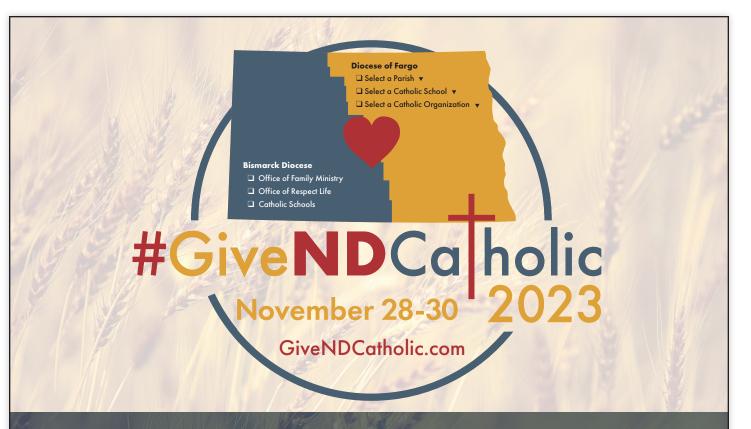


# Dakota Catholic Action

Vol. 82 No. 11 **DECEMBER 2023** 



**ADVENT WAITING:** THE BIRTH OF A LIVING HOPE



#### What is it?

An annual fundraising event for the Catholic parishioners in the Bismarck Diocese, giving all Catholics an opportunity to support their favorite Catholic ministries over three days.

#### How does it work?

Anyone can click on the #GiveNDCatholic website link which will show them the different Catholic ministries highlighted by the Bismarck Diocese. Bishop David D. Kagan has selected the Catholic ministries he wants to highlight this year for our #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.

Donations up to \$25,000 for each diocese will be matched 1:1

For more information, contact:



Bismarck Diocese rschatz@bismarckdiocese.com



Fargo Diocese steve.schons@fargodiocese.org 701-356-7926

Make your donation November 28-30 by visiting:

GiveNDCatholic.com

#### **IN THIS ISSUE**

#### **Reporting on Catholic Action** In Western ND Since 1941

#### **SEASON OF WAITING**

Advent novena helps us understand the beauty of waiting for Our Lord By Sonia Mullally

#### LOCAL CATHOLIC MEDIA COMPANY

Stand Firm Productions shares home grown inspiration By Patti Armstrong

- **GOLD MASS 2023**
- **ALL SAINTS' DAY**

#### TRUE CHRISTIAN WOMANHOOD

Program offers fertility education for mothers and daughters By Sonia Mullally

**OBITUARIES** 

Sister Mary Eugene Braun, SSND Sister Mary Alene Kuhn, SSND

- LOCAL CHARITABLE OPPORTUNITY
  - Catholic online giving event Nov. 28-30
- **CELEBRATING 50 YEARS AS SSND** 22 **ASSUMPTION ABBEY MONKS ELECT NEW ABBOT**
- **NEW LEADER FOR ND CATHOLIC CONFERENCE** 23

Bishops appoint Dr. David Tamisiea as new executive director



ON THE COVER: The outdoor nativity scene at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit reminds us of the beauty of waiting for Jesus' birth.



PAGE 8: Four local men have started a Catholic production company.



# 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 - Bismarck Diocese 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 Bismarck Diocese,

PO Box 1575, Bismarck, ND 58502-1575.

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

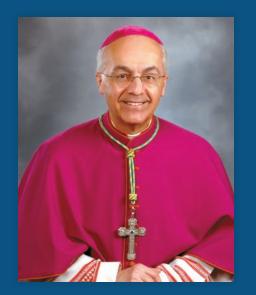
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to address below.

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.

Dakota Catholic Action | 3

www.bismarckdiocese.com



#### FROM THE BISHOP

# Aze this time to prepare for Him in Advent

#### **Bishop** David D. Kagan

It is hard to believe that we are entering December and the Catholic Church's new year of grace and favor from the Lord, the season of Advent. It seems that this last year has sped by so quickly!

Last Sunday, Nov. 26, we celebrated the Solemnity of Christ the King, and we began the last full week of our last year of grace and favor from the Lord. Recalling the Gospel for this last Sunday, it is at once both sobering and consoling. Jesus makes it clear that He is the just judge of all, and He even tells us how He will judge each of us. That's the sobering part because we all fall short in one way or another. That He is our judge is the consoling part. He is merciful to all who seek His mercy and make the daily effort to do good and avoid evil. Hopefully, that is what we are doing now.

Advent as a penitential season is such because it is a time of preparation for the just and merciful judgment of Jesus upon us. Yes, Advent recalls the four thousand years of waiting for the Messiah, Our Savior, but it also directs our attention to Our Savior's return and His judgment. That is why our Advent season is supposed to be a penitential preparation of our hearts, minds, bodies and souls to finally see Jesus and make a gift of our lives to Him.

Unfortunately, many other nice but mostly secular things compete with our penitential preparation in Advent for our attention. While these other things are not bad in themselves, if we are serious about Advent, we should not let them interfere with our preparation for His birth. Advent is the great season of hope. Because God became man out of love for us and for no other reason than to redeem us from slavery to sin, we have the sure and certain hope of heaven if we surrender ourselves to Him and follow Him in our lives. To follow Jesus is to be an imitator of Jesus. Advent gives us the best opportunity to do this and to make His life our life.

If it seems that this year has passed too quickly, that must mean that we are not fully prepared for the Lord Jesus. However, He gives us the time now to prepare for Him in Advent. Let us use these few weeks in December to do just that.

May your Advent be a time of abundant blessings and may all of you have a most Blessed and Merry Christmas and a Happy and Holy New Year! †

## BISHOP IN ACTION



Photo by Mike McCleary, University of Mary: Bishop Kagan celebrated the Gold Mass at the Annunciation Chapel on the campus of the University of Mary on Nov. 8. For more photos of this Mass, see page 11.



Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for December FOR PERSONS WITH

## FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

#### BISHOP'S **SCHEDULE**

#### **DECEMBER 2023**

Dec. 5	Real Presence Radio Banquet, Bismarck Event Center, 5:30 p.m.
Dec. 6	North Dakota Catholic Conference Meeting, St. James Basilica, Jamestown, 9:30 a.m.
Dec. 7	Annual Visit and Mass at the University of Mary, Bismarck, 4:30 p.m.
Dec. 10	Confirmation, Pro-Cathedral of St. Mary, Bismarck, 2 p.m.
Dec. 11	Visit to Pro-Cathedral of St. Mary, Bismarck, 5 p.m.
Dec. 14	Real Presence Radio Interview, 9 a.m.
Dec. 14	Parish Expansion Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 11 a.m.
Dec. 15	Home On The Range Board of Directors Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 12 p.m.
Dec. 17	Installation Mass for Fr. Brandon Wolf, Church of St. Patrick, Dickinson, 10 a.m. MT

Serra Club Christmas Gathering, Municipal Country Club, Bismarck, 12 p.m.

