy to put faith aside with a packed schedule and not even realize it’s happening.”

There is enough interest on each team for them to have their own Bible studies, according to Bordiuk. He noted that UMary has offered strong support to FOCUS. “I love it here,” he said. “It has an incredible staff. Father Vasek is a great spearhead to reach the students. He has such a fire for wanting athletes to get to know Christ.”



Submitted photo

In a photo taken this fall, University of Mary students have signed on to be part of Varsity Catholic missionaries serving on 146 campuses. Varsity Catholics which was launched in 2007 as part of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS)

UMary student-athlete, Gabby Castillo, from Texas, plays volleyball and leads one of the Bible studies. She has attended two FOCUS mission trips with Varsity Catholic to teach volleyball in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

“It was like a camp,” she said, “but we were there to show them what it means to love one another; being present and building relationships. We are made for relationships with God and for each other.”

The main message to the kids

was that their identity is not in the things of the world, such as sports, Castillo explained. “We told them, ‘You are children of God and that is number one; that is your true value. They can be great through their sport just through knowing that.’”



Building Resilience In Your Kids

All youth face difficulties, which can range from traumatic losses to everyday disappointments. The ability to cope and recover - or “bounce back” - after a setback is important to their success. Experts call this “resilience,” and it’s a skill that can be learned.

What You Can Do

You can help your children develop resilience by taking the following steps:

- Model a positive outlook. Children will learn from your ability to bounce back from difficulties. When faced with a challenge yourself, model an “I can do it” attitude. Remind yourself and your child that the current problem is temporary and “things will get better.”
- Build confidence. Comment frequently on what your child does well. Point out when he demonstrates qualities such as kindness, persistence, and integrity.
- Build connections. Create a strong, loving family and encourage your child to make good friends. This will help ensure that she has plenty of support in times of trouble.
- Encourage goal-setting. Teach children to set realistic goals and work toward them one step at a time. Even small steps can build confidence and resilience.
- See challenges as learning opportunities. Tough times are often when we learn the most. Resist the urge to solve your child’s problem for him—this can send a message that you don’t believe he can handle it. Instead offer love and support, and show faith in his ability to cope. Remind him of times when he has solved problems successfully in the past.
- Teach self-care. Many challenges are easier to face when we eat well and get enough exercise and rest. Self-care can also mean taking a break from worrying to relax or have some fun.
- Help others. Empower your child by giving her opportunities to help out at home or do age-appropriate volunteer work for her school, neighborhood, or place of worship.

*This article was created using information from Prevent Child Abuse America, the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, the Enough Abuse Campaign, and Stop It Now.

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

Ordination Celerations

Dcn. Jim Belohlavek – Dcn. Ross Reiter – Dcn. Mohn Koble



(l-r) Deacon Jim and Jolanta Belohlavek, Deacon Ross and Angela Reiter and Deacon Mohn and Julia Koble with Bishop Kagan following their ordination on Nov. 22.



The three new deacons are joyously greeted by the diocesan deacons in the gathering space as they exit the ordination Mass.



Bishop Kagan during the laying on of hands during the rite of ordination.



Deacon Ross Reiter with his hands between Bishop Kagan's to promise respect and obedience to the bishop and his successors.



Deacon Mohn Koble is handed the Book of the Gospels by Bishop Kagan conferring him as a herald of Christ.



Deacon Jim Belohlavek with Bishop Kagan at the altar.



Family members of Deacon Ross Reiter brought forth the gifts during Mass.



Deacon Jim Belohlavek assists Bishop Kagan with incense at the altar.



Bishop Austin Vetter 11th Bishop of the Diocese of Helena

Photos courtesy of the Diocese of Helena

Bishop Vetter during Solemn Vespers the evening before the installation and ordination Mass.



Bishop Vetter blessed those in attendance as he exited the installation and ordination Mass at the Diocese of Helena on Nov. 20.



Reviving sacred music through organ scholarship program

By Amanda Evinger
DCA Writer

A few years ago, Jennifer Sammons shared her daughter Mary's lifelong dream with Lillian Bielinski, a talented musician who gives music lessons throughout our diocese.

"I told her that Mary had always wanted to play the organ," Jennifer said. "Soon after that, she and Fr. Nick Schneider decided to implement the organ scholarship program."

The program helps prepare young people to bring the marvelous gift of sacred music more fully into the life of the Church.

"Very simply put, the organ scholarship provides the gift of lessons to those keyboard musicians interested in learning the art and role of a liturgical organist," Lillian said. "During the lessons, we work on the basics of organ technique, hymn playing, improvisation and classical repertoire. In addition to receiving regular lessons, each summer around 10 to 15 students enjoy a week-long series of masterclasses with Dr. Beverly Everett, which culminate in an organ recital."

Dr. Everett is the Music Director of the Bismarck-Mandan Symphony Orchestra.

Using God-given talents

Students like Mary continue to experience beautiful blessings in their lives because of the organ scholarship program.

"It has helped her blossom in her faith," Jennifer said. "She looks forward to spending time in church while she practices. It is her way of adoring God. She loves to play for God—He is the one she plays for."

Mary currently plays the organ for St. Joseph's Parish in Mandan on one or two Sundays per month. She savors the opportunity to contribute to the reverence of Holy Mass by using the gift that God has given to her.

"The organ is my favorite instrument, and I feel it adds a lot to the Mass," Mary said. "I have always felt connected to other Catholic musicians who played the organ throughout history. My favorite composer is Bach, and it is a great feeling to know that I am playing the same music that he played 500 years ago. From a very young age, Bach dedicated his music to the greater glory of God. Every composition he wrote, he wrote in the Name of God. He was very determined to give glory to God through his music."

