



Dakota Catholic Action

Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941

Source and summit

Eucharistic Congress event on June 2

By Fr. Brian Gross

Special Contributor to the DCA

On the Feast of Corpus Christi Sunday, June 19, 2022, the Bishops of the United States inaugurated a three-year plan for Eucharistic Revival. The Revival is not only for the purpose of growing in knowledge. We must have a real, sustained and lively relationship with Christ.

Simply knowing information about someone does not mean we have a relationship with that person. Jesus invites us into an encounter. The beautiful final words he speaks to us in Mt. 28:20, "Behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age," reveal this truth. We must let this wonderful proclamation sink in. Jesus desires to be with us!

I like to think of the motto St. John Henry Cardinal Newman chose for his coat of arms, "heart speaks unto heart." This is what Christ desires when we are with Him at adoration and when we receive Him at Mass; an encounter with us speaking heart to heart.

In our local Diocese of Bismarck, we have been planning the diocesan phase of the Revival during these last few months.

We are excited to announce a diocesan event, "Source and Summit: A Eucharistic Congress" for all to attend on Friday, June 2, 2023, at the University of Mary. Speakers will include Msgr. James Shea and Shelly Preszler. I will also address those in attendance. There will be extended periods of Eucharistic adoration throughout the day and opportunities for confession.

The day will conclude with Mass celebrated by Bishop Kagan. In addition, we will have a kid's track specifically focused on helping your child grow in love for Jesus, present in the Blessed Sacrament. Of course, there are many more details to come.

In the first few weeks of 2023, Bishop Kagan will be celebrating a holy hour in each of our five deaneries within the different regions of the diocese during the months of January and February. Each holy hour will include a homily and time for silent prayer concluding with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. There will be time for discussion after the holy hour. Here are the dates, times and locations for the event in each of the deaneries.

- Sunday, Jan. 8, 3-5 p.m. - Our Lady of Grace, Minot
- Sunday, Jan. 15, 2-4 p.m. MT - Queen of Peace, Dickinson
- Saturday, Jan. 21, 1-3 p.m. - Christ the King, Mandan
- Saturday, Feb. 18, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. - Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck
- Saturday, Feb. 25, 12-2 p.m. - St. Joseph, Williston

Phases of the National Eucharistic Revival

The National Eucharistic Revival is an initiative to inspire and prepare the people of God to be formed, healed, converted, united and sent out to a hurting and hungry world through a renewed encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist—the source and summit of our Catholic faith. The Eucharistic Revival consists of three phases.

Year One (2022-23): Year of Diocesan Revival

During the first year, the U.S. bishops are inviting their presbyterates, diocesan teams and parish leaders to a renewed love for Jesus in the Eucharist by hosting and highlighting diocesan-wide events such as Eucharistic congresses and days of formation centered on the mystery of the Eucharist in the life of the Church.

Year Two (2023-24): Year of Parish Revival

During the Parish Year, pastors will invite their parishioners and staff

Continued on page 6



A LOOK INSIDE



Graveside pilgrimage

Trinity High School students visited the gravesite of Michelle Duppong to learn about her and the process of canonization Page 5

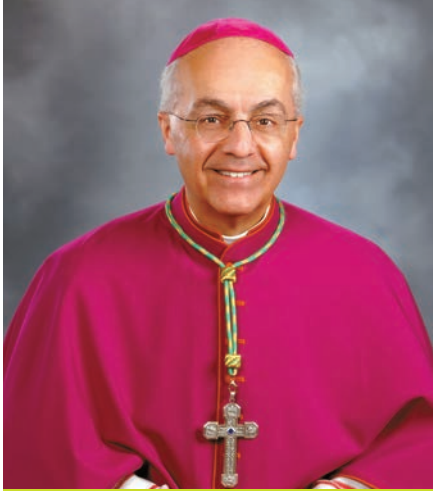


Real Presence

Parents and educators play an important role in helping children understand the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist Page 7

Make Advent that real time of preparation

FROM THE BISHOP



Bishop David D. Kagan

The season of Advent is upon us and this year the first Sunday of Advent was Sunday, Nov. 27. Also, this year unlike many years, Advent has four full weeks since Christmas is Sunday, Dec. 25.

In whatever way the Advent season seems to be recorded on the calendar, doesn't it seem that what it is supposed to be never quite turns out? For us, Advent is supposed to be that time of quiet yet joyful period of preparing ourselves for the birth of the Son

of God, Jesus Christ. It seems to me that Satan is extra busy in Advent trying to distract us from this preparation with many nice but not very important things that the culture tells us are all-important.

The gift buying and giving, the parties, sending cards, decorating our homes and many other things in themselves are not bad. However, if any or all of them become all that we do and spend our time on in Advent, then that is bad. They have distracted us from what Advent is supposed to be and when Christmas arrives, we find that we are not prepared to meet the Lord Jesus, adore Him and follow Him.

Let me offer a few ideas to make Advent that real time of preparation for us. First, wait until the third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday, to put up your decorations. Have your Advent wreath ready and use it as a family from the first Sunday of Advent and, in this way, all the other decorations, cards and gifts will follow from that wreath and what it reminds us of. Second, try to be at Mass daily in Advent and most

especially on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a holy day of obligation, Dec. 8.

Third, resolve to do a penance every day of Advent and resolve to perform a corporal or spiritual work of mercy every day of Advent. To do these things helps us to avoid the many distractions in Advent and truly prepare ourselves for the birth of Jesus. Also, it helps us recall that He was born in poverty and obscurity to reveal to us what is truly pleasing to God the Father.

All of this helps but unless we commit ourselves to being people of Advent, Christmas becomes just another holiday. Let us be the people of Advent by imitating Our Blessed Lady, St. Joseph, Sts. Elizabeth and Zechariah, and St. John the Baptist.

Have a blessed Advent and a holy and Merry Christmas in the Lord!

BISHOP'S SCHEDULE DECEMBER 2022

Dec. 1	• Finance Council, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 10 a.m.	Dec. 13	• Building Commission Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 9:30 a.m.
Dec. 2	• Admission into Candidacy for Permanent Diaconate, Spirit of Life, Mandan 9 a.m.	Dec. 15	• North Dakota Catholic Conference Meeting, Jamestown, 9:30 a.m.
Dec. 4	• Confirmation, Pro-Cathedral of St. Mary, Bismarck, 2 p.m.	Dec. 16	• Mass for Diocesan Staff, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 11 a.m.
Dec. 5	• Women's Care Center Board Meeting, Chancery, Bismarck, 5 p.m.	Dec. 22	• Real Presence Radio Interview, 9 a.m.
Dec. 6	• PBA Board of Trustee Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 11 a.m.	Dec. 23	• Serra Club Christmas Gathering, Municipal Country Club, Bismarck, 12 p.m.
Dec. 8	• Annual Visit and Mass, University of Mary, Bismarck, 4:30 p.m.	Dec. 25	• Midnight Christmas Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 12 a.m.
Dec. 9	• Cabinet Meeting, Chancery, Bismarck, 10 a.m.	Dec. 28	• Reception of new St. Mary Sisters postulants, Bishop's Residence Chapel, Bismarck, 2 p.m.
Dec. 9	• Home on the Range Board of Directors Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 12 p.m.		