Christmas Eve Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, 10 p.m.

Christmas Mass at N.D. State Penitentiary, Bismarck, 8 a.m.

4 Dakota Catholic Action December 2023 www.bismarckdiocese.com Dakota Catholic Action 5

Dec. 23

Dec. 24

Dec. 25

#### SEASON OF WAITING

# Advent novena helps us understand the beauty of waiting for Our Lord

## Sonia Mullally DCA Editor

As children, we recall the anticipation of waiting for Christmas. We remember longing for that magical morning when we could race to the living room to open our presents under the tree.

However, many of us never understood the "proper" way to wait for Christmas. The Advent novena from December 14 through December 22 at Bismarck's Church of Saint Anne might just help us wait for the Lord in a special way that we've never done before.

Priests at Saint Anne's, Frs. Kregg Hochhalter and Paul Gardner, were discussing ways to increase the right living of Advent in the parish setting when they decided on the idea of an Advent novena. Both men had experienced such a novena during seminary formation.

"In our parishes, we are telling people not to start the Christmas season too early but not giving them ways to live this out. It's our role as priests to lead the faithful toward the truth, beauty and wonder behind the season of Advent—the season of waiting for our Lord," said Fr. Hochhalter.

The Latin root of the word Advent means "coming." For four Sundays before Christmas, we capture both the longing and the hope for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ. What often happens, however, is that we are in such a rush to get to Christmas that we tend to skip right over the waiting part during the busy time of preparation.

Father Hochhalter's intention is that the nine days of the Advent novena help those who attend to appreciate and love that waiting period instead of wishing it away.

"Our hope is that this time will bring out in ourselves and in the people who we serve, the beauty of waiting—a holy waiting. When both Fr. Paul and I have done this novena in the past, it grew in us this idea of holy waiting in our hearts. It's a way to focus our hearts on waiting for the birth of our Lord in an intentional way."

Each night will begin at 7 p.m. and run approximately an hour. Antiphonal singing or chant (back and forth between a choir and a congregation), reading from the Old Testament, a homily and a time for meditation completes the novena over nine days. Each of the nine evenings will feature a different priest from the Bismarck-Mandan area as the homilist.

Featured homilists

Father Paul Gardner, parochial vicar at the Church of Saint Anne, will lead off the novena on night one on Thursday, Dec. 14. The following nights are Dec. 15 - Fr. Russ Kovash, Dec. 16 - Fr. Josh Waltz, Dec. 17 - Fr. Steven Vetter, Dec. 18 - Fr. Jeff Zwack, Dec. 19 - Fr. Josh Ehli, Dec. 20 - Msgr. Patrick Schumacher, Dec. 21 - Fr. Jared Johnson and Dec. 22 - Fr. Kregg Hochhalter.



On the Friday nights, Dec. 15 and Dec. 22, there will be refreshments afterwards to bring in the fellowship aspect and community of faith.

"Hearing from a different priest each night adds to the value in giving those in attendance a different perspective," Fr. Hochhalter said.

Father added, "How do we live Advent well and with a tone of waiting? There's a handful of saints out there who have written about this and how to live Advent. It's not like Lent. There are all kinds of writings on Lent, and I think we do that season well, but Advent is very different. It's shorter, right next to Christmas. People are busy, the weather is harsh. We want to give people a chance to rest in this season and learn how to wait for the Lord."

It's easy to see why we need to wait, but the "how-to" is maybe more difficult for the faithful to understand.

Father Hochhalter noted, "How do we wait in a holy way? Advent is the very life of Mary and Joseph. It was their life—waiting for the Lord to come. Here's

our chance to model ourselves after the two holiest saints we know. How do we model our Advent of waiting after them?"

If you go

The novena event will be held in the main body of the Church of Saint Anne in Bismarck. All are welcome to attend one evening, all nine or as many as possible. There will be a worship aid to accompany each night and other "take-home" materials to aid with people's experience.

For those far away or if scheduling is an issue, the novena will be livestreamed each night via the parish website at stannesbismarck.org.

"All are invited to attend. We want people, far beyond the boundaries of Saint Anne's, to feel welcome," Fr. Hochhalter said. "It's all about helping people do Advent well. And, if we do Advent well, then our Christmas will be that much more enhanced." †

#### LOCAL CATHOLIC MEDIA COMPANY

# Stand Firm Productions shares home grown inspiration

## Patti Armstrong DCA Writer

It's a story for our times—four bright and creative, young, local men, Ben Weisbeck, Cole Gendreau, Mark Dever and Jake Olson, start a media production company together. But it soon grew into a story of faith.

"Let's make it a Catholic media company," Gendreau suggested to Weisbeck over the phone one evening. It would mean dropping everything they had been working towards for months to change direction.

"As soon as he told me the idea, I was on board," Weisbeck said. "I knew that was our calling." They shared the idea with Dever, who also immediately felt called to it and a fourth friend, Olson became part of the group. Thus, was born Stand Firm Productions, named for the Scripture passage: "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. Your every act should be done with love" (Cor 16 13-14).

In an interview at their studio— a spacious garage in Bismarck— Weisbeck and Dever talked about their mission and how things have gained momentum very quickly.

"With the amount of vocations and the treasure of so many great minds here," Weisbeck said, "we realized that we could create a platform to bring great Catholic speaking to others. They are like *Ted Talks*. Our first one was with Father [Josh] Waltz."

They explained that in just six months, Stand Firm Productions published 23 podcasts and 55



Submitted photos: The crew from Stand Firm Productions takes care of set up for a past episode with Fr. Josh Waltz.

shorter form videos with power-packed messages and amassed over 2.7 million views across several social media spaces including Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter).

The video of Bishop Austin Vetter, a North Dakota native serving as Bishop of Helena, Montana, has over 739k views. He did an interview when he was in town this past spring for his nephew Father Steven Vetter's ordination. In his talk, *Truly Connecting With People & Visiting the Imprisoned*, he shares poignant stories and tells people to go deeper in faith and desire to save souls or otherwise Jesus is not real to us. "He doesn't take the mess away," Bishop Vetter explained, "He enters it."

One of Fr. Josh Waltz's talks with a quarter of a million views includes reflections on prayer during



The creators of Stand Firm Productions (l-r) Ben Weisbeck, Mark Dever, Cole Gendreau and Jakob Olson with Bishop Austin Vetter (center)

# "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. Your every act should be done with love" (Cor 16 13-14).

a 30-day silent retreat in seminary. Considering the lure of the world, Fr. Waltz told God that he has a terrible sales pitch. Then, he heard God's response: "Mine isn't a sales pitch; mine is the truth."