Ultimately, God's generosity knows no bounds. What has been a tremendous blessing to Mary and her fellow students, has been a blessing to those around them as well.

"Our whole family has learned about the treasury of sacred music in the Church by watching Mary play, discover and learn," Jennifer said. "It has had great spiritual benefits for all of us. When I take

Mary to St. Joseph's to practice, I often bring the younger kids with me. We have quiet prayer time, and read about the Mass or saints. They bring their sketch books and draw a stained-glass window, a design on the ceiling, or a hanging light fixture... all the while hearing the sacred music Mary plays. It's time to just be in God's house that we never would have thought to carve out otherwise."

Offering organ scholarship

Lillian was first inspired to bring the organ scholarship program to our diocese because she wanted to make a return unto God for the blessings she received.

"As a young person, I received organ training through a scholarship program in the Kansas City Diocese," Lillian said. "Those organ lessons had a huge, positive impact on my life, opening up a world of sacred music to me. I wanted to bring that same kind of opportunity to the young people of the Diocese of Bismarck."

Looking forward, Lillian holds high hopes for what the new program will bring to our diocese, to our blooming young musicians, and to all who worship God faithfully in our churches.

"The students involved in the program have already begun playing regularly for Masses in the Bismarck/Mandan area parishes," she said. "I hope that the students' careful preparation and service playing on the organ will elevate the culture of music present in our parishes, and encourage robust congregational singing for Holy Mass. Since the pipe organ is an instrument uniquely suited to use in the liturgy, it provides a renewed sense of sacredness and beauty in our communal worship. I hope the program continues to grow and we are able to reach more parishes throughout the diocese. Its overall goal is to encourage a new generation of liturgical musicians to make use of 'The King of Instruments' for the worship of Our King."

By taking advantage of this unique opportunity, our young musicians will discover just a little more about their Catholic faith.

"Playing the organ is a beautiful art form and an important part of our Catholic heritage," Lillian said. "It challenges young people to dedicate their best efforts for the liturgy because they have to practice for many hours. It also involves them intimately with the prayers and participation during Mass, and familiarizes them with great composers of sacred music. The Catholic Church has historically been the patron of composers and organ masters, from Palestrina to Mozart to Faure, and the Bismarck organ scholarship program is a modern continuation of that support for young artists."

Father Nick Schneider, Director of the Office of Worship for the diocese, has witnessed the profound impact that the scholarship program has had on



Submitted photo

Diocesan parishioner Mary Sammons plays the organ at St. Joseph's Parish in Mandan on one or two Sundays per month. She received lessons through the diocesan organ scholarship program.

our diocese so far, and the way in which it has brought sacred music to life in our midst.

"There is this rich tradition of organ music in the Church," he said. "Tradition sometimes earns the misinterpretation of 'holding on.' If we just hold on to something, it goes nowhere, and becomes stagnant. Rather, the word tradition literally means 'handing on.' It's not about keeping something, but sharing it and allowing it to grow and develop."

He has also seen how enriching it has been for the talented young people among us as well.

"Young people enjoy new challenges, especially purposeful challenges," Fr. Schneider said. "They benefit from playing music, learning music theory, and connecting more deeply with the Church and Her mysteries. The people of God also benefit because they can enjoy beautiful organ music at Mass. Finally, the Church benefits. Many parishes have these tremendous instruments that really incorporate the entire building as a resonant chamber. Having them alive and used is a benefit. We are truly handing on an ancient practice to the young and keeping a tradition alive."

Further, implementing organ music at Holy Mass enhances the voices God has given to those who seek to worship Him with their whole hearts, minds and souls.

"The organ is the recommended instrument in the Catholic Church for a reason," Fr. Schneider explained. "It supports and sustains the human voice naturally. In fact, many of the pipes are designed specifically either to mimic or to uphold the voice."

In fact, even recent Church documents reaffirm the long-cherished, vital tradition of using the organ during the Holy Sacrifice of Mass, and even speak of it as

essential.

According to *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, a document of the Second Vatican Council released in 1963, "The pipe organ is to be held in high esteem in the Latin Church, for it is the traditional musical instrument, the sound of which can add a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up people's minds to God and to higher things." Furthermore, the General Instruction of Roman Missal (no. 393) expresses, "Among all other instruments which are suitable for divine worship, the organ is 'accorded pride of place' because of its capacity to sustain the singing of a large gathered assembly, due to both its size and its ability to give 'resonance to the fullness of human sentiments, from joy to sadness, from praise to lamentation.'"

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 McDowall, 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>.

Stand where God has planted you

Father Mike Schmitz offered inspirational Prayer Day message

By Patti Armstrong
DCA Writer

“Prayer matters,” Msgr. James Shea told the crowd of approximately 1,800 people who filled the McDowell Activity Center for the University of Mary’s Prayer Day on Nov. 20. “It is the most effective thing a person can do,” he said. “It is our lifeblood.”

Monsignor Shea explained that the day marked four decades of Prayer Day during the University’s 60-year history as a time set aside to reflect on God and the mission of being a faithful and joyful Catholic. The event featured Fr. Mike Schmitz, director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Duluth and Chaplain for the Newman Center at the University of Minnesota-Duluth. He is also an author and offers weekly homilies on iTunes and bulldogCatholic.org and appears on regular video messages on “Ascension Presents.”

