



Faithful Footsteps

Walking Together in Faith on a Lifelong Journey

Easter Joy: New Members Enter the Church in Western North Dakota



At the Easter Vigil in 2026, the Bismarck Diocese joyfully welcomed a remarkable number of new members into the Catholic Church. A total of 62 adults received the Sacrament of Baptism, 89 individuals were received into full communion, and 33 adults completed their initiation through Confirmation.

In a diocese of 61,699 Catholics, this year's numbers reflect approximately one new member entering the Church for every 335 Catholics—an encouraging sign of growth and evangelization across western North Dakota. Each of these individuals represents a unique faith journey, often shaped by prayer, personal invitation, and the witness of family and parish communities.

One of those welcomed this Easter, Jesse Roth, shared how meaningful the journey has been for him and his family:

“OCIA was a transformative experience that introduced me to the Catholic Church and brought my wife and me closer together. She is a cradle Catholic who faithfully prayed that I would take the step to enter OCIA. Through this journey—and especially through my confirmation—we have grown stronger as a couple, and our marriage has been deepened. Our family is now more united through our shared faith. I have come to deeply appreciate the richness, history, and apostolic succession of the Church. While I know there is still much more to learn, OCIA has been a meaningful

springboard into my life as a Catholic.”



Stories like Jesse's highlight the profound impact of OCIA and the continued vitality of the Church's mission. As these new Catholics continue their journey of faith, they bring renewed energy and witness to parishes throughout the diocese.

Walking Together in Faith to these UPCOMING EVENTS

**NORTH DAKOTA
PRO-LIFE
YOUTH
SUMMIT**



North Dakota State Heritage Center
612 E. Boulevard Ave, Bismarck, ND
Register at www.ndrl.org
Guest Speaker
Dr. Jerry Obritsch
Presented by
Lutherans for Life of
ND and ND Right to Life

**NEW DATE:
JUNE 6, 2026**




SAVE THE DATE!!

CREDIBLE WITNESSES

RETREAT FOR PARISH LEADERS

"Did not our hearts
burn within us..."
— Luke 24:32

A weekend of prayer,
reflection, and renewal—
an opportunity to step away,
listen for the Lord, rediscover
the story of His work in your
life, and grow in sharing that
story with others.

When?
August 28–30, 2026

Where?
Assumption Abbey



 **Cor Christi Institute**
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARY

July 6-10, 2026 &
July 13-17, 2026



umary.edu/corchristi

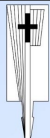
"Let them prefer nothing to Christ."

RB 72 Retreat

What: A retreat for girls completing 7th Grade
When: May 28-30, 2026
Where: Annunciation Monastery Bismarck, ND

For more information, contact Sister Marena
701-255-1520
marena@annunciationmonastery.org



Bismarck-Mandan Nun Run

Saturday, May 9, 2026

Who: High-school aged women
What: A day of exploration of vocations with the Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery, the Servants of the Children of Light, and the St. Mary Sisters
When: Saturday, May 9, 2026; 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

Agenda of the Day:

- Mass at Cathedral of the Holy Spirit
- Breakfast and visiting with St. Mary Sisters
- Lunch and prayer with Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation Monastery
- Visiting with Servants of the Children of Light and tour of Christ the King Montessori School
- Return to Cathedral of the Holy Spirit

There is no cost to attend this event, but pre-registration is required in order to organize transportation needs for the day. Registration closes May 2.
For more information, please contact Sister Marena Hoogland at 701.255.1520 or marena@annunciationmonastery.org.



WORTHY

For the battle belongs to the Lord.
1 SAMUEL 17:47

STEUBENVILLE 2026

St. Paul – July 23–26

The Bismarck Diocese Steubenville Conference trip provides an exciting opportunity for youth in grades 8–12 to experience a deep encounter with Jesus and empowers them to live life to the fullest for Him. The conference features seasoned speakers, workshops, music, Mass, Confessions, Eucharistic Adoration and fellowship with other young Catholics.

\$350 for Youth 18 and under
\$200 for Chaperones 21+ years
Registration Opens March 1st
Registration Deadline May 5th



register online at bismarckdiocese.com/Steubenville

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Level 1 Part A Training 2026

(Part B Dates TBD Summer 2027)

Monday - Friday, July 13-17 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
Saturday, July 18 8:00 am - 1:00 pm
Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, Bismarck, ND
Register \$175 per part

Mary Minor started her training in Level 1 in 2009 and continued to become certified in Levels 2 and 3. She helped establish and coordinate CGS at The Church of the Epiphany in Coon Rapids, MN. This included five arias, serving 400 children weekly. Mary has worked in Montessori environments for twelve years. A graduate of the Harry J. Flynn Catechetical Institute, she is active in her parish as a Scrutin, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, and the Pastoral Care Ministry. Mary became certified as a Level 1 Formation Leader in 2021.