Titles and talks are intriguing. In *Politicians Will Not Save You*, Fr. Dominic Bouck addresses people's outrage at politicians. "What? You can't believe politicians are corrupt? What Bible have you read? They won't save you and they also won't destroy you."

Fr. Josh Ehli in *Distracted in Prayer* says, "I want to write a book on it: 'Distraction in Prayer: the greatest thing that could have ever happened to me."

Stand Firm Productions will soon include *Handmaiden of the Home*, with Sarah Merck, a wife and mother and owner of Root & Bloom photography in Minot. Her interviews will feature women in the world living their faith. Another, "7-Mile Study" with Sam Breen, will connect the Old and New Testament with the Catholic Catechism.

They are also working on a documentary recounting the miraculous recovery of Lance Goetz after being hit by a train in 1998, shortly before his graduation from St. Mary's Central High School. Goetz had left his parent's farm in Sterling, headed to Bismarck to play basketball with friends. He never saw the train coming due to no warning signal and a blinding sun.

#### "It's the Holy Spirit guiding us," Weisbeck said. "God is using our gifts to spread the Gospel which is what we are called to do."

Goetz was ejected from his car and landed on the side of the road, torn to shreds.

"He should be dead," Weisbeck explained. "His mom said he was like a jigsaw puzzle with fingers and legs just hanging on by skin." A neighbor called 9-1-1. No one expected him to make it alive to the hospital. When he did, survival still seemed impossible even after he received enough blood for three people because he kept losing so much."

"The first night in the hospital, essentially his entire class of St. Mary's packed the chapel at St. Alexius Medical Center praying for him," Weisbeck said. "The prayers were unending. They'd be praying and get messages from doctors convinced something divine was at work."

Goetz, who is married with two daughters and teaching in Mandan, shared that telling his story is difficult, but he believes in the mission of Stand Tall Productions to spread the message of Jesus Christ.

"Jesus is a big part of my story," Goetz said. "So many have told me how my story has helped them, that I have to believe it should be shared, even if I do not like the spotlight. I see Stand Firm as a source for those who may be downtrodden, suffering or need to see something spiritually uplifting to fuel the spirit."

Weisbeck, commenting on the documentary said, "We could have a priest tell us that suffering redeems us but when you have someone who has suffered more than you can imagine, it bears a different message."

"It's been rewarding to see how much it [Stand Firm Productions] is impacting people," Weisbeck said. "Some of the local Catholic schools have been using the videos in classes. What has occurred in the last five months, we are all blown away by. We didn't



The crew working behind the scenes for the Handmaiden of the Home podcast.

expect to get two million views in such a short time. People are hungry for it and seeking it."

"We are still new and have a million more ideas," Dever said, "but we need to narrow the focus as we diversify." He explained that they will soon offer merchandise on their website including t-shirts and rosaries. There is also a support page on their website where people can donate to help them with expenses as they grow.

"This is bigger than ourselves," Dever said. "When you think that Bishop Vetter's video has 46,000 people who liked it and 920 comments, you never know who you are going to impact."

"It's the Holy Spirit guiding us," Weisbeck said. "God is using our gifts to spread the Gospel which is what we are called to do."

To learn more, go to StandFirmProductions.com and follow them on social media. †



#### **GOLD MASS 2023**

Photos by Mike McCleary, University of Mary

Bishop Kagan celebrated the Gold Mass at the Annunciation Chapel on the campus of the University of Mary on Nov. 8.

Pope St. John Paul II wrote, "Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes. Each can draw the other into a wider world, a world in which both can flourish."

These two mere sentences by this great saint uniting the two worlds of science and religion are contrary to what many people think are at odds. His words, in a letter to the director of the Vatican Observatory in 1988, gave way to the creation of a group of American Catholics to form the Society of Catholic Scientists. The Gold Mass was started by this society.



The Gold Mass, which follows in the tradition of special Masses for members of different professions, was selected because gold is the color of the hoods worn by individuals graduating with a Ph.D. in science. It is also the color associated with the patron saint of scientists St. Albert the Great, whose feast day is Nov. 15.

Bishop Kagan celebrated the first-ever Gold Mass at the University of Mary in 2018. †







#### **ALL SAINTS' DAY**

#### **NOVEMBER 1**

#### Photos by: Deacon Joe Krupinsky/Submitted Photos

Children from across the diocese participated in festivals for All Saints' Day.







Church of Saint Anne, Bismarck



Church of Saint Anne, Bismarck



Church of Saint Anne, Bismarck



Church of Saint Anne, Bismarck



Children from the Church of Saint Anne in Bismarck dressed as their favorite saint for the festival of fun and games after Mass.



Children at Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in Stanley at All Saints Day Mass dressed up as saints, with coordinating efforts by Elonda Davidson, parish director of religious education.

Brother/sister duo, Serafina Beehler and Nathan Torres, were dressed as famous brother/sister duo St. Benedict and St. Scholastica at Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in Stanley.



Church of Saint Anne, Bismarck





At the All Saints' Day festival at St. Joseph's School in Williston, Fr. Ben Wanner, dressed as St. Peter, welcomed students to "heaven."

#### TRUE CHRISTIAN WOMANHOOD

# Program offers fertility education for mothers and daughters

## Sonia Mullally DCA Editor

One of the many challenges that parents face is equipping their children with the knowledge on a wide range of topics that will prepare them for adult life.

The true meaning of sexuality and what our faith teaches us about this aspect of life is one of those areas where parents might struggle to find resources. No doubt, it's a sensitive subject for both parents and children to approach.

The diocesan Office of Family Ministry is offering guidance to parents with a program called "Cherry Blossom Buds." The cycle awareness and charting system is designed for girls who have begun to show outward signs of puberty but have not yet begun to menstruate and continues as the girl matures into womanhood. The program corresponds to the chastity education outlined in the Pontifical Council for the Family's document, The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality.

"One of the benefits of Cherry Blossom Buds is the education of God's gift of fertility, what true womanhood is, and the importance of chastity," offered the diocesan Director of the Office of Family Ministry, Amanda Jensen. "The mother is supported in the immense and important task of educating and forming her daughter according to the beauty of God's plan. Her daughter learns about her reproductive life, including more than charting the signs and symptoms of the menstrual cycle, to help her understand how her body works and assure her own reproductive health."