“In the Acts of Apostles,” Msgr. Shea continued, “we see that as the early Apostles moved through the world, no matter what they were threatened with, they wouldn’t stop saying the name of Jesus. I see that same spirit in Fr. Schmitz. He has an effervescent love for God.”

Becoming an adult

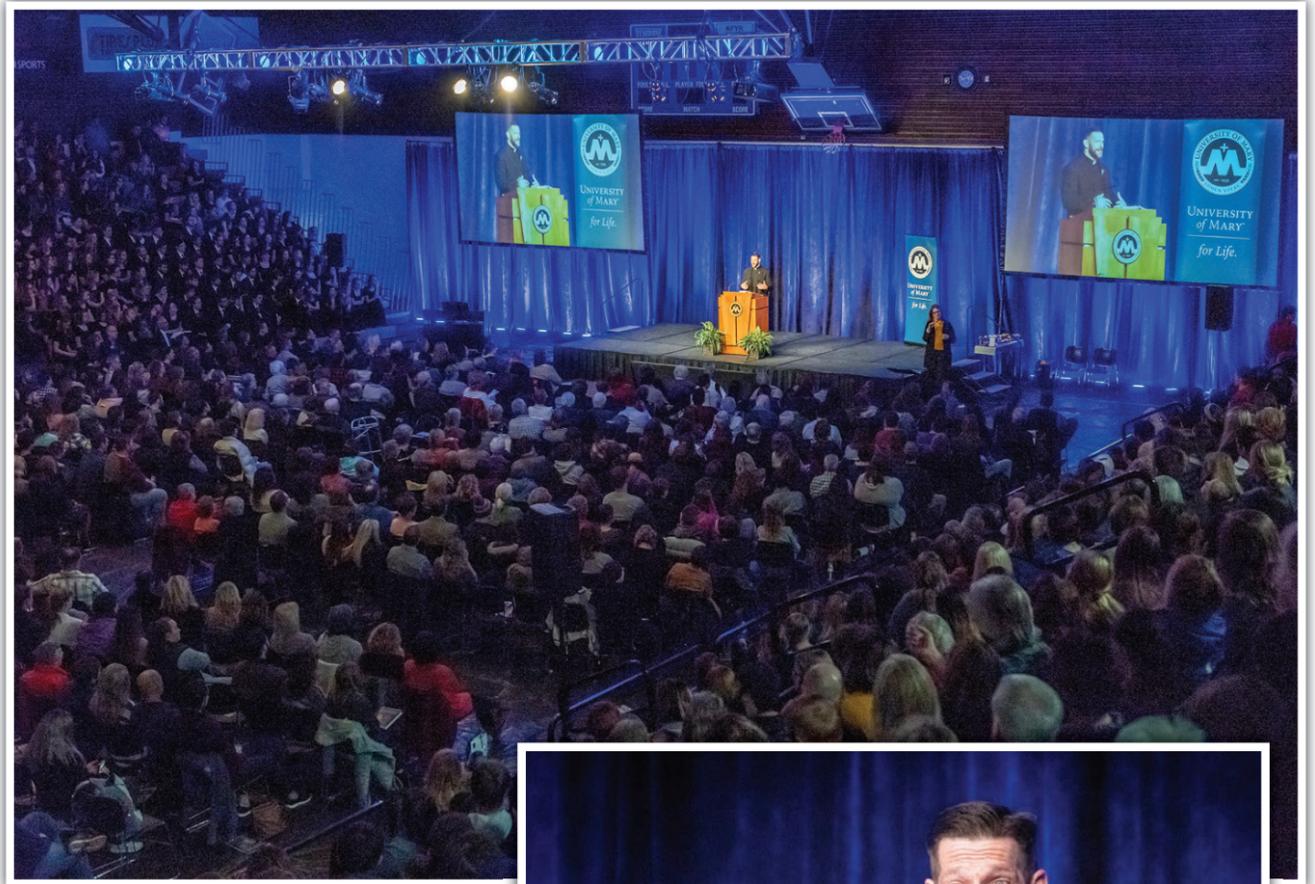
From the podium, Fr. Schmitz explained that it was his third trip to University of Mary. “And, every time, I’m blown away by the character and culture here,” he said taking note of the large crowd.

After a few light-hearted jokes, Fr. Schmitz began with a serious question. “What is it to become an adult?” He explained that his parents had installed a default mode to growth in him and his siblings. Being good just as they were, was understood. Getting better was expected.

“You are made by God on purpose; who you are is good, but you are made to be better,” was the message he grew up with. “Our attitude should be that the world needs me,” he said. “God has entrusted a task—a mission—to you.”

The first step towards that mission, according to Fr. Schmitz, is to accept where you are now. “Sometimes you don’t like what you see, whether it’s your appearance or background or what you got yourself into. But, the sooner you accept the realities of your life, the sooner you can start moving and default to growth. But, first, I have to let God love me as I am, not as I want to be.

“God does not love that false person because that person doesn’t exist,” he said. “He’s chosen the real you, the only version that exists. Jesus meets us where we are at.” Father Schmitz used the example of St. Peter who had a limited love for Jesus in the beginning. But, at the end, Peter had agape—unconditional—love for Christ and was willing to die upside down on a cross for that love.



Photos by Jerry Anderson, University of Mary
Fr. Mike Schmitz offered an inspirational Prayer Day message to a large crowd at the University of Mary on Nov. 20.



Prayer Day featured Fr. Mike Schmitz, director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Duluth and Chaplain for the Newman Center at the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

“So, how do we adult?” Fr. Schmitz asked, while commiserating that the noun is used as a verb these days. “I’d say the common denominator of having left childhood behind is the willingness to take responsibility for my life,” he said.

