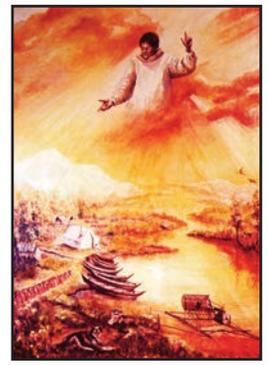


# The Alaskan Shepherd



Volume 53 Number 4

August-November 2015

Some give by going to the Missions

Some go by giving to the Missions

Without both there are no Missions

## The Catholic Schools of Fairbanks Where Faith and Academics Meet

### FROM BISHOP ZIELINSKI'S DESK



Dear Brothers & Sisters in Christ,  
In September, I journeyed to Rome to attend a two-week New Bishop's Conference with 125 bishops from around the world. It was truly an encounter of the "Universal Church." Many cardinals and archbishops who were heads of various Vatican congregations spoke with us. It was clear they are driven by the missionary zeal of Pope Francis. They reiterated the call of all the baptized to be "missionary disciples," as Pope Francis so beautifully articulates in the *Joy of The Gospel*.

The central power of Eucharist became clear to me during the conference. I had the honor and joy of meeting Pope Francis. The Universal Catholic Church is so blessed to have him as our shepherd. He is a most humble and joy-filled man of God, especially exemplified during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist. Our encounter with Christ in the sacramental life of the Church moves us to bring this joy to our own families, parish families, communities, nations and the world.



I carried this meeting of the Holy Father and new bishops with me to Washington D.C. The U.S. Catholic bishops had the honor to meet with Pope Francis at St. Matthew's Cathedral for Midday Prayer and for the Canonization Mass of Junipero Serra at the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception. As we bishops traveled by buses throughout D.C., I was so overwhelmed by the thousands of people who lined the streets waving to us with beaming smiles while capturing photos. Who were these people that were so caught by the visit of Pope Francis? They were people of many different faiths and walks of life. There is something about the radiating joy of Pope Francis.

It touched them to the core of their being and they left their work places and homes to cheer us on with great joy.

The Holy Father spoke to us, saying: "***I appreciate the unfailing commitment of the Church in America to the cause of life and that***

**CATHOLIC BISHOP OF NORTHERN ALASKA  
1312 PEGER ROAD FAIRBANKS, ALASKA 99709  
Phone: 907-374-9532 [www.dioceseoffairbanks.org](http://www.dioceseoffairbanks.org)**

***Special Masses are offered throughout the year for you and your intentions by our Missionary Priests.  
Please pray that God may bless us and our work.***

*of the family, which is the primary reason for my present visit."*

In that spirit, Pope Francis continued to Philadelphia for the World Meeting of Families. He met with representatives of the Catholic Church from over 100 countries. On Saturday evening, September 27, Pope Francis departed from his prepared text. He passionately expressed his sincere love for families and his concern for the challenges they face.

***"We are celebrating the Feast of the Family. Families have a citizenship which is divine. The identity card that they have is given to them by God. So that within the heart of the family, truth, goodness and beauty can truly grow."***

This is the focus and heart of Catholic Education in our schools and religious education programs. Parents are the primary teachers of their children in the faith. Similarly, the love for Christ and His Church should drive teachers in Catholic schools and catechists in religious education programs to contribute to the formation of the consciences and souls of children. You cannot buy this or download it from a website. Children will follow Christ as "missionary disciples," by seeing the sacrifice of parents and teachers, witnessing the goodness, beauty and truth in their own lives.

Please be assured of my prayers for each of your families as I celebrate Mass. May the Eucharist be the source of strength that keeps us ever so closely united as brothers and sisters amidst the several thousand miles that separates us.

In this issue of ***The Alaskan Shepherd*** newsletter, I believe you will get a glimpse of the very missionary discipleship that Pope Francis urges us to grow.

Thank you for your prayers and most generous support to the families of Northern Alaska and to our Catholic Schools of Fairbanks.