Three programs are offered, each designed for a unique stage in the development of the adolescent cycle. They include "Blossom" (for girls awaiting their first menstrual cycle), "Bloom" (for girls ages 11-15) and, currently in development, "Beauty Revealed" (for young women ages 16-22).

"Cherry Blossom Buds offers three age-appropriate programs for the daughter in her journey through adolescence to maturity, starting while she is awaiting her first menstrual cycle," Jensen said. "The main teacher and guide of the program to the daughter is the mother, as the Cherry Blossom Buds instructor walks alongside her on educating her daughter. This allows the mother to introduce and teach the topics according to her daughter's understanding and ability."

# Origin of the program

The Cherry Blossom Buds program was started by Kelly Donahue, an author, certified Natural Family Planning instructor since 2010 and holder of a bachelor's degree in theology from Franciscan "One of the benefits of Cherry Blossom Buds is the education of God's gift of fertility, what true womanhood is, and the importance of chastity," offered the diocesan Director of the Office of Family Ministry, Amanda Jensen.

University. She's also a certified health coach, wife and mother. The New Orleans resident was inspired to share the ministry aimed at helping girls discover the beauty of the feminine design as a gift from God.

## More information

Mothers can teach aspects of the Cherry Blossom Buds program (depending on what program fits the stage of development) to their daughters at home or mothers and daughters can attend a seminar together, if available.

Currently, the Bismarck Diocese offers only the Bloom program, for girls ages 11-15, and their mothers. Bloom offers three options—home instruction (\$75 per mother-daughter pair), in which the mother teaches her daughter in the privacy of their home after sessions with the instructor; cycle awareness seminar (\$125 per mother-daughter pair), in which the instructor teaches a group in a classroom type



setting; and private instruction (\$200 per mother-daughter pair), which is taught privately by the instructor. Registration cost includes the sessions, consults and materials. To register for Bloom, visit bismarckdiocese.com/cbb.

To register for the Blossom or Beauty Revealed programs, visit cherryblossombuds.com. †



Servant of God

# Michelle Christine DUPPONG

Jan 25, 1984 - Dec 25, 2015

A laywoman who dedicated her life to evangelization and showed Jesus to others while suffering with cancer Jesus, I praise and thank You for the life of Your servant
Michelle Duppong. In her life and suffering, she joined You in Your thirst for souls and embraced the cross offered to her.
Following her example, I ask for the special grace of... and, if it brings You greater glory, that she be honored by Your Church.
Jesus, I ask this in Your Holy Name.
Amen.

With ecclesiastical approval of Bishop David D. Kagan Diocese of Bismarck, North Dakota

Please report any special favors granted to duppongcause@bismarckdiocese.com

## Sixter Mary Eugene Braun, SSMD

Sister Mary Eugene Braun, SSND, died at age 97 on January 21, 2023, at Benedictine Living Community in Shakopee, Minn. Sister Mary Eugene (Helen Braun) was born August 22, 1926, on the family farm northwest of Schefield, N.D.



She entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Mankato in 1942 and professed first vows in 1945. She served as a homemaker in several convents and schools in North Dakota and Minnesota. Her years of service in North Dakota were at St. Mary's in New England, at SS. Peter & Paul in Mantador, and in her home parish of St. Pius in Schefield. In 1966, she moved to the Our Lady of Good Counsel motherhouse in Mankato, Minn. She worked with postulants and in the motherhouse sewing room for 10 years and then assisted at Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary in Winona for two years. In 1977, she returned to Good Counsel, where her main responsibility was the convent laundry until 2003. During this time, she also cared for a disabled young woman. From 2003 until her move to Shakopee, she continued to provide service to the convent community in a variety of ways.

Sister Mary Eugene is buried in Our Lady of Good Counsel cemetery in Mankato, Minn. She is survived by one sister, Laverne Rios, nieces and nephews and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND Associates. She was preceded in death by her parents Peter and Bridget (Roeder) Braun, her sisters Florence Voris and Mildred Hegel-

Heinle and her brothers Ernest, Eugene, Henry and Louie.

## Sizter Mary Alene Kuhn, SSMD

Sister Mary Alene Kuhn died at age 98 at the Benedictine Living Community, Shakopee, Minn. on September 7, 2023. Sister Mary Alene (baptized Frances) was born August 15, 1925, in Hague, N.D. to Daniel and Frances (Stroh) Kuhn.



In August 1943, Frances entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND) candidature. She was received into the novitiate in 1945 and professed first vows in 1946. She then began a long ministry in Catholic schools in Minnesota, Iowa and North Dakota. Following her final vows in 1952, Sr. Mary Alene was assigned to St. Wenceslaus School, Dickinson, where she ministered until 1961. Sister Alene earned her bachelor's degree from St. Catherine's College (now University), St. Paul, in 1956. In 1961, she worked toward a master's degree in administration during summer sessions at St. Thomas College (now University), St. Paul, and graduated in 1966. She continued to serve in several schools as a teacher and principal.

In 1979, responding to a desire for a more contemplative life, Sr. Alene spent a year with the Poor Clare Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Portsmouth, Ohio. She returned to the classroom in 1980 and taught upper grades in Minnesota, for one year. From 1981 until 1985, she was on the staff of the Our Lady of Good Counsel Education Center,

Mankato, Minn. Next, she spent three years at St. Mary, New England, N.D., where she also served as principal. In 1989, Sr. Alene moved to Pocahontas, Iowa, where she was the administrator of the Catholic school. In addition to her work in school, she visited the elderly of the area. Sister Alene returned to Our Lady of Good Counsel, Mankato, in 1993, in part to care for her sisters. She also contributed to life in the motherhouse in many ways including receptionist duties.

From 1998-2010, Sr. Alene served as co-coordinator of the Sister Friends Program at their motherhouse. Sister Alene also participated in another form of outreach—crocheting prayer shawls for St. John's parish in Mankato.

Sister Mary Alene is buried in the Our Lady of Good Counsel cemetery in Mankato. She is survived by nieces and nephews and her sisters in community, the School Sisters of Notre Dame and SSND Associates. She was preceded in death by her parents, Daniel and Frances (Stroh) Kuhn; three SSND sisters, Mary George, M. Dora and M. Daniella; sisters Magdalen Nolz, Sr. Mary Ann Welder, OSB; and niece, Sr. Thomas Welder, OSB, former President of the University of Mary in Bismarck. †

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.

May they rest in peace. Amen.