Relationship demands prayer

Most importantly, according to him, is taking responsibility for our spiritual lives and nurturing prayer regardless of our environment. “Prayer does not help your relationship with God; prayer is your relationship with God,” Fr. Schmitz said.

Whenever college students tell him that they don’t have time to pray, he tells them, “You will never have more free time until you retire. It’s not that you don’t have time, you don’t have faith. If you believe that prayer actually mattered, you would not treat it as an option.”

After taking responsibility and having a prayer life, Fr. Schmitz said, is competence. “How do we become competent? We train; we work at practicing our faith. Competence leads to confidence and confidence leads to freedom. Live in such a way that whenever God calls me forward, I am ready to go.”

Father Schmitz used King David as an example of one who practiced competence by tending his father’s sheep and even killing wild beasts to protect them. When God called him to fight Goliath, he was ready.

Likewise, at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio, out of 500 theology majors Fr. Schmitz said that typically only 50 are serving in their parishes. So, which ones would you want to

hire to work in a school or parish? Which ones are training for competence?

Competence, he explained, begins with what St. Jose Maria Escriva, called the heroic minute: Getting up when your alarm goes off. “It begins with making a decision on what time to set it the night before,” Fr. Schmitz said. “If I stayed up late on purpose, when am I going to wake up on purpose? Integrity is doing what you said you were going to do.”

Going back to King David, he noted that when David was anointed, he was given a purpose. He was the one who was going to lead Israel. In 2 Samuel 11, when kings went out to fight, David sent out Joab and stayed back in

Jerusalem. “He was not living his mission,” Fr. Schmitz said. “David sees Bathsheba and had relations with her. When he stopped living his mission, the hero becomes a villain. He didn’t start by saying I’ll commit adultery; he started by not doing what he was supposed to do. He was not taking responsibility. Instead of serving others, he was looking for how people could serve him.” Then later, David recognized his sinfulness and repented.

In closing, Father Schmitz challenged everyone to stand where God has planted you, develop a prayer life and be prepared to fight to live your faith to become who God created you to be.



Spirited contest

Continued from page 1

said Richter, who is now Vice-President of Public Affairs at the University of Mary. He noted that athletes, artists, musicians, singers and the speech team all had opportunities for recognition. "This would give the kids that love their faith a chance to be recognized," he said.

The persuasive duo was given the go-ahead. They wrote a 75-question multiple-choice exam for the entire student body with questions such as: "What is a crozier? Which one is not a mystery of the rosary?" The three top scorers would compete on behalf of their class.

They scrounged up four overhead-projectors for teams to reveal answers, put together a soundtrack to play music, and bought glow sticks and beach balls for the crowd to toss in the bleachers during team deliberations. Winners would receive an iPod and the winning class would have a field trip to the movies at a later date. There would be a tug-of-war between classes and other half-time entertainment.

When game day arrived, were they afraid that it might fall flat? "We were not worried," Richter said. "We knew our students." And, they did. "It was outstanding!" he said. "It surpassed all expectations. The students were wonderful. The winning class carried the student who got the last question right around the entire gym."

High point

From that time on, the Know Your Faith competition became the high point of Catholic Schools week at St. Mary's. Father Josh Waltz took over as chaplain from 2007-2013 and kept it going strong. His brother, Fr. Justin Waltz, then chaplain of Bishop Ryan High School in Minot, wanted in on all the faith and fun so he started it there in 2010. The winners from both schools then faced off in the first state tournament. It soon spread to Shanley in Fargo, Sacred Heart in Grand Forks, and Trinity in Dickinson, so that now, all six Catholic high



schools participate in the state championship.

The format has evolved some each year. Now, schools hold in-house competitions earlier in the week to choose the winning trio to advance to the state competition. The prizes now are \$100 for the winners of the school event and the entire class of the in-house winner gets to attend the state competition which now rotates to the various schools. State winners get their school name engraved on the traveling trophy which they keep until the next competition.

At St. Mary's under Father Josh, a donor made it possible to buy strobe lights, large black lights that get attached to the ceiling, a smoke machine, and sound system, creating a concert-like atmosphere. Mini concerts have been part of some events when a few talented priests have grabbed guitars and belted out numbers. Since national speakers are invited during Catholic Schools Week, notable guests such as Leah Darrow, Chris Stefanick and Jason Evert have participated as MC's and judges.

Father Waltz recalled a year when an ancient Roman theme was chosen for a championship hosted at St. Mary's. "We built a pillar and huge plaster golden eagles," he said. The seniors built a chariot that was manned by Roman slaves that brought in the various school contestants."

Father Waltz dressed like an emperor over his clerics and was lowered from the ceiling in a lift and approached the bishop who had a red carpet rolled out for him. Bishop Kagan is the one who comes up with the final question on which wagers are placed. Father Waltz knelt and kissed the bishop's ring and escorted him to a throne on stage and stated to the students that God always comes before man.

The enthusiasm keeps growing. For the last few years, Real Presence radio has broadcasted it on the radio and



The St. Mary's Central High School students celebrate victory at the 2019 "Know Your Faith" contest held at Shanley in Fargo.



Bismarck Diocese priests, (l-r) Fathers Justin Waltz, Nick Schneider, Bill Ruellie and Josh Waltz, entertained the crowd at the contest in 2018 hosted at Dickinson Trinity High School.

on Facebook live.