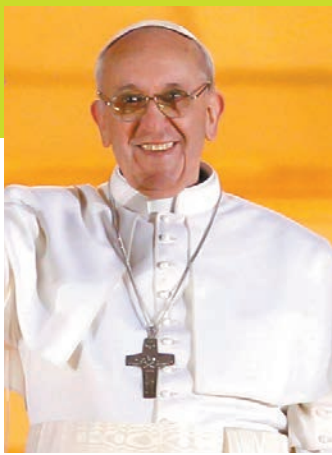
BISHOP IN ACTION



Submitted photo

Bishop Kagan celebrated Mass for the Diocesan Youth Conference in the St. John Paul II Chapel at Dickinson Trinity High School on Oct. 29. Concelebrating with him was Fr. Roger Synek (left) and Fr. Christian Smith.

Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for December



For volunteer not-for-profit organizations

We pray that volunteer non-profit organizations committed to human development find people dedicated to the common good and ceaselessly seek out new paths to international cooperation.



Know Your Faith rivia

- At what age must a person observe the days of abstinence during Lent?
A. 12
B. 14
C. 16
D. 18
- What do you call a person who has been beatified?
A. Sanctified
B. Holy
C. Saint
D. Blessed
- What do you call the laws by which the Church is governed?
A. Precepts
B. Canons
C. Traditions
D. Dogmas
- What does NFP stand for in the Catholic Church?
A. National Faith Program
B. Normal Faith Process
C. National Family Program
D. Natural Family Planning
- On what day do you hear the words "you are dust?"
A. All Souls' Day
B. All Saints' Day
C. Good Friday
D. Ash Wednesday

Answers: 1. B; 2. D; 3. B; 4. D; 5. D



Dakota Catholic Action



Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941

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

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

The Dakota Catholic Action (0011-5770) is published monthly except July by the Diocese of Bismarck, PO Box 1575, Bismarck, ND 58502-1575.
Periodical postage paid at Bismarck, ND, and additional mailing offices.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to address below.
Dakota Catholic Action, PO Box 1137, Bismarck, ND 58501-1137
The Dakota Catholic Action is funded in part by the annual God's Share Appeal.

Faith and college life

Catholic student group started on BSC campus

By LeAnn Eckroth
DCA Writer

A new group geared toward the needs of Catholics attending Bismarck State College found early success with its debut this fall.

Mystic Catholics launched with 25 participants, according to staff sponsor John Carroll.

It hatched via generous support from Cathedral of the Holy Spirit Church in Bismarck and its rector Father Josh Ehli.

“College-age students are in need of community and encountering Jesus,” said Fr. Ehli. “We are trying to provide both.”

It’s that desire to reach the college-age demographic that was the motivation for getting the Mystic Catholics group established.

“We have a pretty high Catholic population on campus, and we really didn’t have any student groups or anything working with them for formation or activities,” Carroll said.

So, on Sept. 13, he pitched the idea during the student organization recruiting day at the BSC Student Union. Personal invitations were also sent out to potential members. “We gave out black T-shirts with the Mystic Catholics logo. Fifty T-shirts were given out,” Carroll noted.

The group is included on the BSC list of student organizations.

“We’ve had quite a good turnout,” Carroll added. “We were hoping for a handful of students, maybe 10 and we’ve got 25 on the

list. That is very good.”

Mystic Catholics meets 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays on alternate weeks at the BSC Student Union. The group is a community of Catholic students at BSC to serve the formative needs of BSC students who are open to having a relationship with Jesus Christ, according to its mission statement.

“It’s really for any student. BSC’s average student age is 24-25. There are no age limits. In fact, we have students who are freshmen, and we have some students who are in their 30s attending. It is open to all students,” Carroll said.

So far, meeting itinerary consists of a mix of fun and comradery in the Catholic faith, but the agenda will evolve with members’ goals.

“We have a game night in the student union. We’ve done that a couple of times. We are just in the building phase. We will have guest speakers. We have an evening called ‘stump a priest’ where they can ask him any theologically related questions. Those who stump a priest can win a prize. Some things like that,” he added.

Game prizes are funded through private donors not any appropriation or any state money, he assured. According to Fr. Ehli, Cathedral parish also provides resources such as staff, financial support and meals for events whenever needed.

Mystic Catholics aims to



strengthen and evangelize the faith to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

“We plan on having guest speakers and talking about anything Catholic or theological, certainly helping students in college become better Catholics or helping folks who are really interested in Catholicism, answering those questions, helping them understand what it means to be Catholic. It’s for all students.”

The organization is student-led and driven, and he foresees the potential for community or campus service projects as members see fit.

“It is really not only Catholic formation, but formation for the students to get leadership experience and those extracurricular benefits of participating in a group like this,” Carroll said. “We want to meet the formative needs of BSC students who are open to having a relationship with Jesus Christ whether they be Catholic or not.”

Mystic Catholics is an officially

recognized student organization with a president, a vice president, a treasurer and secretary. They have a constitution and bylaws. It’s like any other student organization, but with a focus on faith.

Ultimately, the goal is for the program to grow campuswide. “It’s part of Cathedral’s mission of evangelization. BSC is in our boundaries. It is part of outreach to our college-age parishioners, to all those in our area,” Fr. Ehli said.

“The idea is to bridge the gap from K-12 formation into adulthood,” Carroll explained. “BSC has students from all over western North Dakota. It’s not just the Bismarck-Mandan metropolitan area. The hope is to let all the parishes in the diocese know that if they have students attending BSC, that the group is available for them, and we hope to see them on campus.”

For more information about Mystic Catholics, email mysticcatholic@gmail.com or call 701-335-6332.

UPCOMING EVENTS

■ Christmas Eve dinner at Ascension

Ascension Parish in Bismarck is hosting their annual Christmas Eve dinner on Saturday, Dec. 24 from 5:30-7 p.m. in their parish community room. The menu includes roast turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetable, coleslaw, cranberries, relishes, rolls and dessert. This is a free meal for individuals and families in need, alone or simply want to celebrate Christ’s birth with others. Rides are available for those who need transportation. Call the parish office at 701-223-3606 to reserve a ride or if you have any questions.

