



Faithful Footsteps

Walking Together in Faith on a Lifelong Journey

Diocesan Catechetical Event Held in Beulah



On Saturday, September 13, catechists, parish leaders, and faithful from across the Diocese of Bismarck gathered in Beulah for a diocesan catechetical event sponsored by the diocese.

The featured speaker was Dr. Stella Jeffrey, who presented on *“How Grace Works through the Ordinary: Why Practical Life Activities Matter.”* Dr. Jeffrey lives in Fargo with her husband Greg and serves full-time at Franciscan University of Steubenville as both an adjunct professor in Theology and Catechetics and as part of the Catechetical Institute (CI). She also leads retreats, parish missions, and other teaching opportunities throughout the year.

The **Catechetical Institute (CI)** is a large-scale international outreach of Franciscan University for ministry formation. Formally organized in 2015 and launched publicly in 2017, CI serves Christ and His Church by forming those entrusted with the formation of others in any ministry role—priests, deacons, religious, parents, parish and school leaders, teachers, catechists, and volunteers at every level of parish and diocesan life. Rooted in the Franciscan Center for Evangelization and Renewal and the university’s Catechetics and Theology programs, CI combines academic strength with practical training. Its formation is offered through conferences, online ministry tracks and workshops, webinars, a catechetical journal, local events, small-group guild circles, mentorship, and a variety of other resources.

As part of her presentation, Dr. Jeffrey walked participants through how to use the Catechetical Institute’s resources, including its workshops and webinars. She explained how ministry tracks can be adapted for different parish and diocesan needs and gave a practical overview of how each session is structured. The Diocese of Bismarck maintains a contract with CI, allowing those in the diocese to create an account and log in for continued education and formation. (contact Diane at dhuck@bismarckdiocese.com FMI)

Dr. Jeffrey also emphasized the ever-present reality of God’s grace, reflecting on the words of St. Paul in Romans 12 and Ephesians 2:10: *“Grace, God’s help, comes to each of us constantly; and in the Sacraments, God himself comes to live within us. Thus, every moment, place and relationship is an opportunity for God’s love to be known to us and to be made known to others. All is an opportunity for each of us to make a sincere gift of ourselves.”*

Participants were encouraged and inspired by the day of formation, fellowship, and prayer, which highlighted the essential role of catechesis in the life of the Church.

Walking Together in Faith to these

UPCOMING EVENTS

Emmaus Youth Retreat

Williston: Sunday, October 26, 2025, St. Joseph Parish
 Minot: Sunday, November 16, 2025, Bishop Ryan High School
 Dickinson: Sunday, February 22, 2026, Trinity High School
 Bismarck/Mandan: Sunday, March 22, 2026, St. Mary's Central

All retreats run from 12:30 - 6:00 pm local time
 with 5:00 pm Mass included

2025-26 SEARCH WEEKENDS

Don't wait until the last minute, the deadline to register is 2 weeks before.

- OCT 10-12, 2025
- NOV 14-16, 2025
- JAN 16-18, 2026
- MAR 6-8, 2026
- APR 17-19, 2026

WEEKEND COST: \$75⁰⁰

PARTIAL SCHOLARSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE. NO ONE WILL BE TURNED AWAY BASED ON FINANCIAL NEED.

REGISTER ONLINE
 SearchinMedora.com



A PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN MUST BE PRESENT WHEN REGISTERING ONLINE IF UNDER 18.

The **ROCK** is for **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ONLY.**

Large Group coming? Please RSVP

to nemmel@lightofchristschools.org

ALL-CITY youth event
 sponsored by Bismarck/Mandan Catholic Youth Ministry
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2025
5:00-8:00 PM
ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL GYM MANDAN, ND

Join us for a Christian concert, Praise and Worship, Adoration of Jesus, Reconciliation, games and pizza!
OPEN TO ALL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Concert by Hip Hop Artist Austin Bitz

Keynotes by Fr. Justin Waltz and Fr. Greg Luger

Praise and Worship by Cole Jones and Co.

THE ROCK

"A great flame of faith and love must once again spread across the world, lighting the way for all people of good will." -Pope Leo XIV

OCT 8 | NOV 19 | APR 8

St. Mary's Central High School
 Doors Open at 6:30 pm
 Event Starts at 7:00 pm

"Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on ROCK. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on ROCK." -Matthew 7:24-25

Sponsored by the Office of the Chaplain of St. Mary's Central High School.

Oct 8: Talk : Personal Prayer/Activity: ultimate football/yard games/Food: Buffalo WildWings
 Dress-up Theme: Sports (not jerseys, but dress up like a real athlete)

Do you have a past event you would like to highlight or an upcoming event you would like to share? Email Diane at dhuck@bismarckdiocese.com with all the information, photos, quotations and more to be including in the upcoming issues of Faithful Footsteps.

Balancing Faith and Field: Understanding Sports-Obsessed Parents

[Christopher Wesley](#) Nov 2, 2023 <https://blog.marathonyouthministry.com/>

I remember the frustration building up as I read yet another email from a parent explaining their child would miss our workshop due to a distant tournament. "Just tell the coach you'll be late," I wanted to reply, but that response wouldn't be pastoral. Still, at my wit's end, I saw sports-obsessed parents consistently choosing sporting events for their elementary-aged children over sacramental preparation.