"I think one dad, whose kid was a big football player, put it best," Fr. Waltz said. "He said, 'My kid is more excited about Know Your Faith than state football.' It's amazing to hear that, but most importantly, it's all about Jesus. I always told the kids, 'You can have a good time and still be virtuous.'"

Father Waltz noted that whenever a chaplain leaves, no matter who steps in, it continues. "It's not built around a personality, it's of God," he said.

Sets the tone

Saint Mary's is hosting the state competition this year on Jan. 29. Father Dominic Bouck has been the chaplain there since 2018. "When I first saw the Know Your Faith competition, I was blown away," he said. "The gym had as much energy as a rivalry basketball game. The state competition was one of the most intense competitions I had ever been to. The rivalry aspect ratchets up the urgency of representing your school well."

Reed Ruggles, the current principal was a freshman religion teacher in 2005, that first year. "My first impression was, 'This is a powerful experience because

it's rooted in Christ,'" he said.

"It's rooted in Christ and kids had the opportunity to laugh and learn and most importantly grow in their faith. People do this all the time for other types of competitions, so why not our faith?"

Ruggles explained that the student body rallied around it from the start because of the culture at St. Mary's. "Part of that has been having a bishop willing to put chaplains into the high schools that understand their role as a shepherd and father of their flock," he said. "The kids love our chaplains.

Jesus was a teacher and the chaplain teaches daily and builds relationships with the students."

The goal at St. Mary's is to hire mission-driven, faith-filled instructors regardless of the subjects taught, Ruggles explained. Nurturing the culture includes reaching parents. For example, keynote speakers for Catholic Schools Week also gives an evening talk for parents.

"Our entire faculty is now involved in Know Your Faith," Ruggles said. "It comes to this beautiful culminating point where the school rallies around their faith and classmates rally around each other."



In 2016's contest at Bishop Ryan in Minot, school chaplains at the time, (l to r) Fr. Tom Grafsgaard, Dickinson Trinity; Fr. Jared Johnson, St. Mary's Central High School; Fr. Charles LaCroix, Fargo Shanley; Sarah Swafford, event emcee; Fr. Justin Waltz and Fr. Jady Nelson, Bishop Ryan posed with the trophy before the festivities began.

OBITUARY

Sr. Matthew Wehri, OSB

Sr. Matthew Wehri, OSB, 85, died on Sunday, Nov 24, 2019.

The funeral Mass was celebrated Saturday, Nov. 30, 2019 in Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel. Burial was in the Monastery



Sr. Matthew Wehri, OSB

cemetery.

Carol Ann Wehri was born April 18, 1934 to Frank and Kathryn (Roether) Wehri of rural Haymarsh (Hebron), N.D. She was the second of four children and attended St. Clement's Catholic grade school in Hebron and St. Mary's High School in Richardton, N.D., graduating in May 1953. Carol Ann entered Sacred Heart Monastery on Sept. 6, 1954. On June 28, 1955, she became a novice and received the name Matthew. She made first profession on June 29, 1956 and

final profession on June 29, 1959.

Sr. Matthew was schooled daily in the Lord's service for the remainder of her religious life and was known by the work of her hands. She learned her ministry by watching others or just by doing what needed to be done. Her hands became proficient in housekeeping, drape-making, laundry, upholstering, growing flowers and plants, baking, Christmas decorating, sewing for the Sisters in the Care Center, driving for appointments and much more. Her years of service began with sewing in the Vestment Department in Yankton, followed by housekeeping in Lincoln, Neb.,

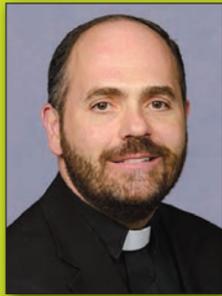
at Stephan Indian Mission and the Bishop's house in Sioux Falls, S.D. In 1969, she returned to Yankton and worked once more at the Monastery. She then served as housekeeping supervisor at Mount Marty for 24 years. After stepping down from this supervisory position, she continued caring for the flower beds and plants at Mount Marty until her retirement.

Sr. Matthew is survived by her Benedictine community, her brother, Frederick (Fritz) (Laura), her sister, Eileen (Larry) Bolstad, several nieces and a nephew. She was preceded in death by her parents and brother, Fr. Francis, OSB.

Questions

I was afraid to ask

FR. GARY BENZ



These men and women are spiritual heroes in the Church. Why? Because they didn't flee evil, but engaged it in battle. When the Church they loved was under attack, they fought back, even to the point of offering their lives for her. The Body of Christ, the Church, has been seriously wounded by the Evil One with the sex abuse scandal. Don't leave in retreat, for this would be a victory for the Prince of Darkness, whose goal is to diminish the Light of Christ which shines through His Church.

Secondly, if one were to leave the Church so as to escape the scandal of sexual abuse, where would you go? Sadly, all Christian denominations are dealing with this same issue; they just don't receive as much press coverage as the Catholic Church. Studies have shown that the rate of sexual abuse is the same in all Christian denominations, so leaving the Catholic Church does not mean that you will leave this issue behind.

But, it is more than our churches. We know from our following of this issue in the media that sexual abuse is a problem in schools, sports programs, organizations for youth and, most commonly, in the home. At virtually every turn, we will face head-on the scourge of sexual abuse, for it is not a Catholic problem alone, but a societal problem.

We must root it out, which will take human effort and, more importantly, divine grace. Remain in the Church and be fortified by the grace of the sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist, so that you will have the strength and fortitude to rid the Church and society of sexual abuse.