■ Search weekend dates

Search for Christian Maturity is a weekend retreat experience which provides youth an opportunity to think, talk, question and dive deeper into their faith. The weekends are for any high school or college age person at least 15 years old. The program is both rooted in the Catholic faith and open to young people of any denomination or creed. Search weekends are held at the Badlands Ministries Camp just south of Medora. Remaining weekends for the season are Jan. 13-15, Feb. 24-26 and April 14-16. Find more information at bismarckdiocese.com/search1.

■ March for Life Pilgrimage to D.C.

Registration is now open for the diocesan 2023 national March for Life in Washington D.C. The March for Life is a peaceful gathering of people who march on capitol hill as a witness to the dignity of unborn life. Roe v. Wade was overturned on June 24, 2022, effectively bestowing power to the states to enact their own abortion policies. While this is an important step in legally defending life in our nation, abortion is still legal in 28 states. Because of this, we will continue to march for the defense of life from conception to natural death in our nation. This year’s pilgrimage will be from Jan. 17-22 and includes sightseeing of the area along with the annual march. For more information and to register, visit bismarckdiocese.com/march. Registration closes Dec. 17.

■ North Dakota March for Life Jan. 20

Save the date for the third annual North Dakota March for Life on Friday, Jan. 20. New this year is a holy hour led by Bishop Kagan the evening prior on Thursday, Jan. 19 at 8 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit. Friday’s activities begin with Mass with Bishop Kagan at 10:45 a.m. at the Cathedral. Following Mass, march (or drive) to

the steps of the N.D. State Capitol building with the rally beginning at 12:30 p.m. For more information, go to bismarckdiocese.com/ndmfl or contact Amanda at ajensen@bismarckdiocese.com.

■ Post abortion ministry

Rachel’s Vineyard is a confidential retreat for anyone struggling with the emotional or spiritual pain of an abortion. This is open to all individuals regardless of faith denominations. Register at bismarckdiocese.com/rachels-vineyard-retreat or contact Carol at 605-374-5639 or ckling@sdplains.com for more information and dates of retreats.

■ Marriage Encounter Weekends

You’ve celebrated a few anniversaries... maybe many. You’ve been through some ups and downs, and you have learned a lot about each other. But what if there’s more to your marriage than you’ve ever realized? Experience a Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend and discover the beauty of your relationship. The next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekends in the region are Feb 4-5, 2023, in Saint Paul, Minn. and Feb 10-12, 2023, in Buffalo, Minn. Early registration is highly recommended. For more information visit our website

at ndwwme.org or contact Rob and Angie at Applications@ndwwme.org or 701-347-1998.

■ Patriotic rosary at Spirit of Life

Come in prayer to heal our nation. A patriotic rosary dedicates one Hail Mary in a traditional Catholic rosary to each state of the United States and asks God’s protection and guidance for our nation. This will be said the first and third Thursday of every month at 7 p.m. at Spirit of Life in Mandan. Please join as we come together and unite to strengthen our nation.

■ World Youth Day 2023

World Youth Day is an international pilgrimage held every three years with millions of young Catholics from around the world gathering with the pope to pray and be formed in faith. The 2023 WYD is in Lisbon, Portugal. The diocese is gathering information on those interested in this pilgrimage July 29-Aug. 7, 2023. For additional questions and details, go to bismarckdiocese.com/wyd or contact Ben Ottemoeller at bottemoeller@bismarckdiocese.com or 701-204-7208.

Opening Mass for the **CANONIZATION** of Michelle Duppong

PUBLICATION OF THE POSTULATOR'S PETITION

Dearly Beloved in Christ,
In the name of the 'Fellowship of Catholic University Students' (FOCUS), Father Thomas J. Grafsgaard, appointed as postulator and approved by myself as postulator, requested me to initiate the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of Michelle Christine Duppong, former FOCUS Missionary and Director of Adult Faith Formation for the Diocese of Bismarck who died on December 25th, 2015, at Haymarsh in this diocese.

After having consulted with the Holy See, my brother bishops and the faithful of this diocese; and having verified the existence of a true and widespread reputation of sanctity, enjoyed by her during her life and growing ever stronger after her death, as well as ample evidence of the granting of graces and favors by God through her intercession, I, David D. Kagan, Bishop of Bismarck, do hereby make public the petition of Father Thomas J. Grafsgaard, the postulator of this cause, and thus declare I am initiating the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of the Servant of God Michelle Christine Duppong.

In conformity with "The Norms to be Observed in Inquiries Made by Bishops in the Causes of Saints", published by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints on February 7, 1983, I also call upon any and all who may have useful information regarding the Cause of Beatification and Canonization of Michelle Christine Duppong to bring such documents, materials or information to my attention.

Given at Bismarck, North Dakota, on this 1st day of November in the year of Our Lord 2022.

+1 David D. Kagan

Bishop of Bismarck



Staff photos

Bishop Kagan read the official documents for the cause of canonization of Michelle Duppong from the altar.



Several family members and friends of Michelle Duppong attended the Mass including her parents, Ken and Mary Ann.



Deacon Randy Schmidt raised the book of the Gospels.



Among the concelebrating priests was Fr. Tom Grafsgaard, who was appointed by Bishop Kagan as postulator of the cause for canonization, the person who oversees the diocesan phase of the process.



The graces from a gravesite pilgrimage

By Colton Steiner
Diocesan Seminarian

When I hear the word “pilgrimage,” I find myself thinking about a journey to Rome, where one encounters the rich history and beauty of the Catholic Church. People regularly visit the Holy Land, walking in the footsteps of our Lord and praying the mysteries of the rosary where they physically happened. Some pilgrims journey to the Lourdes shrine, where one bathes in the cold, healing waters and experiences the love of our Blessed Mother in a new way.

Going on a pilgrimage to a place in North Dakota however, let alone somewhere in our own diocese, does not readily occur to me. Thankfully, we have, within our Catholic schools, many holy teachers who have a much broader understanding of both where to and how one can go on pilgrimage.

Earlier this fall, Trinity High School religion teacher, Kelli Schneider, helped me see that we could go on a pilgrimage somewhere within our very own diocese thanks to Bishop Kagan opening the cause for the canonization of Michelle Duppong. I thought it was so beautiful how our teachers and students (primarily freshmen) were taking advantage of this blessed opportunity and was overjoyed when I received the invitation to partake in such a holy expedition.

What I found particularly extraordinary about this pilgrimage was just how holistic this formative experience was: mind, body and soul. The students were taught as to how saints are “made” both by learning how the canonization process works, but also by hearing how the Lord worked in Michelle’s life to mold her heart after His own.

The students were able to take in some picturesque views of the

North Dakota prairie and have lunch at the farm where Michelle grew up. Additionally, they were fed spiritually in the sacrifice of the Mass by Fr. Ben Wanner, which was celebrated just a short drive away from this farm at the church Michelle so often attended while growing up. We also heard from Renae Duppong, Michelle’s sister, on Michelle’s life and how she lived ordinary holiness. We had the opportunity to visit Michelle’s grave where we offered a decade of the rosary and prayed the litany of saints.