Yours in Christ,



*+ Chad W. Zielinski*

† Chad W. Zielinski  
Bishop of Fairbanks

## KEYS TO THE KINGDOM



*Christina (Winfree) Woodward is the Assistant Principal of Monroe Catholic Junior-Senior High. She attended Immaculate Conception Grade School through sixth grade and then Monroe Catholic Junior/Senior High through twelfth, graduating in 2004 as class valedictorian. While at Monroe, Christina played varsity softball, volleyball, and basketball. In her senior year, she cheered and served on the Executive Board for Student Government, while also serving as President of National Honor Society. She attended the University of Portland, where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education and a Bachelor of Arts in English, in 2008. Currently she attends the University of Notre Dame, enrolled in the Mary Ann Remick Leadership Program; she graduates this next July with a Master in Catholic School Education. Christina has been teaching in the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks for seven years and currently teaches 6th and 8th grade Religion as well as 9th grade Health. You can find her after school hours cheering on student athletes at various sporting events. When not at the school, she loves to spend her free time with her family and especially her mom, Cathy Winfree. "I want to be just like my mom—she has strong faith as well, works incredibly hard, and cares for everyone around her." When asked who she admires professionally, Christina says, "I really admire Nancy (Hanson)—her faith, her dedication to the schools, and her passion for our mission."*

*Christina's article, that follows here, first appeared in Alaska Catholic Magazine, Winter Issue, early in 2015.*

**When people find out I teach 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, there is usually one of two reactions: expressions of utter horror and disgust along with nods of pity at my poor life choices, or looks of awe and odes to my sainthood. It's true the hallway often smells atrocious, and if you aren't careful, an errant backpack might take you out unexpectedly. But in these hallways you will find Heaven on Earth, for these are the children Jesus called to him. These are the children who understood the message and lived the commandments without effort.**

This is my sixth year teaching at my alma mater. My journey as a Catholic school student began here, led me to the University of Portland for undergraduate work, and onto Notre Dame, where I am currently involved in graduate studies. But never have I learned more about the Catholic Church and my own faith than during my time here at the school working with our students.

This might seem obvious because I teach Religion. Of course I learn more about the Church when I have to teach about it. But it is not through the catechism that I learn about the faith; *it's through the student body*. In fact, some of my students helped me come up with ideas for this article. I asked a few students what they liked about our school, and their responses led me to these insights, affirming my own experience about student involvement and faith development.

Here are a few of the highlights and successful activities that make up the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks:

#### ***Weekly Student-led Masses:***

Our student body celebrates Mass each week. These are primarily student-run; our students are altar servers, Eucharistic ministers, lectors, singers, and they decorate the Chapel.

#### ***RAMS Day:***

#### ***Random Acts of Mercy and Service:***

Community service is not an usual requirement at Catholic schools. However, we serve together as a student body the day before Thanksgiving,



known as RAMS Day (the Ram is our high school mascot). Roughly fourteen groups of students of various grades head to local businesses throughout the community. While groups go all over town, the highlights are often the seniors baking pies at the soup kitchen, the orchestra playing at the Pioneer Home and working with the residents, and our own grandparent luncheon run by the students themselves (they fed close to 350 people last year!).

#### ***Kindergarten Buddies:***

Another highlight for our students is the Kindergarten Buddy program. Each year, the seniors are paired up with a “buddy” in the Kindergarten class. These buddies meet monthly for activities and sit together at K-12 masses. Kindergartners love the special attention from the big kids and the seniors learn more about love and relationship from their buddy than any lesson or lecture in the classroom.

#### ***Catholic Schools Week:***

At the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks, we work to make this week interactive and fruitful for all students and faculty. This year's activities include participating in the nation-wide prayer



Kingdom of God.