Our parish had even adapted a program that could be led from home, aiming for flexibility, but it felt like we were still losing families to the allure of sports. That's when I decided to call one of the parents. After a few awkward minutes, the parent agreed to miss the tournament, admitting they just needed someone to affirm that decision.

The tug-of-war between sports and church creates noticeable tension. Many ministry leaders express their concern over sports drawing kids and teens away from church. As a sports fan and a father watching his sons play, I understand that resisting the prevailing culture isn't simple.

But our parish is dedicated to engaging with sports-minded families by:

LISTENING TO THE STORY BENEATH THE STORY

Sports are more than entertainment; they offer community and opportunities. Given the emphasis and financial rewards of winning and talent, it's no wonder many parents chase this dream. However, the reasons behind their sports obsession vary. We should avoid generalizing parents as those who WANT to place athletics above all else.

Some parents use sports as a chance to bond with their children in their pursuits. Others find camaraderie with fellow adults on the sidelines. And for some, seeing their children succeed where they couldn't offer a shot at redemption.

To truly understand sports-obsessed parents, we need to engage with them. Show up at their kids' games, ask questions, and share their experiences. You may uncover insights into what sports provide that perhaps the church does not.

It's about grasping the pressures parents feel to keep their kids integrated into friendships and avenues of success. It's not that sports are inherently problematic; we may have just failed to clearly articulate why a relationship with Jesus Christ should be paramount.

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS

Sometimes sports trump church because we haven't set high expectations for what our parish can offer. While many parishes operate with limited resources and staff, we must strive to deliver meaningful experiences.

Recently, in a Monday Motivation ([subscribe HERE](#)) shared a [Ted Talk by Will Guidara](#) on hospitality. It emphasized the creation of compelling environments and experiences. So, when hosting parish events, we ensure thorough preparation, presentable spaces, and well-rehearsed presentations. Our welcome should be as warm as the father's in the Prodigal Son parable, making every family feel they belong.

INVITING THEM INTO SOMETHING BETTER

Engaging parents doesn't mean compromising our faith's values. It's about inviting sports-obsessed parents to experience something more profound. It's not about preaching from a soapbox but rather about having sincere one-on-one conversations. Share your insights and discuss how they might reintegrate faith into their family life.

BREAKING DOWN THE STEPS OF THE PATH

We sometimes expect parents to leap too far when it comes to parish involvement. Providing workshops and catechesis can be beneficial, but it's also crucial to help parents feel capable of guiding their children in faith. Encourage involvement in small groups and Bible studies and suggest faith-based podcasts, social media, and videos.

CELEBRATING SPORTS

Finally, we must recognize that sports are not the adversary. Hosting an athlete's Mass or showing up to games demonstrates our support. By partnering with coaches and being a positive sideline presence, we affirm that the community and their passions matter to us.

Parents may be drawn to sports because it fills a void. It's our role to communicate that God can quench that deeper thirst. We must convey to parents that the church desires something for them, not something from them. Through prayer and loving support, we assure them that the church is always there, ready to welcome them home.

New CGS Trainings Already in Motion for 2026

Plans are underway for a Level 1 training to start July 13-18, 2026 at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit! Registration will be open soon on the diocesan website. Also working on the details for a Level 2 and Level 3 training for July 2027-2028! CGS is growing and I am so excited to support it from the diocesan level!

Be sure to attend the Prairie Sheepfold event on September 6!

[Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Bismarck Diocese](#) | [Bismarck, ND](#) | [Bismarck Diocese](#) | [Bismarck, ND](#)

LOOK WHO'S WALKIN'

Celebrating fun and educational events in our Diocese that are spreading the Love of Jesus!



Thank you to the Catholic Indian Mission Parish and School for remembering our brothers and sisters in Christ in your prayers.

"This morning at Mass, our students and staff came together to pray for the Annunciation Catholic School community in Minneapolis, honoring the lives lost, those fighting for recovery, and all who are impacted. In a poignant procession, each student and staff member offered a rose at the foot of the cross. Though our hearts are heavy with sorrow, we remain steadfast in our hope for healing, comfort, and resilience. We pray for the souls of the young lives lost, for the recovery of those injured, and for the strength and unity of the Annunciation Catholic School family."



"On Sunday, September 7, the youth of Saint Ann's Parish of Hebron and Sacred Heart Parish of Glen Ullin spent a day in Medora. We first went to the historic St. Mary's Church and spent some time in prayer. We then went to have ice cream, drove through the Theodore Roosevelt National Park, and did some hiking in the park as well at Wind Canyon. We closed the day with supper at Pizza Ranch in Dickinson. We enjoyed our day, especially experiencing the beauty of God's creation in the Badlands." - Fr. Gary Benz



JEOPARDY!!

Father Vetter, Cruz Dykins, Mathias Holkup, Vada Szudera, Teagan Feldman, Lyvi Wojahn
Not pictured: Kenley Maus & Savaya Heckaman

The 6th grade class studied their Bibles for a few weeks, and challenged Father Vetter to a game of Jeopardy! It was a close competition but they came out with a win, and a Coffee!!