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

#### An invitation from the St. Serra Vocations Apostolate of Bismarck Mandan

Dec. 1	Fr. Ken Phillips	Dec. 17	Sr. Nancy Miller, OSB
Dec. 2	Deacon Ryan Nelson	Dec. 18	Sr. Michael Emond, OSB
Dec. 3	Br. John Seiler, OSB	Dec. 19	Fr. David Richter
Dec. 4	Sr. Margaret Nelson, OSB	Dec. 20	Br. Elias Thienpont, OSB
Dec. 5	Fr. George Pruys	Dec. 21	Sr. Agatha Muggli, OSB
Dec. 6	Deacon Don Nistler	Dec. 22	Msgr. Thomas Richter
Dec. 7	Deacon Bob Nutsch	Dec. 23	Deacon Kris Ringwall
Dec. 8	Br. Gregory Senger, OSB	Dec. 24	Music Ministers
Dec. 9	Lay Ministers	Dec. 25	Bishop David Kagan
Dec. 10	Sr. Gemma Peters, OSB	Dec. 26	Sr. Denise Ressler, OSB
Dec. 11	Liturgical Ministers	Dec. 27	Seminarians and Religious in
Dec. 12	Fr. Logan Obrigewitch		Formation
Dec. 13	Deacon Bob Olson	Dec. 28	Sr. Karen Warren, SSND
Dec. 14	Seminarian Joe Schon	Dec. 29	Deacon Dennis Rohr
Dec. 15	Fr. Patrick Ojedeji	Dec. 30	Deacon Gerald Rustand
Dec. 16	Deacon Ross Reiter	Dec. 31	Sr. Ivo Schoch, SSND

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS**



#### Real Presence Radio banquet Dec. 5

Real Presence Radio will host their annual fundraising banquet in Bismarck on Tuesday, Dec. 5. This year's keynote speaker is Cy Kellett, best known as the host of "Catholic Answers Live." He previously hosted "The Bright Side" with Cy Kellett on the Immaculate Heart Radio network. For more than a decade, Kellett was editor of San Diego's diocesan newspaper, "The Southern Cross." Before that, he taught at Xaverian Brothers High School outside of Boston and spent several years living in Boston's Catholic Worker house working with the homeless mentally ill. For more information, email Karen Selensky at karen.selensky @realpresenceradio.com or call 701-318-5467



#### Catholic Daughters bake sale Dec. 9

Bismarck Catholic Daughters will hold their annual Christmas bake sale on Saturday, Dec. 9 the Church of Saint Anne in Bismarck. Selling is from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Please use the southwest door. For more information, call Marella at 701-255-0559.



#### **Christmas Eve dinner at Ascension**

Ascension Parish in Bismarck is hosting their annual Christmas Eve dinner on Sunday, 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 five times throughout the year at the Badlands Ministries Camp just south of Medora. Cost for the weekend is \$75. Partial scholarships are available. Remaining weekends for the 2023-24 season are: Jan. 12-14; Mar. 1-3; and Apr. 12-14. Find more information at bismarckdiocese.com/search1.



#### Right to Life march Jan. 21

Bismarck-Mandan Right to Life Chapter will hold their annual March for Life on the capitol building steps in Bismarck on Sunday Jan. 21 at 2 p.m. Following the march, join the group for a warm reception at Zion Lutheran Church at 413 East Ave. D. Use the southwest door. For more information, call Virginia at 701-258-5379.



#### **Pilgrimage to National Eucharistic Congress**

Embark on a transformative spiritual journey! The Bismarck Diocese and the University of Mary warmly invite you to join us on a seven-day pilgrimage (July 16-22, 2024) to the 10th National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. Take part in a historic gathering of missionary disciples and experience what promises to be a "new Pentecost" for the American Catholic Church. Register today at www.umary.edu/NEC.



#### **Post-abortion support**

If you or someone you know has experienced an abortion either recently or in the past and are dealing with the aftereffects, contact the staff at Dakota Hope Clinic. This life-affirming clinic based in Minot offers a post-abortion support program called "Discover Peace." This support program is offered in a small group setting, giving individuals the chance to share and heal, surrounded by those who have been in similar situations. A new Discover Peace support group is being offered soon. The course will run Monday nights from 6 to 7:30 p.m. For more information, including location, go to dakotahope.org and click the post-abortion support tab under the free services tab to fill out a confidential form and the program facilitator will contact you.

# Embark on a rewarding career

Find freedom, flexibility and fulfillment as a Knights of Columbus insurance agent.



Knights of Columbus helps families enjoy economic security when they need it most, while turning some of the profits from our insurance business into charitable impact.

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



Wayne Cherney Field Agent 701-739-8143 wayne.cherney@kofc.org



Jamison Fettig Field Agent 701-325-0712 jamison.fettig@kofc.org



Joel Herman Field Agent 701-219-5847 ioel.herman@kofc.org



Sam Owan Field Agent 701-609-1918 sam.owan@kofc.org



Nathan Sather Field Agent 701-840-0965 nathan.sather@kofc.org



Don Willey Field Agent 701-202-9089 don.willey@kofc.org



Pete Speicher Field Agent 701-864-2679 peter.speicher@kofc.org



Jon Beebe General Agent 605-882-8689 jon.beebe@kofc.org



Apply today. kofc.org/careers



© Knights of Columbus, 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 0651

18 Dakota Catholic Action December 2023 www.bismarckdiocese.com Da

#### LOCAL CHARITABLE OPPORTUNITY

#### Catholic online giving event Nov. 28-30

The #GiveNDCatholic giving event is back for the fourth year.

It's your chance to give locally, have your donation matched and stay here in your diocese. Go to GiveNDCatholic.com and select the Bismarck Diocese to begin your donation process.

Bishop David Kagan and Bishop John Folda of the Fargo Diocese are, once again, offering this special giving opportunity for all Catholics in North Dakota called #GiveNDCatholic. This state-wide fundraising event gives all Catholics in North Dakota an opportunity to support their favorite Catholic organizations and charities on Nov. 28-30.

Since its inception in 2020, Bishop Kagan has chosen a handful of focused areas for donations to benefit. This year, there are three options for giving: Office of Family Ministry, Office of Respect Life and Catholic schools.

# Office of Family Ministry

The diocesan Office of Family Ministry provides information and resources for marriage and natural family planning. The office brings a family perspective to these and other church ministries, allowing all families to learn from and grow deeper in love with each other and with God. Some of the programs and services provided include marriage

preparation seminars for engaged couples, retreats for struggling marriages, second marriage seminars, Spanish marriage preparation and relationship building classes.

## Office of Respect Life

The Office of Respect Life within the diocese works to foster the culture of life by education, prayer and outreach to raise awareness and respect for the dignity of each person from conception to natural death. Some of the programs and services provided by the office include N.D. March for Life, youth chastity and fertility awareness, anti-pornography resources, same-sex attraction support, infertility and infant loss support, resources for pregnant moms, as well as abortion healing support.