As necessary as it is to learn in the classroom, this pilgrimage was an excellent way to show the students how death does not have the final say—to help them understand St. Paul when he echoes the prophet Hosea: “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” (1 Cor. 15:55). By honoring the saints (and those whose cause for canonization is open), we in turn acknowledge that death is not the end, but that which allows us, through the mercy of God, to enter life eternal. We celebrate the saints not only for the amazing things they did in this lifetime, but also for the way in which these good works, together with their faith in the salvation brought about by Christ’s own sacrificial offering, so moved the Lord to offer them the invitation: “Come, share in your master’s joy” (Mt 25:23).

In a new way, the students experienced the dynamic in which we look to the earthly lives of the saints for encouragement as we strive for holiness and ask for their intercession now that they enjoy new life with our Father in heaven. For Christ himself tells us that our God “is not God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive” (Lk 20:38).

I would like to extend an invitation to all of you who want



Submitted photos
The students and chaperones began the day with Mass at St. Clement Oratory, celebrated by Fr. Ben Wanner.



Father Ben Wanner spoke to the students at the gravesite of Michelle Duppong.

to go on a pilgrimage but do not desire to travel half-way across the world. Please, if you are able, prayerfully consider taking a pilgrimage to visit and pray at the gravesite of Michelle Duppong. Not only is the area around the cemetery exceptionally beautiful, but the grace that the Father

desires to pour out upon you through this pilgrimage is even more beautiful.
Steiner is a seminarian studying for the diocese who is currently experiencing a pastoral year serving at the Church of St. Wenceslaus in Dickinson.

A Portfolio of Protection

Permanent Life Insurance

Our signature product. Insure your life for life.

Term Life Insurance

Affordable protection for temporary needs.

Retirement Annuities

Retirement income you can count on. Guaranteed.

Long-Term Care Insurance

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

Disability Income Insurance

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

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

*As of 01/2021, rated A+ Superior by A.M. Best

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

Knights of Columbus®

Jon Beebe

General Agent
(605) 882-8689
jon.beebe@kofc.org
www.kofcbeebeagency.com

Eucharistic Congress event on June 2

Continued from page 1

to become even more truly and deeply Eucharistic communities through small groups, increased exploration of the sacrifice of the Mass, Eucharistic adoration, catechetical studies on the Real Presence of Christ, parish-sponsored processions and other activities to enable deeper encounters with Our Lord in the Eucharist.

Year Three (2024-25): Year of the National Eucharistic Congress and Missionary Sending

During the third year, the Church will gather for the first National Eucharistic Congress in almost 50 years, where approximately 80,000 Catholics are anticipated to draw close to Jesus in

the Eucharist by way of a pilgrimage to Indianapolis from July 17-21, 2024. The intended fruit of the Congress is to prepare the faithful from around the country to go out to the peripheries of their communities as “Eucharistic missionaries” filled with the flame of divine charity for those around them.

On the Feast of Corpus Christi 2018, Pope Francis had these words for us, “In life, we constantly need to be fed: nourished not only with food, but also with plans and affection, hopes and desires. We hunger to be loved. But the most pleasing compliments, the finest gifts, and the most advanced technologies are not enough; they never completely satisfy us. The Eucharist is simple food, like bread, yet it is the only

food that satisfies, for there is no greater love. There we encounter Jesus really; we share his life, and we feel his love. There you can realize that his death and Resurrection are for you. And when you worship Jesus in the Eucharist, you receive from him the Holy Spirit and you find peace and joy. Dear brothers and sisters, let us choose this food of life! Let us make Mass our priority! Let us rediscover Eucharistic Adoration in our communities! Let us implore the grace to hunger for God, with an insatiable desire to receive what he has prepared for us.”

Let us pray that this time of Eucharistic Revival is one of true depth and deeper conversion for ourselves and our diocese as we center our lives more intentionally in service and love of our Lord and His Church.



Fr. Brian Gross spoke during the 40 Hours Devotion at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in November 2020.



Fr. Brian Gross adoring the Lord during the 40 Hours Devotion event in 2020.

GIVE NOW & BE A PART OF OUR \$5 MILLION MATCH!

The Stability Initiative is an 11-year strategic fundraising plan to become financially stable, so we can continue to offer the best Catholic education, with competitively paid employees and affordable tuition for our families.



Photo by Deacon Joe Krupinsky

Thank you for supporting our Catholic schools!

For more information and to read the complete Stability Initiative, please visit:

keepthepromise.net/stability-initiative

Scan this code to learn more or donate now!



For more details, please contact:
Jake Markel
701-751-8739
jmarkel@lightofchristschools.org

Toby Schweitzer
701-220-1507 (call or text)
tschweitzer@lightofchristschools.org



Light of Christ Catholic Schools

All monetary donations to Phase 1 of this Stability Initiative will be 100% matched - up to \$5 Million - through the generosity of Robert Franzen.

Bringing children to savor the wonders of the Real Presence

By Amanda Evinger
DCA Writer

When it comes to Catholic education, the young people in our diocese receive some of the finest there is available, because they receive Jesus, their eternal savior. Thankfully, many of our local Catholic educators understand that there is no authentic Catholic education without the presence of Christ, especially in the Most Holy Eucharist.

“The children who attend our school are given the gift to understand the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist at a very young age,” said Sr. Chiara Thérèse Jacobson, Atrium Catechist at Christ the King Catholic Montessori School in Mandan, and member of the Servants of the Children of Light. “This, of course, often begins with their parents. However, in the school, we begin by introducing the young children to the great mysteries of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The children come to understand the gestures of the Mass, the liturgical year and the mystery of the consecration, all which deepens in them the desire to receive Him in the Most Holy Eucharist.”

In a variety of ways, teachers at Christ the King School help bring the infallible teaching of the Real Presence of the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ in the Eucharist deep into the hearts, minds and souls of their students.

“We know that children desire true witnesses of the faith, and as a school community, we desire to be this for them; living witnesses that bear in mind the treasure we have every time we enter the church or receive Him in the Holy Eucharist,” Sr. Chiara commented. “The children are always welcome to make visits during the school day to Jesus in the church. We also have a specific time set aside each week for the older children to go to adoration, as well as for our weekly all-school Mass. The school Mass provides a beautiful moment for the children to come together as a school community and share a common love and reverence for Jesus.”

In the end, they find their efforts truly rewarding and inspiring.

“The children often comment on the peace and joy they feel after their time spent with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament,” Sr. Chiara said. “They recognize the font of fulfillment that they can only receive from Him. I can tell by the light in their eyes that His presence has become real and tangible to them.”