Since 2001, the Catholic Church has made great strides in the fight against sexual abuse. Studies by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) have shown a sharp decline in incidents of sexual abuse since 2002. Perhaps, learning from her own mistakes and failings, the Church can offer a path out of the societal morass of sexual abuse. With your input and prayers in the life of the Church, help her in this important endeavor.

Indeed, evil has infected the Church and her members with the sexual abuse scandal, but there is hope. Faithful Catholics are demanding change and calling for long overdue reforms; victims are receiving justice and more importantly, healing; and the Church is offering a way to root out sexual abuse in all facets of society. These are all signs of hope, so don't be discouraged and leave the Church in frustration.

Now, more than ever, victims of abuse and those scandalized by the abuse need the Church, especially the healing and fortifying power of her greatest gift—the Holy Eucharist. Perhaps we can all say with Saint Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go. You have the words of everlasting life" (John 6:68).

■ Fr. Benz is pastor at St. Mary in New England and St. Elizabeth in Lefor. 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.

A: What should I say to someone who has left the Church because of the sexual abuse scandal?

Q: "The Church has been shocked to the core by the presence of evil among its members," said the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols. How correct his assessment is of the clerical abuse scandal in the life of the Catholic Church. This scandal, caused by abusive clergy and bishops who ignored the problem of the abuse, has created countless victims, hurting souls who will spend their entire lives healing from the pain inflicted upon them.

In addition, many Catholics are leaving the Church because of their disgust with clerical sexual abuse and how it was poorly addressed by the hierarchy. Some estimates claim that since 2001, 15% of Catholics in the United States have left the Church because of the sex abuse scandal. What do we say to them in our hope of bringing them back home to the Church?

First, ask them to join us in the fight against evil; it is our Christian duty. We know that the sexual abuse scandal is the work of the Evil One, because he is continually at war with Christ and His Church. We must fight back!

As Saint Paul reminds us in his Letter to the Ephesians, "Put on the full armor of God, so as to be able to resist the devil's tactics" (6:11). In the life of the Church, courageous men and women have not left the Church when evil attacked her; no, they fought for Holy Mother Church because of their great love for her. Praise God for holy martyrs like Saints Cecilia, Perpetua and Felicity and Lawrence, who stood up to the anti-Christian tyranny of pagan Rome; praise God for brave bishops like Saint John Fischer, who was the lone voice among the bishops of England in his resistance to King Henry VIII's break with Rome; and praise God for the layman, Blessed Franz Jagerstatter, and the cleric, Servant of God Father Franz Reinisch, who refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Nazi regime and were executed for their bold defiance.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Life in the Spirit in Harvey Jan. 10-12

Everyone's invited to a Life in the Spirit Weekend Jan. 10-12 at St. Cecilia's Social Center in Harvey, N.D. Registration begins at 6 p.m., seminar begins at 7 p.m. Friday and concludes at 3 p.m. Sunday. The seminar is an opportunity to deepen your personal relationship with the Holy Spirit and fellow members of the Body of Christ. The weekend includes Mass, praise and worship, talks and testimony, discussion groups, Eucharistic adoration, healing of hurtful memories prayer and more. Register by Jan. 7. Free will offering. For more information and to register, contact Rosalie at raxtman@gondtc.com or call 324-2706 or the parish office at 324-2144. No-cost housing available in St. Cecilia's Social Center or in private homes with prior weekend arrangements. Area hotels include: Cobblestone Inn 635-2222 (until Jan. 4); R&R Motel 324-2271; Artos Motel 324-4602. Mention the Life in the Spirit group name for possible block rates.

Right to Life Mass Jan. 22

On the anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision, the public is invited to a Right to Life rosary procession and Mass on Wednesday, Jan. 22 in Bismarck. The 4th Degree Knights of Columbus will lead a rosary procession from the doors of CHI St. Alexius to St. Mary's Church beginning at 6:30 p.m. Bishop Kagan will celebrate Mass at St. Mary's Church at 7 p.m. Refreshments will be served following Mass.

Marriage retreat in Williston Feb. 28-29

Mark your calendar for a marriage retreat at St. Joseph's Church in Williston, 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. Whether your marriage is thriving, feels weathered or hopeless, all couples are invited to attend this retreat to get the tools you need to live marriage according to God's designs. More details to follow in next month's issue of the Dakota Catholic Action. For more information on the retreat leaders, Matt and Mindy Dalton, go to marriagemissionaries.org.

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: Jan. 16-19; 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.

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 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. Registration details to follow.

Latin Mass

The Extraordinary Form of the Mass, sometimes referred to as the traditional Latin Mass, is offered at Christ the King in Mandan every fourth Sunday of the month at 11:30 a.m. and on the first Friday of each month at the Church of St. Joseph in Killdeer at 7:30 a.m. mountain time. All are welcome to attend.

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.

Balancing Church & State

CHRISTOPHER DODSON



False notion of the culture of death

The numbers should trouble us. The suicide rate in North Dakota is higher than the national average.

Between 1996 and 2016 the rate increased 58%, higher than any other state. Even accounting for our demographics, the rate of suicide in North Dakota for white middle-aged men and Native Americans is higher than the national average. Suicide is also a significant problem with youth, veterans and those dealing with same-sex attractions or gender dysphoria.

No one, however, is immune. Behavioral health and emotional issues can strike anyone, Catholics included.

For that reason, we need to treat suicide as a preventable public health issue. The more we know and talk about suicide, the more it becomes clear that we can tackle the problem with evidence-based strategies. We must also have the will to invest the necessary resources.