## Catholic schools

The Bismarck Diocese has over 3,000 students in our Catholic schools in six cities across western North Dakota. Our Catholic schools not only provide excellent education to the students but are also fostering vocations. In fact, 14 of our new priests ordained in the past 10 years received their primary education while attending one of our Catholic schools.

This special three-day donation 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 bestowed upon them and an opportunity to share their blessings with good Catholic organizations and charities. The event is being held at the same time as other national online fundraising campaigns held on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Cyber Monday.

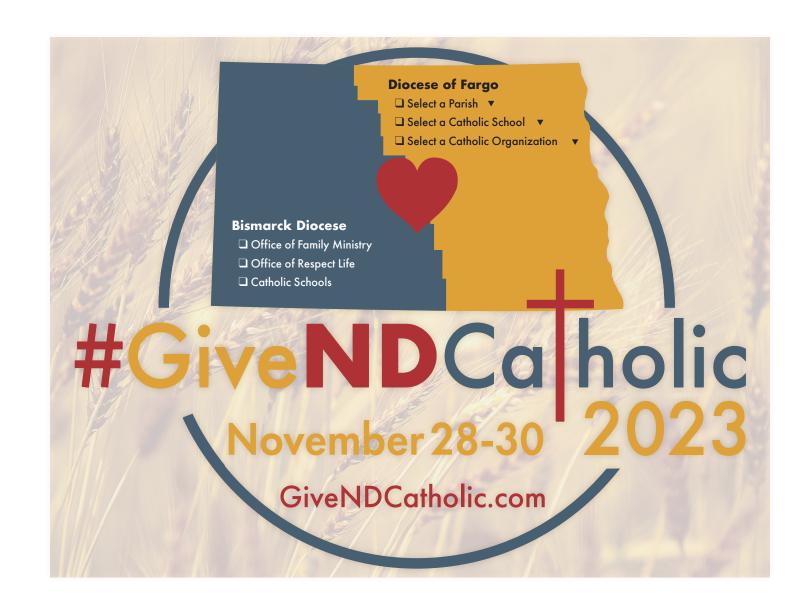
An exciting benefit of donating to the #GiveNDCatholic event is that \$25,000 has been secured to be used as matching gifts for the first \$25,000 raised. Donations of any size are allowed, and all donations qualify for a charitable tax

contribution. Donations may be made online or mailed directly to the diocese.

## What if Imizz the window of giving?

No need to worry if you didn't catch the giving window of Nov. 28-30. The website, GiveNDCatholic.com, remains live for several weeks following the event. Donations are welcome after the event dates and will be matched until the \$25,000 amount is achieved. †

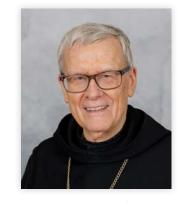
-Staff report



#### ASSUMPTION ABBEY MONKS **ELECT NEW ABBOT**

The monks of Assumption Abbey in Richardton elected Father Valerian John Odermann as their tenth abbot on Nov. 7.

The community was founded in 1893. Its first abbot was Vincent Wehrle, who became



**Abbot Valerian** 

the first bishop of the Bismarck Diocese when the diocese was established in 1910.

After joining the Abbey, Abbot Valerian did seminary studies at St. Meinrad School of Theology. Further graduate studies were undertaken at Indiana University, the Catholic University of America (Washington, D.C.) and the University of Alabama.

He has served at the Abbey's foundation, Monasterio Benedictino de Tibatí in Bogotá, the University of Mary in Bismarck and in Yankton, S.D., Mount Marty University and Sacred Heart Monastery.

Abbot Valerian is the first abbot of the community to have been born and raised in the Bismarck Diocese. His family belonged to the parish of St. Bernard in Belfield.

Bishop David Kagan will bless Abbot Valerian at the Abbey within a couple months. †

—Submitted information

#### **CELEBRATING 50 YEARS AS SSND**

Sister Karen Warren recently marked her 50th jubilee with the School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND).

Sister Karen was born in Bismarck to Del and Bernice Warren, who were among the founding members of



50th Jubilee

the Church of Saint Anne in Bismarck. She attended Saint Anne Grade School in Bismarck, and high school at the Good Counsel Academy of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Mankato, Minn. After graduation in 1969, she entered the congregation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. In 1973, she professed first vows in Mankato. Beginning in 1974, she spent one

year in community service at the Church of St. Mary in New England, N.D., and received a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Mount Mary College (now University), Milwaukee. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Sr. Karen taught at Sacred Heart, St. Paul, Minn.; St. Joseph, Cresco, Iowa; St. Mary, New England; and the Academy of the Holy Angels, Richfield, Minn. In 1986, she received a bachelor's degree in physical education from the University of Minnesota. While ministering as a teacher, Sr. Karen learned the art of woodturning. In 2011, Sister Karen returned to Bismarck, where she now assists her family and serves as a wood turner.

Along with 24 other jubilarians, Sr. Karen celebrated her 50th Jubilee in Prior Lake, Minn. on July 29. Present for the jubilee liturgy and dinner were their families and the SSND community. †

#### NEW LEADER FOR ND CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

# Bishops appoint Dr. David Tamisiea as new executive director

Bishop David D. Kagan of Bismarck and Bishop John T. Folda of Fargo are pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. David Tamisiea as the new Executive Director of the North Dakota Catholic Conference.



David Tamisiea

Tamisiea comes to the conference from the University of Mary, where he has served as the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences since 2019. He has an extensive background in law, theology, Catholic social doctrine, and the Christian lay vocation. Tamisiea received his Ph.D. and M.A. in theology from Ave Maria University, his law degree from the University of Texas School of Law, and his bachelor's degree from the University of Notre Dame, where he double majored in pre-medicine and psychology. Tamisiea lives in Bismarck with his wife Seana and their six children.

Upon the appointment, Bishop John Folda stated: "David's extensive experience in both the law and theology, as well as his commitment to the Church and the common good, make him uniquely well-positioned to continue the important work of the Catholic Conference."

"David's extensive experience in both the law and theology, as well as his commitment to the Church and the common good, make him uniquely wellpositioned to continue the important work of the Catholic Conference."

- Bishop John Folda, Fargo Diocese

Bishop Kagan added: "David's dedicated service to the Church is evident throughout his career and personal life, and especially his excellent work at the University of Mary. I look forward to his leadership as the next Executive Director of the North Dakota Catholic Conference."

David Tamisiea succeeds Christopher Dodson, who is retiring from the conference after 29 years. Tamisiea started his new position on Nov. 1. Dodson continues as a co-director during the transition. †

-Submitted information

#### **BALANCING CHURCH & STATE**



# Catholic social doctrine does not change

#### **Christopher Dodson**

Changes are coming to the North Dakota Catholic Conference. The bishops of North Dakota have chosen David Tamisiea as the new executive director. David started on Nov. 1.