Further, preparing the children to receive their first sacraments is an essential aspect of Catholic education, and bringing them to savor the presence of Our Eucharistic Lord is its foundation.

“My most cherished moments with the children are preparing them to receive their first Holy Communion,” Sr. Chiara shared. “I desire to ignite in them the desire for Him and Him alone. This moment in the life of the children is a culmination of their preparation. They have come to know the love Jesus has for them, and they can hardly wait to receive Him in the Eucharist.

These moments spent together contemplating the mystery of His immense love for us, and how it is still realized in His Presence in the Holy Eucharist, imparts on the children a long-lasting desire to revere Him in this Most Holy Sacrament of the altar.”

According to Sr. Chiara, the ideal time to begin teaching children about the doctrine of the Real Presence is when they are very young.

“We know the immense value of parents simply taking their children with them to Mass every Sunday,” Sr. Chiara said. “If the gift of this knowledge is imparted at a young age, the child will naturally absorb this as part of their being; as part of the culture they have been born into. Allowing children to come to know and love Jesus in the Eucharist in an organic and harmonious fashion will leave an everlasting impression, not only in their mind but also in their soul.”

Because children are so open to the workings of God’s grace in their hearts, they can receive the truth about the wondrous mystery of the Eucharist in a profoundly refreshing way.

“We can never underestimate the gift of learning about the Eucharist will be for the rest of their lives; it will always help them know Who is the font and source of their joy and happiness, Who is the one to turn to in times of trial, and with Whom they can rejoice at the gifts the world imparts,” Sr. Chiara said.

In addition, for parents such as Bismarck residents, Brad and Christa Wiederholt, teaching their children about the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist fits perfectly into their homeschooling way of life. For 12 years, Brad and Christa have been teaching their children; Sam, 16; Gabriel, 13; Nicholas, 10; and Juliana, 6.

“We include into most of our school days something I call ‘family school,’” Christa explained. “During this time, we explore different subjects altogether. We do much of our religious education during this time and have many discussions about religious topics. I have loved how the older kids give reflections which the younger kids can learn from, as well as how



Submitted photos

Delia Wanner, age 4, working with the monstration material in the atrium at the Christ the King Catholic Montessori School in Mandan.



Rita Goettle, 11, and Ahriana Gonzalez, 12, praying in Christ the King adoration chapel.

the younger kids sometimes offer insights that the older kids learn from.”

Like the students at Catholic schools who attend Mass together with their classmates, the flexibility that homeschooling provides gives many families an opportunity to encounter the presence of Christ in a meaningful way at the sacrifice of the Mass attended together as a family.

“The main way we have taught the children about the Real Presence is by going to Mass regularly,” Christa said. “Since they were all babies, we have tried to get to at least one daily Mass each week. Daily Masses are shorter, so this has provided a good opportunity for training them to behave at Sunday Mass, as well as teach them about what is going on during Mass.”

Brad and Christa enjoy driving home the beautiful message of the true presence of Our Lord at the Masses they bring their children to. Sharing a love for Christ in the Holy Eucharist together unites them to their children in a powerful, ethereal way, like nothing else can.

“Whispering to them, ‘Jesus is here now,’ over and over during the Consecration helps them to understand this truth,” Christa said. “We also attend the Traditional Latin Mass once or twice a month, and our boys serve Mass there. Our boys also serve Mass frequently at the Cathedral, which gives them the opportunity to be with many different priests, deacons and seminarians. These men have all been such good examples to our children on their love for the Mass and for Jesus, truly present in the Eucharist.”

By bringing their children to spend time with Jesus humbly exposed in Eucharistic adoration regularly, they help them understand how much He really wants to be part of their lives. Sometimes it comes to leading children by our example to always seek Jesus.

“There was one summer when we had a one-hour break between baseball practices,” Christa recounted. “I took all the kids to Adoration during this time, fully geared up in their baseball uniforms. I think it taught them that Jesus is always available to us, even during baseball days. However, I believe the times Brad takes them to adoration has mattered the most. Having their dad lead by example teaches the boys what men do—they go to Jesus.”

Prayer for the spread of perpetual adoration

Heavenly Father, increase our faith in the Real Presence of Your Son Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist. We are obliged to adore Him, to give Him thanks and to make reparation for sins. We need your peace in our hearts and among nations. We need conversion from our sins and the mercy of Your forgiveness. May we obtain this through prayer and our union with the Eucharistic Lord. Please send down the Holy Spirit upon all peoples to give them the love, courage, strength and willingness to respond to the invitation to Eucharistic adoration. We beseech You to spread perpetual adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament in parishes around the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen. Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament, help us to spread the glory of Your Son through perpetual adoration. Amen.

– Pope St. John Paul II Eucharistic Adoration

Red Mass



Photos by Deacon Joe Krupinsky

Bishop Kagan celebrated the Red Mass on Oct. 3 at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit. This Mass celebrates with those involved in the administration of justice—judges, attorneys, law professors, law students and government officials.



Concelebrating priests at the Red Mass were (left to right): Msgr. Gene Lindemann, Fr. Chris Kadmas and Fr. Josh Ehli. All three priests are have licenses in canon law.

White Mass



Photos by Deacon Joe Krupinsky

The Bismarck Catholic Physicians Guild inducted new members at the White Mass held at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in October. This special Mass honors physicians and those involved in the medical field.



New members of the Catholic Physicians Guild signed the oath in the Cathedral sacristy in the presence of the group's chaplain, Msgr. Thomas Richter.



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

An invitation from the Bismarck-Mandan Serra Club

- Dec. 1 Fr. Jady Nelson
- Dec. 2 Deacon Randy Schmidt
- Dec. 3 Br. Louie Bachand, OSB
- Dec. 4 Sr. Stephanie Dolyniuk, OSB
- Dec. 5 Fr. Raphael Obotama
- Dec. 6 Deacon Kenneth Schmit
- Dec. 7 All Seminarians & Religious in Formation
- Dec. 8 Sr. Phoebe Schwartz, OSB
- Dec. 9 Seminarian Deacon Josh Hill
- Dec. 10 Fr. Patrick Ojedeji
- Dec. 11 Deacon Ervin Schneider
- Dec. 12 Fr. Anthony Baker, OSB
- Dec. 13 All Liturgical Ministers
- Dec. 14 Sr. Joseph Dukart, OSB
- Dec. 15 Seminarian Deacon Dustin Johns
- Dec. 16 Fr. John O'Leary
- Dec. 17 Deacon Doyle Schulz
- Dec. 18 Fr. Damien Dietlein, OSB
- Dec. 19 Sr. Krista Ferrell, OSB
- Dec. 20 Fr. Cas Paluck
- Dec. 21 Deacon Al Schwindt
- Dec. 22 All Lay Ministers
- Dec. 23 Bishop David Kagan
- Dec. 24 Fr. Christy Pathiala
- Dec. 25 Sr. Idelle Badt, OSB
- Dec. 26 Fr. John Pfeifer
- Dec. 27 Deacon Bob Stockert
- Dec. 28 Fr. Nicholas Erickson, OSB
- Dec. 29 Fr. Ken Phillips
- Dec. 30 Deacon Steve Streitz
- Dec. 31 Sr. Melissa Cote, OSB



Washington, D.C.