For example, research shows that most people who attempt suicide but survive will never again attempt to take their life. We also know that suicide is usually an impulsive act and the impulse will dissipate within five minutes, on average. Removing easy means of harming oneself during those five minutes and developing strategies to prevent quick acts will help

prevent suicides.

The State of North Dakota has a suicide prevention plan to address the problem as a public health issue. Part of that plan addresses removing the stigma associated with talking about mental health issues. Recently, Forum Communications dedicated a series of stories on suicide with an emphasis on doing just that.

Missing in the discussion, however, is that at the same time society is putting greater focus on preventing most suicides it is increasingly accepting of doctor-assisted suicide.

Proponents of assisted suicide have cleverly recast assisted suicide as “aid in dying,” but the rebranding is nothing more than an attempt to masquerade the true nature of the act, which is and will always be assisted suicide.

One of the strangest developments in contemporary society is a combination of legal positivism and self-defined reality. Legal positivism is the idea that whether something is right or wrong depends on what the law says. According to this thinking, if the government legalizes a particular act, that act is not only legal, but also moral. By “self-defined reality,” I mean the view of self-autonomy that believes the ultimate arbiter of whether something is right or wrong is the

individual.

With assisted suicide, as we have seen with abortion, we have a partnership of the two ideas whereby if the state says it is allowed under certain circumstances, it is up to the affected individual to decide their own reality. Thus, killing an unborn child is a crime in most states, including North Dakota, but if a woman voluntarily seeks the assistance of a licensed physician to kill her child by abortion, it is legal. The contradiction should be obvious. The only reason to criminalize unborn homicide when it is not abortion is because the child is a human being. Yet, advocates of abortion justify killing an unborn child by abortion by claiming that it is solely up to the mother to decide whether the child is human. Stranger than the absurd idea that a person’s opinion can trump objective science is the idea that the state can give the right to dehumanize in one instance but insist on the existence of a human in another.

The assisted suicide advocates are taking a page from the pro-abortion handbook. Most promoters of assisted suicide for the terminally ill claim they oppose suicide for everyone else. Suicide by youth, persons with mental illness, veterans and Native Americans—all groups with

high rates of suicide—they would argue are not only tragedies, but should be targeted by the state for prevention. They are right. They seek, however, a carve-out for a particular group of individuals and they have been successful in several states and the District of Columbia.

Their purported claim for the carve-out is the “fact” that the individual is dying. Dying, however, does not change the nature of the act. Nor can it justify the state abandoning this set of persons from the task of preventing suicide. A person near death is still a human being and deserves care, not abandonment.

Ironically, a few days before the Forum published its stories on suicide, one of its columnists praised efforts in Minnesota to legalize assisted suicide. People like him want us to believe that some people are “different” from everyone else. This is how the “culture of death” wins.

If you or a loved one is in crisis, you can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255 (1-800-273-TALK). To help someone have immediate access to help and a safety plan, see the My3 phone app at my3app.org.

■ 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.

Ag Attitudes

JAMES ODERMANN



God will always love me (and you)

“Did you know winter starts in 10 days?” a friendly face queried in mid-December as I waited in line. It was the levity that was needed while waiting to purchase the needed supplies to combat the cold. Everybody in the store (except the checkout clerks) looked about six sizes bigger in winter clothes, but generally happiness was reflected in the chatter.

I thought back to earlier in the day when, after finishing the morning chores, I removed the various layers of clothes and found my way into the office. I plopped myself down and, on a notepad next to my computer, was the message: “I will always love you!”

It was my wife’s handwriting. I smiled as I read and reread the message. I rhetorically wondered if those five words were intended for me.

Of course, I could just flat out ask, which would bring an end to my curiosity. Or, I could

see if the words were part of a message meant for someone else. (The grandchildren had been visiting.) I pondered this for a minute and scrapped the idea. I was going to relish the message and say “thank you.”

Obviously, the “thank you” would begin with my wife, recalling the multiple decades of joys and challenges of life on the ranch. Yet, the “thank you” would need to go far beyond a simple verbal exchange. The “thank you” for me was a reflection of God’s way of telling me the same thing: “I will always love you!”

There are so many moments in life when God comes to me. Sometimes, the message is one that I don’t like to hear, a message that is designed to correct my ideas, my attitude, my patience, my willingness to listen.

I reflected on my days as a youngster, when I had to memorize the Baltimore Catechism (yes that was required study back in the day).

One phrase that was especially imprinted by my School Sisters of Notre Dame teachers was, “God always was, always is and always will be . . . God is in everything.”

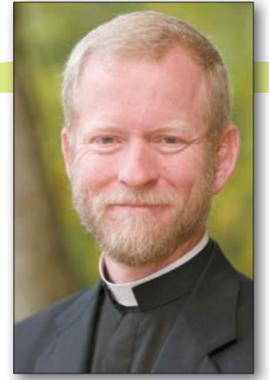
Yes, God is everywhere and God leaves me messages all the time, like notes that read “I will always love you.” As I reflected further, God, in his infinite mercy, loves me. Do I return the love? Do I say “thank you” to God for his unconditional acceptance of me? Do I seek God’s forgiveness?

The Christmas season is such a great time to reflect on this message. God sent Jesus to save the world. I need to tell God “I will always love you!” 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).

Making Sense out of Bioethics

FR. TAD PACHOLCZYK



Medicine and a sense of the sacred

As clergy, we touch upon very holy realities when we baptize, consecrate the Eucharist, give absolution to sinners, or anoint the sick. These special moments engage divine grace in deep and important ways in the lives of those to whom we minister.