Mary Minor

- Optional 6:45 am Mass
- Lunch on your own
- infants welcome!

Go to www.bismarckdiocese.com/good-shepherd or click the QR code to register.




The Echo of Faith: Three Pillars of a Catechist's Heart

January 10, 2026

www.catechist.com



In a homily delivered at the 2022 St. John Bosco Conference, Bishop Franz-Peter Tebartz-Van Elst explored the spiritual identity of a catechist. Drawing from the etymology of the word “catechesis”—derived from the Greek for “echo”—he described faith as a sound wave that bounces off the believer. When faith touches us, we are called to become “echoes,” sharing that faith with others.

Bishop Tebartz-Van Elst outlined three essential dimensions that define a catechist's ministry:

1. Embracing the Cross

Bishop Franz-Peter emphasized that catechists must personally identify with the crucified Lord. He noted that in the rite of installation, catechists receive a cross as a sign of their ministry, symbolizing that they have “touched the wounds of Christ”. This intimacy with the Cross empowers them to bear the burdens of others and witness to the depth of the faith.

2. Witnessing to Conversion

Using Saint Paul as the prime example, the Bishop described catechesis not just as teaching, but as a witness to continuous conversion. He distinguished between a one-time event and the Catholic understanding of being “born again and again”. All catechesis is rooted in the sacrament of Baptism and should mirror the catechumenate process—a journey of deepening faith that turns back to the origin to open future horizons.

3. Showing Compassion Through Listening

“If you feel what you see, you will give what you have,” the Bishop stated, highlighting the necessity of empathy. He shared an image of a fresco of St. Nicholas depicted with a giant ear, illustrating that proclaiming the faith begins with “empathic listening” rather than “pre-packed answers”. Citing Pope Francis, he urged catechists to listen to the culture and the unspoken needs of the people before speaking.

Conclusion Bishop Franz-Peter concluded with a powerful thought from St. John Chrysostom: “One man aflame with zeal is enough to uplift a whole people”. By embracing the cross, living a life of conversion, and listening with compassion, catechists keep the “resounding wave of the Holy Spirit” alive in the world today.

LOOK WHO'S WALKIN'

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



Sioux County Catholic Communities — including the churches of St. Peter in Ft. Yates, St. Elizabeth in Cannon Ball, Sacred Heart in Solen, St. James in Porcupine and St. Philomena in Selfridge. Everyone enjoyed a wonderful time and delightful meal at the Easter Egg Hunt after Easter Sunday Mass.



Christ the King in Mandan has started a Little Flowers girls' group for girls ages 5-18. The group meets monthly and is focused on growing in a different virtue each month. It's for moms and their daughters and is led by the moms taking turns leading various sections, such as a lesson on the virtue for the next month, a craft, a snack, and time for fellowship and fun. The group has similarities to the Girl Scouts in that the girls have their own sashes, and once they complete different acts of virtue throughout the month, they earn a flower petal for that virtue that they can then sew onto their sashes and eventually form a full flower. Here are some pictures from our first meeting! If you are interested in starting your own Little Flower group in your parish, call Jeannie 651-



The final ROCK event of the year at SMCHS was one to remember.

With a fun "Couch Potato" theme, we continued a special ROCK tradition by inviting our 8th graders to join us—giving them a glimpse into the faith, community, and experiences that await them next year at SMCHS.

We were blessed with a powerful and inspiring message from Monsignor James Shea, who challenged us to consider what it truly means to evangelize in our daily lives. We transitioned to the chapel for a meaningful time of adoration and confession, grounding the evening in prayer and reflection.

The night concluded with black light dodgeball, great conversation, and Chick-fil-A—because no ROCK is complete without fun and fellowship.

Thank you to our chaplain, instructors, and assistant chaplains for the time, energy, and care you put into making each ROCK a meaningful and faith-filled experience.



The junior class retreat during Holy Week is a special tradition at SMCHS. The class walks together to the five Bismarck Catholic parishes, praying and learning more about Holy Week along the way.