March for Life

Jan. 17-22, 2023

The March for Life pilgrimage provides an opportunity for youth to be a part of a national movement to defend a 2,000-year Catholic tradition of protecting life threatened by abortion. The trip will include participation in the annual March for Life in Washington, DC; local sightseeing and tours of museums and monuments.



Pilgrimage Cost

- \$350 - High School Youth (Grades 9-12)
- \$150 - Chaperones (21+)

*A non-refundable deposit of \$100 is due with registration. Cost includes transportation, lodging and all activities. Each participant will need to bring money for additional meals and some spending money.



Registration Deadline

December 16, 2022

For more information and to register visit bismarckdiocese.com/march or contact Ben Ottemoeller at bottemoeller@bismarckdiocese.com or 701-204-7208

Stewardship

RON SCHATZ



The Blessed Virgin Mary as our model of stewardship

During the Advent and Christmas seasons, we have several opportunities to reflect on and honor the Blessed Virgin Mary, who is not only the greatest saint in our Catholic family of faith, but the model of stewardship “par excellence.” Mary teaches us the meaning of stewardship through her own life witness.

On December 8, we celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, the conception of Mary in her mother’s womb without the stain of original sin. Pope Pius IX proclaimed this truth on December 8, 1854, that Mary’s preservation from original sin was a “singular grace and privilege” given her by God. In anticipation of what God did for all in Christ, she alone was preserved from original sin “from the first moment of her conception.”

On December 12, we celebrate Mary as Our Lady of Guadalupe. In 1531, she appeared to Juan Diego on a hill outside Mexico City. A life-size figure of the Virgin as a young, dark-skinned American Indian woman with the

face of a mestizo was imprinted on his cloak. The image gave the people of North and South America assurance that our Blessed Mother was loving and compassionate toward them.

On December 25, when we celebrate the Nativity of Our Lord, we celebrate the birth of Jesus through His mother, Mary. The Incarnation took place through Mary’s own flesh, and the infant Jesus was nourished by Mary’s own body.

On January 1, Mary is honored as the “Mother of God,” which is the greatest of her titles. This title is the foundation for every other title attributed to her as she became the mother of God from the instant Jesus was conceived in her womb by the power of the Holy Spirit.

In their pastoral letter, Stewardship: A Disciple’s Response, the U.S. Bishops urge us to look to Mary for a clear example of stewardship. “After Jesus,” they say, “it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who by her example most

perfectly teaches the meaning of discipleship and stewardship in their fullest sense. All these essential elements are found in her life: she was called and gifted by God; she responded generously, creatively and prudently; she understood her divinely assigned role as “handmaid” in terms of service and fidelity (see Luke 1:26-56). As the mother of God, her stewardship consisted of her maternal service and devotion to Jesus, from infancy to adulthood, up to the agonizing hours of Jesus’ death (John 19:25).

Mary, Mother of God, pray for us that we may also hear and answer, know and do the will of God in our daily lives, just like you have taught us to do by your loving stewardship examples.

Ron Schatz is the director of the diocesan Office of Stewardship and Resource Development. He has worked for the diocese for more than 31 years.



Photos by Deacon Joe Krupinsky

All Hallows’ Eve celebration

Families gathered at the Church of Saint Anne in Bismarck for the annual All Hallows’ Eve celebration on the vigil of the Solemnity of All Saints’ Day. Children dressed as their favorite saint and enjoyed food, fellowship, games and prizes.



Balancing Church & State

CHRISTOPHER DODSON



Encouraging legislators to make North Dakota a sanctuary for life

The United States Supreme Court decided the Dobbs case on June 24 of this year. The decision restored the ability of states to prohibit and regulate abortion. At the time I am writing this column, North Dakota’s laws banning abortion are still caught up in the courts.

As I have written before, however, banning abortion alone has never been the goal of the Catholic Church or the pro-life movement. Our goal is to create a society where abortion is unthinkable. We must, therefore, move forward with love-inspired action to make that happen.

It starts in our families, businesses, communities and churches. Catholic parishes across the state have taken action inspired by Walking with Moms in Need, a program launched by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) that encourages parishes to support local pregnancy centers and provide resources to pregnant and parenting women.

The USCCB also called on Congress to enact legislation that reflects a “radical solidarity” with mothers, babies (born and unborn) and families. Its recommendations include labor protections for pregnant and nursing women, support for pregnancy resource centers, the Child Tax Credit, parental leave policies, adoption support and an end to marriage penalties.

The North Dakota legislature, which reconvenes in January, must also move forward with legislation reflecting our love for all pregnant women, their children, new

mothers and families.

The North Dakota Catholic Conference makes the following proposals for the next legislative session:

- Expand the Alternatives to Abortion program. This program provides limited funding to pregnancy centers, adoption agencies and maternity homes. Currently, the program only provides assistance to women who are pregnant or think they are pregnant. It does not cover women after they give birth or their infants. The program also does not cover health care services, such as ultrasounds. The legislature should fix both of these omissions and greatly increase the program’s funding. Compared to other programs in the state, the program is substantially underfunded.
- Enact a sales tax exemption for infant diapers. Did you know that adult diapers are exempt from sales tax in North Dakota, but not infant diapers? Both South Dakota and Minnesota do not tax infant diapers. North Dakota should do the same.
- Provide a child car seat sales tax exemption. Like diapers, child car seats are a necessary item. Other states have signaled their support for children and families by enacting a child car seat sales tax exemption. For safety and children, North Dakota should do the same.
- Give protection to pregnant workers. North Dakota law requires employers to provide

reasonable accommodations to pregnant workers. For some reason, however, the law does not provide similar protections for conditions related to childbirth or miscarriage.

- Establish a life resources website. North Dakota should have a one-stop site with links to pregnancy centers, adoption agencies, maternity homes, government programs and other resources. South Dakota launched one immediately after Dobbs.
- Update the Medicaid program. During the 2021 special session, the legislature chose to provide coverage to postpartum women for 12 months. The legislation, however, expires next July. The legislature should make the care permanent. The state should also make a small adjustment in the program to ensure that legal residents who are not yet citizens—at least those who are pregnant—receive needed coverage. After all, their unborn children will be citizens at birth. We should ensure that they receive health care before birth.
- Make adjustments to the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program. This program assists the poorest pregnant women and families. But it does not provide help until the mother is in her third trimester. The program also penalizes large families. The state should remove these incentives to seek an abortion.
- Create a tax credit for donations to pregnancy centers, maternity

homes and adoption agencies. The state should encourage charitable contributions to these organizations that comprise an important part of the culture of life.