I will remain as a co-director and the conference's general counsel during this transition. For the next months, David and I will share the privilege of writing this column.

The mission and positions of the conference will not change. The North Dakota Catholic Conference represents the state's Catholic bishops as they apply Catholic social doctrine to present situations. Present situations may change, but Catholic social doctrine does not.

The truth of this statement stuck out as I looked at the first columns I wrote. I started writing this column in June of 2001. Two hundred twenty-five columns followed, spanning 22 years. All of them are online on the North Dakota Catholic Conference's website at ndcatholic.org.

For example, while the first column in 2001 introduced readers to the North Dakota Catholic Conference, the next three columns discussed issues and principles that are still relevant today.

The second column, in 2001, concerned embryonic stem cell research. At the time, politicians and large biotech companies were calling for federal funding of research that intentionally killed human embryos. Federal funding was eventually given, but the research did not yield the results promised and interest in embryonic stem cell research faded. Nevertheless, destructive research on human embryos continues. Incidentally, destructive research on human embryos was prohibited in North Dakota in 2001 and still is today.

For the third column, I wrote about the United States Catholic bishops' commitment to the pro-life cause and how their two-pronged approach was the best chance for overturning Roe v. Wade and ending abortion in our country. One prong was the call to expand services to pregnant women and families. The other prong was the incremental approach to law and policy. It consisted of passing pro-life laws at the edges of Roe that simultaneously protected unborn life and built the groundwork for overturning Roe.

The legal strategy worked. Last year, the United States Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade and its related cases when it decided Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization. Almost all abortions are now prohibited in North Dakota.

The other part of that approach is also still relevant. The Catholic Church in the United States has re-emphasized the

need to reach out to mothers, responding to their needs so that no woman feels compelled to choose abortion.

The fourth column of 2001 was about the then-pending Farm Bill. As I write this, Congress still has not finished work on the 2023 Farm Bill. The principles I discussed for the 2001 Farm Bill apply to the 2023 Farm Bill. They were:

- The Need to Respect the Life and Dignity of the Human Person. Public and social policies must put the human person first. Society cannot consider farmers and ranchers expendable in the name of "progress" or "efficiency."
- The Common Good. We must work to preserve family farms and ranches because they provide one of the best guarantees of a healthy community.
- The Integrity of Creation. Agriculture should support farmers and ranchers in the exercise of stewardship of Creation.
- The Universal Destination of Goods. The goods of creation are meant for all, throughout generations. Policies should foster a wide distribution of ownership in agriculture rather than concentration and policies should provide just compensation to ranchers and farmers for their labor.
- Subsidiarity. Agriculture policies should not unduly interfere with the ability of persons and communities to exercise responsible self-governance.
- Option for the Poor. We should judge policies concerning rural life according to how they affect the least among us—those with less power and influence, the most vulnerable and the marginalized.

The fact that these principles are just as relevant today as they were in 2001 illustrates how Catholic social doctrine does not change. Catholic social doctrine is not the opinion of particular popes at a particular time. It is part of the Church's official teaching. The principles were relevant in 2001, are relevant today and will be relevant in 2045. Agriculture practices and policies may change. The Church, however, will still have her teaching and it will be relevant to how the country shapes agriculture policies.

The same is true for many issues. Whether the issue concerns human embryos, abortion, agriculture, or any of the many other issues addressed in these columns, the present facts, political situations and legislators will change. The Church's social doctrine will not. †

Dodson serves as co-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**



# A Thanksgiving gift: being in love is fun

#### **James Odermann**

It was Thanksgiving week. My wife and I were resting, recalling the events of the year—and the history which we had lived through (and crafted) in our decades of marriage.

We recalled the yearly events, the peaks and the valleys. In addition, we talked about the upcoming season of Advent, the preparation time for celebrating the birth of Jesus over two millennia ago.

"You know what?" I began the conversation. "What?" she responded with that irresistible mega-watt smile.

"Being in love is fun," I said, reaching across the table and squeezing her hands in mine. "It has been a glorious ride."

"Glorious?" she wrinkled her nose. "Absolutely," I said. "Glorious brings forth concepts of great joy and admiration—two things that I have been blessed with since I fell in love with you."

And, while that has been true through the hills and valleys of life in an agrarian, rural environment, I thought about the infinite love of God. There is nothing that compares with God's love for me.

I know I was not always a model disciple, asking (in despairing tones at times), "Why me, Lord? Why did the rain pass over the fields? The crops, hayfields and pastures need a drink—and now! What did I do to deserve this?"

To say I got a direct answer would be an exaggeration. It would, however, be accurate to say I did get an answer—in God's time.

This is a real irony. "God's time" is infinite, a concept that, as a human, can petrify me to the verge of a panic attack. As my anxiety increased, I recalled multiple lessons from God, instructions provided daily in multiple forms and from various sources.

God's time is also full of love, a love that is so merciful that even the most heinous act can be forgiven through sincere contrition. This got my mind whirling as I recollected in the past year my frustration because of lack of patience. God had heard my prayers, my pleading for good growing conditions, for fat calves, hay piles and good grain yields. I listened to my thoughts or requests that were secular and selfish.

The Mass readings throughout the summer were especially enlightening, parables when God left a lasting, subtle impression. God wants me to know I am loved. God does not demand love in return, rather creating situations where I can choose to love God.

There are many circumstances where I can return love to God. One of the biggest and best ways is to appreciate what I have (or in some cases do not have). Thanksgiving is a secular holiday but there is an unspoken spirituality about giving praise and thanks to God.

Take friends, for example. There is something distinctive about a good friend, someone who helps one find God, someone who is positive, encouraging, helpful and uplifting. For me, the specialness of this—and the incredible part for me—is that someone is my spouse.

God loves me through my sisters and brothers. In agriculture, most wife-husband relationships share a mutual bond, a communal commitment to feel the presence of God in a relationship where "love is fun."

There are no guarantees, no safety net. I get to choose if life will be fun, if I, as a creation of God, will be faithful to God. With these simple words, "love is fun" because God loves me. While my human love can never approach the infinite love and mercy of God the Trinity, I want to choose God.

I reflected on how I approach God—through others. Do I see God? Am I thankful?

Advent is upon us. I need to let go of my selfish thoughts and commit to God because, I think "love is fun" for God, just as it should be for me.

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).