We know our students are headed down the right path because of the work they do after they leave. Our graduates involve themselves in campus ministry when they head off to colleges, because it's what they know and love. They volunteer and join service groups or attend campus-wide retreats for further spiritual development. Students that might not attend a traditional four-year university continue to grow in serve in ways outside a classroom and off campus. Our alumni serve the country in the military, serve those in need through agencies such as the Peace Corps and Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and serve our children here at the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks. Many alumni become involved in politics at local, state, and national levels to make changes from the ground up. Others continue to give of themselves in the art or music they create, their volunteer hours at the school and in their communities, and in doing the work they love.

chain, a student-faculty dodge ball game, and a K-12 Mass celebrated by the Bishop. Two seniors will write and share a homily for this mass that reflects their cumulative school experience. Each day this week also provides an opportunity for service as we collect books for the literacy council, socks for our teen shelter, toiletries for the rescue mission, and soup for the soup kitchen (a can of soup allows the student to wear a jersey as we prepare for the Super Bowl). We will also be hosting door and bulletin board decorating competitions throughout the school and daily prayers led by students are tailored to the themes of the day and week.

Our seniors learn that, "to whom much is given, much is expected." We know that at the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks, we have been given the ultimate gift: the children of our community. Jesus called the children and let them run to him just as they were—messy, unabashed, and innocent. We are called to do the same and while we strive to show them the path to the Kingdom, they are the ones holding the keys.

Perhaps the most important piece of the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks is not teachable.

Over and over again the students talk about our school community and the family we have created. This cannot be taught, but must be lived and modeled. We look to Christ, the ultimate teacher, and welcome the children as they are. Only through acceptance, support, and love can our children ask questions of their faith, challenge their beliefs, and shape their own path. Given these opportunities, our students grow into leaders living the faith and sharing the





**The total amount of scholarships offered to Monroe Catholic High School Class of 2015, over four years, totaled \$3,700,00.00. Monroe graduates were accepted to the following Institutions:**

Central Washington University

Missoula University

University of Dayton

United States Air Force

California Polytechnical University

University of Idaho (2)

University of Arizona (2)

Air National Guard

Universal Technical Institute

Peninsula College

Washington State University

Conservatory of Music/  
Baldwin Wallace University

Boise University

Saint Martin's University

St. Mary's University

Seattle University

Gonzaga University (2)

University of Portland

University of Alaska Fairbanks (3)

University of Alaska Anchorage (2)

University of Idaho



**Be It Known To All Who Enter Here  
That Christ Is The Reason For This School,  
The Unseen But Ever Present Teacher In Its Classes,  
The Model Of Its Faculty,  
The Inspiration Of Its Students.**



**Nancy Hanson**  
**Director of Schools**

## A Little About HIPOW...

**H**IPOW is a remarkable fund-raiser. In the interior of Alaska where only 30,000 people live within the city of Fairbanks and 90,000 in the entire borough, we raised \$630,000.00 for the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks. How does this happen? It can only be that people believe in what we do; we are a school where faith and academics meet. In the spirit of St.

Ignatius, we uphold these five Jesuit pillars and teach our children to be “open to growth, loving, religious, and committed to both academic excellence and social justice. We teach them to be active citizens of the school community through their studies, prayer, participation on teams and in student government, and serving others.

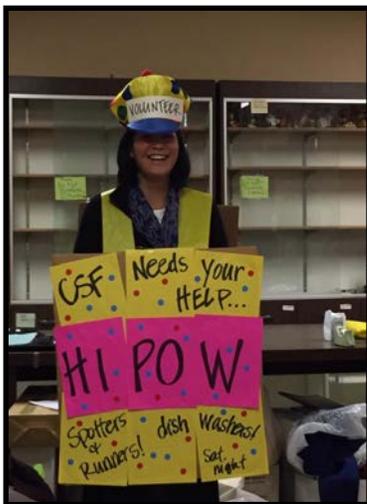
HIPOW is truly remarkable and overwhelms my heart. I give myself a week after the auction to tell HIPOW stories, to remember the particulars of the event, to give thanks for the generosity of our donors, and to give thanks to God for guiding us through a successful event. Just a week, and then the realization sets in that Monroe Foundation must raise another \$400,000.00 for the operating budget of the schools. This takes my breath away. Where do we turn and whom do we ask? We have just been gifted with incredible support.



We turn to those who have not yet given and ask again of those who have. We tell the story of our schools, of the twenty-seven 2015 graduates who earned \$3.7 million in college scholarships. We recount our preparations for RAMS day when all junior-senior high students go out into the community the day before Thanksgiving to serve at fifteen different agencies. We give thanks for our students of all ages who read at weekly Mass, write petitions, serve as Eucharistic Ministers, and participate in attending and leading retreats.