- Restore the adoption tax credit. For years, North Dakota provided a tax credit to individuals who adopted children. The credit disappeared in 2009 as part of a rewrite of the tax code. Now is the time to restore it.
- Cover the cost of an adoption home inspection. Another way we can reduce the cost of adoption is to have the state cover a part of the adoption process that it requires, such as the required home inspection. This is an unfunded mandate that falls on the adoption agencies like Catholic Charities, which must either pass on the cost to adopting parents or find the money elsewhere.

This list is not exclusive. The conference encourages legislators to tackle other issues that impact pregnant women, unborn children and families, such as the childcare crisis in the state and any tax marriage penalties. Some issues could be addressed in other ways. We hope, however, that the list provides an essential foundation for the state’s contribution to making North Dakota a sanctuary for life.

■ 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.

Questions

I was afraid to ask

FR. JASON SIGNALNESS



Q: Can praying to the saints really help?

A: Can burying a St. Joseph statue in my yard really help me sell my house? Or does St. Anthony really help me find my lost keys?

In short, yes. But the saints are not magic. People tend to invoke them in ways that are rather superstitious. If someone thinks, for example, that they are guaranteed to sell their home because they’ve buried a statue of St. Joseph upside down, facing the house, underneath the for-sale sign, they are mistaken.

Our belief in the communion of saints and the reality of heaven implies that we can continue to ask the most faithful of Christians to pray for us, even after death, from their places in heaven. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes, the saints “do not cease to intercede with the Father for us, as they proffer the merits acquired on earth through the one mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus. ... So by their fraternal concern is our weakness greatly helped” (CCC 956). Christians pray for one another all the time, and that doesn’t end when we die.

As St. James wrote, “the fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful,” and the saints are certainly righteous, having been made so by God’s grace and their cooperation with it. Thus, their prayers are powerful. As an example, James cited Elijah, saying he was “a human being like us; yet he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain upon the land. Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit”

(James 5:16-18). Revelation likewise describes many holy saints and angels in the Lord’s heavenly throne room, presenting the prayers of the holy ones still on earth, like incense, up to the Lord (Revelation 5:8; 8:3-4). This shows us that, according to Scripture, we can and should seek the help of saints through prayer.

In addition to this scriptural evidence, we have the witness of saints who came later. While he was dying, St. Dominic is reported to have said to his brothers, “Do not weep, for I shall be more useful to you after my death, and I shall help you then more effectively than during my life.” Saint Thérèse of Lisieux once said, “I want to spend my heaven in doing good on earth,” and many Catholics report that prayers offered to St. Thérèse have, indeed, been answered in a clear manner.

So, yes, the saints can and do help us. But why ask St. Anthony for help with lost things? As the story goes, Anthony was teaching using a Book of the Psalms which he had copied by hand. The book contained his own commentary and was very important to him and his work. One of his pupils, however, stole the book and disappeared with it. Anthony turned to God in prayer, asking that the pupil would be found and have a change of heart, which is exactly what happened. This incident led to Anthony’s reputation as someone who could find a lost item. We can ask any saint for help in finding lost things, but this has become one of St. Anthony’s specialties.

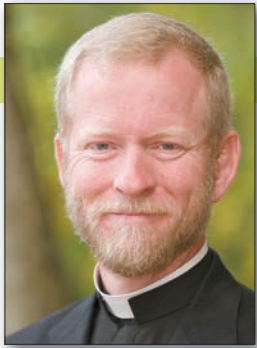
But why ask Joseph for help in selling a home? During his earthly life, Joseph had the important task of providing a home for the Holy Family. As such, he seems like the natural one to turn to when we are trying to sell our homes. Many people do report success in selling and purchasing houses after their prayers to Joseph.

Just please, don’t bury his statue in the yard! And as we do with all of our prayers, we trust that God will provide for the best outcome.

■ Fr. Signalness is pastor of Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in Stanley and St. Ann in Berthold. If you have a question you were afraid to ask, now is the time to ask it! Simply email your question to info@bismarckdiocese.com with the “Question Afraid to Ask” in the subject line.

Making Sense out of Bioethics

FR. TAD PACHOLCZYK



Seeking the spiritual side of dementia

The possibility of suffering from dementia later in life is a worrisome and unpleasant prospect for many of us. Most people I know would like to remain in possession of their mental faculties until the end. Stephen Post, Director of the Center for Medical Humanities, Compassionate Care and Bioethics at Stonybrook University describes it this way:

“The leading symptoms of dementia are, frankly, terrifying: loss of memory, of language, and of reasoning ability. We all feel at least a slight anxiety about dementia because these dreaded symptoms seem to assault our very identities, to dissolve the autobiographical narratives that constitute the very story of our lives.”

The dreaded symptoms of dementia may lead to spiritual temptations. The prospect of losing autonomy and control can lead some to despair and even attempt suicide.

What can we say about the meaning of a life-changing reality like dementia for ourselves and our loved ones? Could it be that God is seeking to carry out a particular spiritual work?

For some who face dementia, it can have the effect of getting them off the treadmill and detaching them from those aspects of their lives that may be binding them, whether it’s work and career, hobbies or pastimes, or something else that may be drawing them away from a needed spiritual focus.

In one of his articles, Stephen Post mentions Peter, who through his struggle with a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s, experienced a spiritual reawakening and encountered the Lord’s grace:

“I’d say, ‘Why did you let this happen to me? I had such a good career. Everything was going fine for me.’ He would say to me probably,

‘Well, why did you fight it? I was trying to lead you in this direction.’ Oh, I didn’t realize that. Well, I’ve come to the conclusion that everything has a purpose, so the Good Lord, He knows the best for you. So maybe this was to slow me down to enjoy life and to enjoy my family and to enjoy what’s out there. And right now, I can say that I’m a better person for it, in appreciation of other people’s needs and illnesses, than I ever was when I was working that rat race back and forth day to day.”

It can be very hard for a family, especially a spouse, to watch the slow destruction of a loved one’s faculties. At times, the person suffering from dementia can become so frustrated they are aggressive towards those around them. There is need for a great deal of patience and spiritual and social support in these situations.

The lives of caregivers tend to be upended and changed profoundly by caring for a family member, relative or friend with dementia, and the generous love they share is itself often sustained by faith in God. As caregivers watch their loved ones with “deep forgetfulness” disengage from the people around them, and from other previously important reference points in their lives, they also witness the emergence of an unmistakable simplicity in those they care for.