In the midst of these sacred realities, we remain, nonetheless, very human and fallible instruments. I remember one time when a bishop contritely divulged in my presence that during the consecration that morning all he could think about was a good cup of hot coffee.

We clergy need to attend carefully to the graced realities we regularly handle lest we end up squandering or losing our sense of the sacred. The old adage reminds us: familiarity breeds contempt. An elderly priest and professor in Rome used to urge us as seminarians: "Seek the grace to celebrate each Holy Mass as if it were your first Mass, your last Mass, and your only Mass."

Similar challenges exist in the world of medicine. Physicians who work with frail and vulnerable human beings every day must be attentive when it comes to the sacredness of their subjects and their profession.

One of the lesser-known lines from the famous Hippocratic Oath has always intrigued me: "In purity and holiness I will guard my life and my art." Doctors face a range of unique temptations that the Oath enumerates: it counsels them to swear off "all mischief and in particular of sexual relations with both female and male [patients]" as well as all abortions and acts of euthanasia. To engage in any of these activities is to lose one's way, forswearing the sacredness of the medical profession's calling.

Yet some doctors, not unlike some priests

and bishops, end up losing touch with this "sacred dimension."

An article in the Irish Times, written by a physician in the run-up to the 2018 abortion referendum in Ireland, exemplified this loss and profanation of medicine's sacredness.

Following a routine 20-week ultrasound of her third pregnancy, Dr. Caroline McCarthy described her sadness at learning that her baby "had no kidneys and as a result there was no amniotic fluid. His lungs could not develop properly without the fluid, but he wouldn't need his lungs or his kidneys until after birth, so the pregnancy would probably carry to term." She was told she had two options: "Carry my baby to term and he would either be born dead or die shortly after birth or travel to the UK to end the pregnancy."

After a few days spent in a haze of panic and tears, Dr. McCarthy and her husband Michael took a flight out of Ireland to undergo a "compassionate induction" of labor at Liverpool Women's Hospital. The terminology brought to mind an astute observation a friend had once made: "Beware of any medical procedure with the word 'compassion' in its name; it often conceals wrongdoing."

When the hospital clerk arrived to get their informed consent signature, the procedure listed on the form was: "Feticide termination of pregnancy." Feticide is a medical term referring to the killing of a human, in this case during an early stage of development — "fetal homicide." After Dr. McCarthy's labor was induced, a large-gauge needle (termed a "catheter" in the article) was used for the feticide; it passed through her abdomen and uterus into her baby's heart and potassium chloride was injected to stop its beating.

Shortly thereafter, her stillborn son was delivered: "I saw his perfect little face for the first time. I felt that same post-birth relief and elation as I had after the birth of my other two children. The midwife wrapped him in a towel and I held him close. I felt at complete peace with my decision and just sat holding and staring at my beautiful son. In the morning, the midwife helped us dress John. We spent the day holding and looking at him and taking photographs."

It's hard to miss the jolting unseemliness of the family's taking photos of their dead child whose life they had just ended. Dr. McCarthy's actions cannot be squared with her vocation as a mother or with her sacred calling as a physician to "do no harm." That sacred calling translates into helping all those born with birth defects or afflicted by disease, without ever imposing death penalties onto them. Ahead of all others, physicians are tasked with grasping this key truth.

Hippocrates possessed unusual wisdom and foresight to codify these real dangers for the soul of the medical professional millennia ago. As we witness an unprecedented collapse of the sense of the sacred within the world of the healing arts today, we must assiduously pray for those who have turned their backs on that ancient and time-tested Oath, and vigorously support those fighting to uphold its tenets within medicine's hallowed hallways.

■ 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

Family Matters

TARA BROOKE



One last family matters

The new year is upon us and we often start to think about ways to improve ourselves, our lives, our families and our peace. I am no different. Each year, I hope for an even better year than the one before.

My prayer for 2020 is that each of our readers makes some small commitment to focus on their family and be intentionally present to family members this coming year.

Each year, the Brooke family chooses a word and we try to live by that word for the year (and beyond). We've used words such as joy, simplify and health in recent years. Our word for 2020 is kindness.

Throughout the course of a week, members of our family seem

to run here, there and everywhere. Once home, we tend to let down our guard and certainly aren't as kind to each other as we should be, as Jesus calls us to be. Tempers are shorter and patience runs thin. We started reflecting on the word kindness at the beginning of November and have already embarked on what it means to choose kindness in our house.

The Brooke family has put a lot of thought and prayers into why we had let unkind behaviors emerge in our house. One of those reasons is the cause for this article. The Brooke family runs better with routine and stability. My husband, Dan's job has shifted and become more demanding; and with my job, the needs of family ministry throughout the diocese are never

ending. Our children are older now and not as flexible as they once were, with greater demands in terms of schedules and basic needs. I always say, "Bigger kids, bigger issues!" Something in our life had to give way; our four (almost five, through adoption) children deserve more balance and consistency.

Thus, through much prayer and discernment I have come to know that I am not the best person for this office. The director of family life, a job I absolutely love and adore, is not conducive to the needs of my family. If I do my job the justice it deserves, my family suffers. If I give my family the time they deserve, this job will suffer. As any good director of family ministry would recognize, I know

family must come first. Thus, it is time that I focus on my family and step away from this job.

I pray that the bishop finds and hires someone who will love this job as much as I have, yet can give the office everything that it deserves. Please know of my love and admiration for the amazing families throughout the great Diocese of Bismarck. Thank you for your unwavering trust in me as I have worked with you and your families, it is now time to minister to mine. Take good care and remember to choose kindness in 2020!

■ Brooke served as 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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