When I am asked what society needs most today, I have a ready answer. Society needs young people who understand that life is about more than themselves; that it is about building and being community with Christ at the center. It is about becoming the best person we can be even as we take time to be for others and to praise, love and serve God. What greater joy is there than to prepare adults like this for the world? That realization gives me the courage to ask you to help us raise that additional \$400,000. Won't you please send us a first gift, an additional gift, or an ongoing gift?

With heartfelt gratitude,  
 --Nancy Hanson



**Editor's Note:** *In 2013, the JSN (Jesuit Schools Network) welcomed Monroe Catholic High School into its membership. The school was originally staffed partially by Jesuits and is now endorsed by the Oregon Province of Jesuits. As one of its now 64 members the JSN initiates programs and provides services that enable its members to sustain their Ignatian vision and Jesuit mission of educational excellence in the formation of young men and women of competence, conscience and compassion. The annual appeal for the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks is an appeal very near and dear to my heart. I currently have a son, now attending Saint Martin's University. He graduated this past May from Monroe Catholic High. Another son is nearing the halfway mark of his senior year, at Monroe, and one more son is knee-deep in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and being prepared for his second and third Church sacraments. I will be forever grateful for our decision to educate our boys in the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks.*

My husband Jim and I have sent our sons to the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks for a number of reasons. Having been educated in Catholic Schools ourselves, we wanted our children to experience a Catholic education. Moreover, the schools are recognized by the Alaska Department of Education, accredited by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools and a member of the National Catholic Education Association and the JSN. They are well known for high academic standards and their ability to help grow college-bound young adults. It is our desire and hope that all our sons will, one day, end their formal education with college degrees.

Still, our main focus in choosing to have our children educated in the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks has been to receive major support, a partner, if you will, in helping us raise good Catholic men. In this parental concern, we have not been disappointed in our choice of schools. In the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks, we have been truly fortunate to find a wonderfully committed partner in helping us raise our sons both academically and spiritually strong. This is why I love the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks.

As a parent, I see at firsthand the great benefits of educating our children through the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks; our sons formed in a school community with children of different faiths and walks of life. They mature into understanding through the call to be joy-filled disciples of Christ.

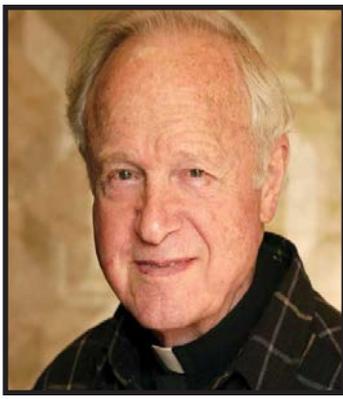
***I ask you to please remember your regular donation to the missions, which we so greatly rely on, and additionally to give to the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks whatever amount you are able.***

Each year the administration and school board are faced with the idea of raising tuition. It is a great dilemma, to balance the true cost of this quality education against the economic pressures of the community.

I want to sincerely thank you in advance for your support of our Catholic Schools and your prayers for their continued success.

***--Patty Walter***





Fr. Louis L. Renner, SJ  
1926-2015

# A Kindly Providence

## An Alaskan Missionary's Story

Concerning the autobiography, they wrote:—

“...written very vividly, clearly, and sincerely in a quietly engaging style.”

--David J. Leigh, SJ, author of CIRCUITOUS JOURNEYS:  
Modern Spiritual Autobiographies

**Less than 125 left!**

“A fine and complete record of a full and fascinating life.”