In a 2010 essay, Mary Anne Moresco beautifully sums up her dad’s and her family’s transformative spiritual journey this way:

“My 83-year-old father has dementia. He can remember things that happened a lifetime ago like it was yesterday, but he often can’t remember yesterday at all... My father needs this time in life. And we, his children, need it too. We need to glimpse into his past days, as he journeys backward. We need to show him

love, as best as we can. We need to offer up our prayers for him. This time is useful. It is valuable. For everything there is a season, and this winter season of my father’s life is part of what will help guide his soul into eternity. Dad, through his dementia is working out his salvation. He isn’t doing that the way his children wanted him to do it. He isn’t doing that the way he wanted to do it. He is doing it the way God has deemed that he must do it. ‘...unless you become like little children, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.’ (Matt: 18:3)... With each passing month, my father grows more humble and more childlike, more dependent and more trusting and I do not doubt, closer to our Lord and to Heaven.”

As the symptoms and complications of dementia unfold, the challenges we face from the disease can unexpectedly become an invitation from God. Although dementia can contribute to spiritual growth, it almost always involves a great deal of suffering for all concerned, and the challenges should not be underestimated. Such moments, nevertheless, offer important opportunities to grow in grace, to slow down, to reevaluate our priorities and to enter into a more profound relationship with Him who is our final destination and abiding hope.

■ 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

Ag Attitudes

JAMES ODERMANN



Sleepless nights can create concerns about commitment

It was 3 a.m. and what was I doing up, peering out at the first snow for the winter? Snow was accumulating, the wind was blowing and I shuddered to think that this was just the beginning of challenges for the next six months.

As I briefly watched the snow whipped around by wind gusts exceeding 40 MPH, I wandered back to the warmth of the covers and tried to “look at the back of my eyelids,” as somebody loquaciously named sleep.

Yet, I was unsettled, worrying about the newly weaned pen of calves. Why this weather? Why this week for fall weaning? Was the feed inventory going to be compromised because of this early snow?

My mind was certainly not at rest. I thought about Qoheleth from the book of Ecclesiastes (from the first reading from the 18th Sunday in Ordinary Time) and recalled the use of the word “vanity.” I remembered Ecclesiastes is about search for contentment, which never is achieved.

It occurred to me as I tried to get back to sleep, my mind drove me down a deeper dark hole. I was overtaken by a worldly vision that was obscuring my sensibilities.

I worried about things far beyond my control as a trance encircled my thoughts. I could not let go. I was being vain, worrying instead of resting.

Like any vocation, there are many situations that present challenges. The issue, as I have learned, is how I deal with the trials of life.

For starters, I have learned God calls me to use my talents to help my sisters and brothers. As I lay hoping to get some sleep, I recalled the names of people who have been hurt by me. These pains could have been actions—or lack of actions.

I recalled words from the Confiteor “. . . in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done, and in what I have failed to do . . .” God is always covering my back. Do I accept and welcome God to be the guiding force in my life?

I pondered further. How many times have I failed to support others through my thoughts, words and actions? Have I been too “vain” to be true to God by not supporting my sisters and brothers?

Do I help as Jesus helped? Am I focused on using the Holy Spirit’s grace?

I pray for the sense to let go and step aside, to be an encouraging

voice for all and find the good in all. 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).

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>



November 29 - December 1, 2022

Donations up to \$25,000 of each diocese matched 1:1

What is it?
An annual, joint fundraising event for the Diocese of Bismarck and the Diocese of Fargo, giving all Catholics in North Dakota an opportunity to support their favorite Catholic organizations and charities over three days.

How does it work?
Go to GiveNDCatholic.com to choose a Catholic organization, ministry or charity selected by each diocese. Bishop John T. Folda and Bishop David D. Kagan have selected the Catholic organizations and charities they want highlighted for this #GiveNDCatholic event.

Why?
This event helps kick off the charitable season, promotes year-end giving, and brings the North Dakota Catholic Community together to give thanks for all the blessings God has blessed them with and an opportunity to share their blessings with good Catholic organizations and charities.

What Catholic organizations and charities has Bishop Kagan selected for this year's event?

- Priest Retirement Fund
- Diocesan Office of Respect Life
- Catholic Schools



GiveNDCatholic.com

Office of Respect Life



The Office of Respect Life provides resources and support for difficult matters, such as pregnancy, single parenting, infant loss and miscarriage, infertility, prenatal diagnoses, after-abortion care, pornography use, sexual addiction, same-sex attraction, and gender ideology. Resources on bioethics, end-of-life care and relationship building are also provided. Some of the ministries, programs and support available from the Office of Respect Life are:

- A Clean Heart
- Courage
- EnCourage
- Hannah's Hope
- Max's Mission
- Walking With Moms in Need
- Rachel's Vineyard Retreats
- Mass of Thanksgiving
- ND March for Life
- Multiple methods of natural family planning and cycle awareness
- Videos, websites and other resources

Priest Retirement Fund



One of the greatest strengths of our diocese is the number of priests who have dedicated their lives to God and to the faithful people of western North Dakota. Our priests have baptized us, educated us, provided parish leadership, preached the Gospel, witnessed our marriages and buried our loved ones. As they grow older, they often face many years of retirement without a family to help care for them. They gave up family to serve us, so we must now come forward to care for them in their retirement years.

The Diocese of Bismarck has a Priest Retirement Fund. The official name, the Priest Benefit Association (PBA), is a defined benefit retirement plan covering all the retired priests in the diocese.

Currently, we have 12 retired priests. A total of 285 priests and bishops who have all passed away had also received retirement funds from the PBA.

The PBA is governed by a board of trustees who are all clergy. Over the years, the trustees have diligently strived to keep the retiree benefits at a level consistent with what was earned as an active priest. Annually, premiums are paid by the diocese and all the parishes to support the retirement fund. The board of trustees uses professional investment managers to invest their funds. The PBA has an annual audit by an outside accounting firm and every other year an actuary provides a valuation to make certain funding is on track to adequately cover the current retirees and all future retirees.

Catholic Schools

Over 3,122 students!
Teachers: Religious Sisters (7), Priests (8) & Lay People (227)
Secondary Schools: Bismarck, Dickinson, Mandan & Minot
Elementary Schools: Bismarck (3), Dickinson (3), Fort Yates, Mandan (2), Minot & Williston

Not every family lives close to a Catholic school but for those that do, when parents choose a Catholic school for their child, they are making a big decision. They could get a free education at the local public school, but something very important would be missing—God. For Catholic school parents, sacrifices they make to send their child to Catholic school are well worth it because the benefits truly last a lifetime!

Did you know: 14 of our new priests in the past 10 years received their primary education while attending one of our Catholic schools!