#### QUESTIONS I WAS AFRAID TO ASK



# Q: If someone confesses something illegal, will the priest report it?

#### Fr. Jason Signalness

Assuming this "confession" happens within the sacrament of reconciliation (also called the sacrament of confession), the answer is most definitely no. To quote the Catechism, "... the Church declares that every priest who hears confessions is bound under very severe penalties to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins that his penitents have confessed to him. He can make no use of knowledge that confession gives him about penitents' lives. This secret, which admits of no exceptions, is called the 'sacramental seal,' because what the penitent has made known to the priest remains 'sealed' by the sacrament."

This is something priests do not take lightly. It is so serious, in fact, that if a priest makes known something he has learned in the sacrament of reconciliation, he is automatically excommunicated. In that state, he could no longer celebrate or receive the sacraments. His life as a priest would be over. Under Church law, only the Pope's authority can remove such a penalty. This punishment serves to remind the priest that he must answer to God for the violation of the trust placed in him by the Church and the people. Consequently, priests would rather go to jail, suffer persecution or even martyrdom before they would choose to violate the seal of confession.

The Church takes this seriously because of the importance and the power of this sacrament. As the Catechism explains, "Individual, integral confession and absolution remain the only ordinary way for the faithful to reconcile themselves with God and the Church." If someone does something illegal and feels great remorse, they need to be able to approach the sacrament whereby God will forgive them. Confession needs to be a place of absolute freedom. Nobody would go to confession if they thought doing so would land them in jail.

If, during confession, a penitent does admit to having done something illegal, the priest may counsel the person to turn themselves in to civil authorities, but he cannot require them to do so. As the priest assigns an appropriate penance, he likewise cannot require the penitent to admit to anyone what he or she has done. The confessional is a place where the worst of sinners are free to speak and receive guidance to set things right.

Thankfully, at least for now, conversations between a person and a "spiritual advisor," when the advisor is acting in that capacity, are still protected even in civil law. For Catholics, this means priests cannot be legally required to testify to something they heard in confession. This is good, but we cannot take it for granted. There are occasional legal challenges to the seal around the country. Some lawyers and courts would very much like to listen in on confessions. Most recently in 2021, right here in North Dakota, Senate Bill 2180 would have forced priests to choose between violating the seal or facing legal trouble. This is an easy choice for a priest to make. To quote St. Peter, "we must obey God rather than men!" That said, it is much better when priests can minister freely, without such a legal threat. Thankfully, the bill was withdrawn.

Even if such a bill had passed, there are problems with the idea a priest can report what he hears. Remember, people often confess through a screen and the priest does not always know who the penitent is. Thus, he cannot report with any certainty who said what.

The truth is that we are all sinners in need of God's mercy, which He freely dispenses to us through the sacrament of reconciliation. There, we can trust that what we say is between ourselves and God alone. God merely works through the priest to give us advice and the consolation of hearing, with our ears, those beautiful words, "I absolve you from your sins..." †

Father Signalness is pastor of Queen of the Most Holy Rosary in Stanley and St. Ann in Berthhold. 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 "Question Afraid to Ask" in the subject line.

#### MISSION ADVANCEMENT



#### Worried about a possible recession?

#### **Ron Schatz**

Does the concern over a possible economic recessing have you looking for guaranteed income and interest rates? A charitable gift annuity might be an excellent option for you.

Today more than ever, Americans want reliability, certainty and accountability. We are all looking for something stable, solid and firm. For many of us, it means a return to classic values and enduring ideals. One of these values is the charitable gift annuity.

A charitable gift annuity is a way to make a gift to support the Catholic entities that you care about, such as your parish, a Catholic school, the Bismarck Diocese, the Seminarian Scholarship Fund and/or the Priest Care Endowment Fund. You make a gift of cash or property to us (minimum \$10,000). In return, we will make payments for life to you, you and a loved one or another person. Each payment will be guaranteed at a fixed interest rate and the amount of each payment will depend on the age of the person who receives the payments. A portion of the income you receive will be tax-free, and your charitable gift annuity will receive an IRS tax deduction along with the 40% North Dakota Tax Credit. After all payments have been made, your favorite Catholic entities will receive the remaining value of your gift to continue supporting what was important to you.

The one-life rates are:

Age	60	65	70	75	80	85
Interest Rate	4.9%	5.4%	5.9%	6.6%	7.6%	8.7%

Do you have concerns about low interest rates and assets that produce little or no income for you? Are you worried about a possible recession and what that could do to your investments or retirement income? Are you growing tired of the unpredictable and negative events in the United States and around the world and wonder "what's next?" Would you like to increase your financial stability and income ... now and for your lifetime?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, now is an excellent time to consider the advantages of a charitable gift annuity with the Catholic Church. It will leave a legacy for you that reflects your life's work and what has been important to you. You will also receive peace of mind that your payments are fixed and will never change for the rest of your life, no matter what happens to the financial markets.

If you have any questions or if you would like to obtain a free, no-obligation, personalized illustration of how a charitable gift annuity will benefit you, please contact me at 701-204-7202 or at rschatz@bismarckdiocese.com or mail this form to me at: Bismarck Diocese, PO Box 1137, Bismarck, ND 58502-1137. †

I am interested in more information
regarding a Charitable Gift Annuity.

□ One-life: A	Age:		
Address:			
□ Two-lives:	Ages:	_ &	
City:			 



Mail this form to: Bismarck Diocese, PO Box 1137, Bismarck, ND 58502-1137

Ron Schatz is the director of the diocesan Office of Mission Advancement. He has worked for the diocese for more than 32 years.



PO Box 1575 Bismarck, ND 58502-1575

#### PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

The Bismarck Diocese 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, Bismarck Diocese, 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 Bismarck Diocese and it provides a foundation for implementing effective and enforceable standards for all personnel. View the Code of Conduct at www.bismarckdiocese.com.

## How to Keep Your Kids Safe Online

According to RAINN.org, more than 32 million reports of suspected child sexual exploitation were reported by online platforms to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children's Cyber Tip Line in 2022. Parents and caregivers can help promote internet safety by following these essential tips.

- · Tell kids never to give out identifying information.
- Have kids use devices in common areas of the house so you can see and hear what's going on.
- Set aside time to join your kids online. Play their favorite game or watch TikTok together.
- Set parental controls on any device that connects to the internet
- Have kids let you know immediately if someone asks for pictures or personal information.
- Be aware of what apps your kids use and set a rule regarding whom you allow them to chat with.
- Set reasonable time limits on computers and smartphones. Have rules around where devices live and can be used.
- Talk to older kids about sexting and cyberbullying.
   Explain the long-term consequences of sending sexual messages or pictures.



www.dakotacac.org 701-323-5626

The Dakota Children's Advocacy Center provides and coordinates services for children who have been abused.