--Brad R. Reynolds, SJ, writer and photographer

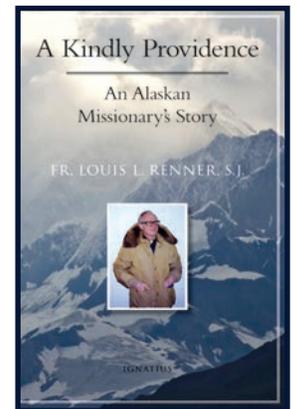
“Your Autobiography is very, very good. In reading it, people will have the experience of being right there where you are at the time. Chapter One is beautiful. It is an American classic, in itself”

--Margaret Cantwell, SSA, author of North to Share: The Sisters of Saint Ann in Alaska and the Yukon Territory

Fragmentary quotes from the autobiography weave an intriguing tapestry:—

“As I was standing on top of Little Diomed Island in Bering Strait, the sight of the Siberian mainland warmed my heart....Just inches from my head, he left a 2-inch deep hoof print....but that was wartime....and Christmas 1943 was the most difficult Christmas of my entire life....the storm in my soul was hushed to a gentle breeze....the desire for the Alaskan missions....‘Thou art a priest forever’....an old, two-bladed pocketknife....On that day, one of the major surprises of my life awaited me....that solo drive....surrounded on all sides, as well as top and bottom, by absolutely nothing other than black coal....disembarked at Plymouth...we spoke ‘Frenghish’....longest, hardest, sweatiest day of my priesthood....talk about entering Vienna ‘in style!’....Mass in the submarine US Quillback....alone, in the presence of the head man of the Archdiocese of Munich-Freising....the Scavi, the catacombs under St. Peter’s....so, smuggling a crucifix out of East Berlin could be a bit risky....I rarely in my whole life felt so utterly relaxed, so totally at ease, so grateful....when Libby Riddles won the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog race....on King Island....Solemn Profession....Therefore be it resolved....most consoling of all my priestly Christmas seasons....well up the Chilkoot Trail....a very rude awakening....a Ruby in my life....Pope John Paul II and Pres. Reagan....And a challenge it proved to be!....the very summit of old Oz himself....when in walks Father General....‘And Gaawd bless you too, Faawther!’ ....stickdance....the slap of a slimy fishtail in my face....got down to minus 76....Yet another case of mixing the useful with the pleasant....Up comes the stern. And, up comes—the kid’s breakfast....end of a wonderful 2,327-mile trip!... But then I thought to myself, ‘Oh, what the hell! Why not?’....Koyukon Athabaskan Dictionary....not a ‘natural’ for prison ministry....a grizzly parading her two cubs past our camp....left a big hole in my personal life....the Dempster Highway....little foxes running around on my tent platform....‘The Great and Sacred Jubilee Year of Our Lord 2000’.... Vice President of the United States, The Honorable Richard B. Cheney....proved to be a fairly accurate prophecy...ALASKANA CATHOLICA.... the same kindly Providence.”

A Kindly Providence is a comprehensive and richly illustrated autobiography. Fr. Louis L. Renner, S.J., a dedicated missionary in Alaska for 40 years, tells a compelling story of a full and fascinating life of service to the people and the Church in northern Alaska, a great land of natural beauties, challenging elements, and vast wilderness regions. Beautifully, Fr. Renner interweaves the everyday lives of the people and the Church as he experienced them first hand as a scholar, a teacher, a “bush missionary,” and ever the Jesuit priest. In the course of his long years in Alaska, among other ministries, he taught German and Latin at the University of Alaska Fairbanks, edited the Catholic newsletter The Alaskan Shepherd, and had the pastoral care of two different Indian villages on the middle Yukon River. For his scholarly writings, Tony Knowles, the governor of Alaska presented him with the “2002 Governor’s Award for Friend of the Humanities.”



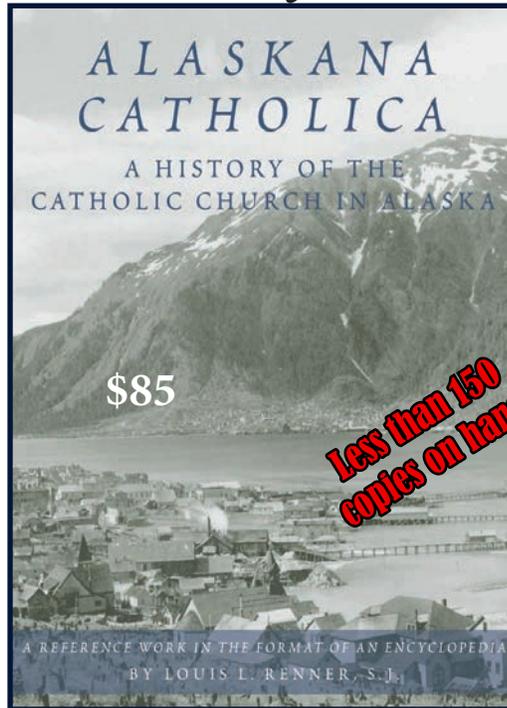
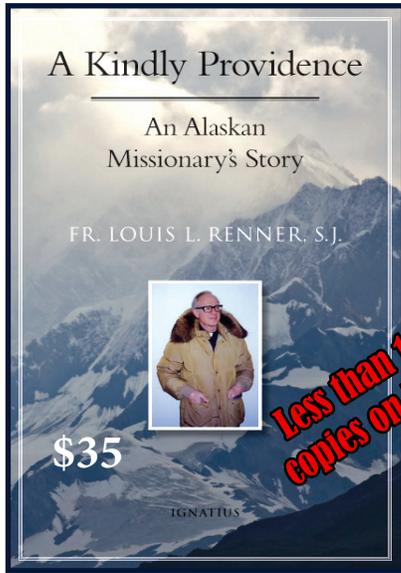
**A Kindly Providence, in softcover, spans 583 pages including some 80 illustrations.**

~Ordering information on page 9~

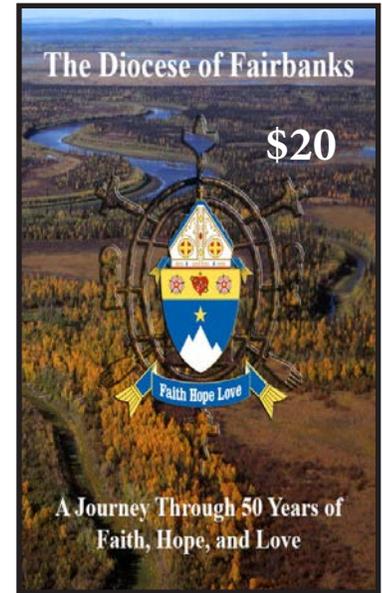


*These books make wonderful gifts.  
Each purchase helps raise funds to assist  
the Missions of Northern Alaska.*

*A Kindly Providence*, in softcover,  
spans 583 pages including some  
80 illustrations.



*Alaskana Catholica*, in hardcover, spans  
702 pages including close to 400 images.



*A Journey Through 50  
Years of Faith, Hope, and  
Love*, in softcover, spans  
178 pages with full color  
illustrations.

*A purchase of one of the books featured above helps to alleviate expenses  
in the Missionary Diocese of Fairbanks.*

Yes, please send \_\_\_\_copy(ies) of

\_\_\_\_**A KINDLY PROVIDENCE, An Alaskan Missionary's Story**,  
Written By Fr. Louis L. Renner, S.J. --I am enclosing \$35.00 for each book. *F921*

\_\_\_\_**ALASKANA CATHOLICA, A History of the Catholic Church in Alaska**,  
Written By Fr. Louis L. Renner, S.J.--I am enclosing \$85.00 for each book. *F92*

\_\_\_\_**THE DIOCESE OF FAIRBANKS, A Journey Through 50 Years...**,  
I am enclosing \$20.00 for each book. *F67*

**NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CREDIT CARD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TYPE OF CARD** (Visa, Master Card or Discover Cards only): **VISA**\_\_\_\_ **MASTER CARD**\_\_\_\_ **DISCOVER**\_\_\_\_

**CREDIT CARD NUMBER:** (Strictly confidential): \_\_\_\_\_

**EXP DATE:**\_\_\_\_\_ **PHONE:**\_\_\_\_\_ **EMAIL:**\_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CATHOLIC BISHOP OF NORTHERN ALASKA/CBNA 1312 PEGER ROAD\*FAIRBANKS, AK\*99709**

## We are in URGENT need of gifts to maintain our Mission Programs!

Dear Bishop Zielinski,

Date                      **F01 S2015 04**

I want to help you and the missionaries ministering in Northern Alaska to bring the Mass, the Sacraments, religious education, and training to the widely-scattered Indian and Eskimo people of Christ. Please accept this donation to your **General Fund** and use it where most needed.

AMOUNT OF GIFT: \$15\_\_\_\_\_ \$25\_\_\_\_\_ \$50\_\_\_\_\_ \$100\_\_\_\_\_ \$250\_\_\_\_\_ Other\$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ StreetNo. \_\_\_\_\_

P.O.Box \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

If donating by **check** please make payable to: **CATHOLIC BISHOP OF NORTHERN ALASKA** or **CBNA**

If donating by credit card: NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CREDIT CARD: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF CARD (Visa, Master Card or Discover Cards only): VISA\_\_\_ MASTER CARD\_\_\_ DISCOVER\_\_\_

One Time Only:( ) Monthly:( ) Quarterly:( ) Twice A Year: ( ) Annually:( )

CREDIT CARD NUMBER: (Strictly confidential): \_\_\_\_\_

EXP DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

*CATHOLIC BISHOP OF NORTHERN ALASKA/CBNA 1312 PEGER ROAD\*FAIRBANKS, AK\*99709*

Date                      **F12\_S2015 04**

Dear Bishop Zielinski,

Enclosed is a special donation to the **Catholic Schools of Fairbanks Annual Fund**, a fund intended exclusively to help alleviate operational costs at the school.

AMOUNT OF GIFT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Name \_\_\_\_\_

StreetNo. \_\_\_\_\_ P.O.Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

If donating by **check** please make payable to: **CATHOLIC BISHOP OF NORTHERN ALASKA** or **CBNA**

If donating by credit card: NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CREDIT CARD: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF CARD (Visa, Master Card or Discover Cards only): VISA\_\_\_ MASTER CARD\_\_\_ DISCOVER\_\_\_

CREDIT CARD NUMBER: (Strictly confidential): \_\_\_\_\_

EXP DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

*CATHOLIC BISHOP OF NORTHERN ALASKA/CBNA 1312 PEGER ROAD\*FAIRBANKS, AK\*99709*

## YOUR GIFTS TRULY HELP KEEP THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS OF FAIRBANKS OPERATIONAL

Would You Consider a Tuition Gift to Help a Family in Financial Need Send Their Child to CSF?

**\*Full Tuition Scholarship for one Immaculate Conception Elementary Student: \$5,775.00**

**\*Full Tuition Scholarship for one Monroe Jr/Senior High Student: \$6,930.00**

A Gift to Help with Operational Expenses?

**\*CSF's Natural Gas Bill/January 2015: \$10,260.00**

**\*CSF's Electric Bill/January 2015: \$10,460.00**

Would You Consider a Technology Gift?

**\*New iPad for CSF's 1:1 Program: \$638.00**



# MCHS Welcomes Fr. Greg Vance, SJ



Greg Vance, SJ was born in Billings, Montana, but grew up in Missoula. The oldest of three children, he joined the Jesuits in 1986, and was ordained a Priest in 1998. His apostolic work has taken him from parish ministry in his home parish of Saint Francis Xavier, to Saint Andrew Nativity School in Portland. He is an experienced spiritual director, having directed retreatants in the SEEL (Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life) programs in both Missoula and Spokane, and having trained directors in both those programs. His true love has always been high school ministry, and he has served on faculties and administrations at Bellarmine Prep in Tacoma, Seattle Prep, and on the Trustees of Jesuit High in Portland. He comes to the school having served recently as Superior of the Manresa Jesuit Community at Gonzaga Preparatory School in Spokane, where he taught in the English Department, worked in Adult Faith Formation and with the Development Department, and served as sports chaplain for many different teams and student groups. Fr. Vance's interests and hobbies include mountain biking and the connection between spirituality and mythology.

Now at Monroe, Father teaches Freshman and Junior English, and serves on the Board of Directors of the Catholic Schools. He works with Adult Formation of Faculty, Staff, Parents and Alums to help strengthen the Jesuit mission of the school. He is just beginning to serve as the "Priest on the Bench" to various athletic teams. Father says, "My students, who are more artistic than athletic, are wondering if I would be Chaplain to their activities too, and I want to figure that out! I have been filling in on some weekends at Saint Nicholas Church in North Pole too. It keeps me busy!"



**CLIPPING BOX TOPS  
IS A GREAT WAY TO  
HELP THE CATHOLIC  
SCHOOLS  
OF FAIRBANKS!**

Find Box Tops coupons on hundreds of your favorite products. Each Box Top coupon is worth 10¢ for our school. Twice each year, Box Tops will send a check to our school for each Box Tops coupon redeemed, up to \$20,000 each year. **The Catholic Schools will receive a check for over \$6,000.00 in December, thanks in large part to the generosity of *The Alaskan Shepherd* Box Top donors from all over the country!**

**Please keep clipping!**



# THE GREAT “I DO.”



+ CHAD ZIELINSKI  
Bishop of Fairbanks

# D

ear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Every Sunday, across the state and around the world, men and women, stand up in our Catholic Churches and say, “I do”, in choosing to follow Jesus Christ. That assent is not easy; it means sometimes we take up the crosses that burden our brothers and sisters. In the next issue of *The Alaskan Shepherd* you will read about Father Robert Fath, a priest who is not content to simply serve his parish, but also responds to emergencies as a volunteer firefighter. Read too about Fathers Dan Hebert and Al Smith and Sister Dorothy Giloley who climb into a small aircraft to lead a retreat in one of the most remote parishes in the United States. Scientist Dr. Glenn Juday takes time away from research to educate folks on the conditions and challenges our changing climate poses. Each of these men and women and uncounted more who are not recognized, do more than just speak words of assent. They respond in actions.

As I continue to travel throughout Northern Alaska, I see a very rapidly growing need for vocations. I know this need is not only in my diocese, but throughout the country. We need men, women and youth to step forward and say, “I do” to teach the faithful in the ways of our Catholic faith. We need parents to step up with a resounding “I do” as they did on the day their child was baptized, to say, “I do”, to train their children in the practice of the Catholic faith. We need more men to say “I do”, to serve as permanent deacons. We need many men and women to hear the call and say “I do” to serve as parish coordinators. Our diocese and many religious communities need more men and women to say, “I do” to consecrate their lives to Christ and serve him in a most unique way. For those already consecrated to Christ, I pray that they would hear the cry and say, “I do”, to serve in the Diocese of Fairbanks where many of our brothers and sisters go six months or more without a priest, deacon or sister in their presence. We also desperately need more young men in our diocese to hear and respond to the call with a mighty, “I do”, as ordained priests.

I am convinced that there will be a great awakening of our faith, and profound healing as we enter the Jubilee Year of Mercy declared by Pope Francis. In the first words of the Papal Bull, “Jesus is the face of the Father’s mercy.” May we each open our hearts to receive the mercy, healing and forgiveness of the Father. Also, may we like the Shepherd who leaves the 99 sheep to look for the lost one, passionately seek out those who yearn to encounter the healing touch of Jesus.”

It is in this celebration and embrace of the Father’s mercy that we will experience a healing, a rejuvenation of the Holy Spirit who will stir into flame those gifts given at our baptism, and with a mighty roar we will stand with unrestrained joy to say, “I do.” Each person, as we are “equal in dignity and different in role,” will share in the building up of the Mystical Body of Christ. I ask you to join the Diocese of Fairbanks in the following prayer:

**Good and gracious God, you have called us through Baptism to discipleship with your Son, Jesus Christ, and have sent us to bring the Good News of salvation to all peoples.**

**We pray you to grant us more priests, clergy and religious to build up your Church within the Missionary Diocese of Fairbanks, Alaska.**

**Inspire young men and women to give themselves totally to the work of Christ and His Church.**

**We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord. Amen**

We are blessed to have so many supporters who make our work possible. I want to especially thank those of you who remember us in your prayers. Donations provide tangible benefits, but the power of prayer and the Lord’s grace is our bedrock.

I am deeply grateful. --Bishop Chad W. Zielinski

+ Chad W. Zielinski