



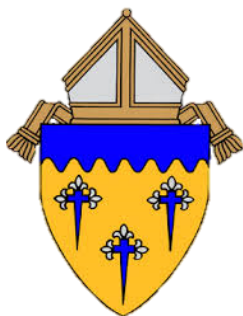
THE CATECHETICAL LEADER

| OCTOBER 2021 |

THE BISHOP HAMMMES CENTER | DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR

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CALENDAR

OCTOBER 7

PRINCIPAL MEETING
GO-TO-MEETING

OCTOBER 14

NEW PRINCIPAL ORIENTATION
GO-TO-MEETING

OCTOBER 29

FALL CONFERENCE
VIRTUAL

NOVEMBER 7-13

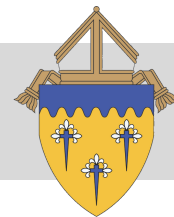
VOCATIONS AWARENESS WEEK

NOVEMBER 4

PRINCIPAL MEETING
ST. MARY, NEW RICHMOND

NOVEMBER 5

PRINCIPAL EVANGELIZATION
ONLINE CSM MEETING



EFFECTIVE SIGNS OF GOD'S LOVE

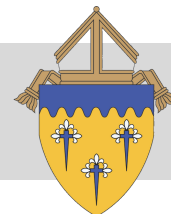
BY TOMMY SHULTZ - RUAH WOODS PRESS ([HTTPS://WWW.RUAHWOODSPRESS.COM](https://www.ruahwoodspress.com))

It was one of those bright spring days where there was a subtle breeze, yet still a blazing heat radiating from the sun. Pretty flowers adorned the fields and there was an aroma of lilacs as I put on the special suit that I had selected for this momentous occasion. I remember getting dressed in the basement bathroom of our old church that always had kind of a musty smell, no matter how many times they cleaned it. Thoughts raced back to the one or two classes I had attended about this significant day that didn't even begin to prepare me for what was about to happen. The door slightly squeaked as I opened it, I walked into the dimly lit box, nervously sat down, and proceeded to fabricate sins to the patient priest intent on freeing me of these burdens that weighed me down. Yes, regrettably, this was my first, but clearly insincere experience of confession. I had no concept at the time of what the sacrament was, and I certainly didn't know what it did.

For this reason, I begin a reflection today with some basic sacramental theology. Efficaciousness is the word I lacked knowledge of upon my first reconciliation years ago. When we say efficacious to describe the sacraments, what we mean is that they are an effective sign. Another way to articulate this would be to say that they are a sign that is so real, they literally become what they signify. The Catechism of the Catholic Church in paragraph 1131 says, "The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us." Think about it, the Eucharist is so much a sign of God's love that it literally becomes the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ. If I had known in second grade that reconciliation would truly erase sin from me and provide the grace to not sin anymore (or at least build up my resistance), I would have had a different, more authentic experience of the sacrament.

When I present on Theology of the Body, I often use the analogy of a stop sign as a method to explain the sacraments in the following way. If you were to saw off a stop sign and hang it on your wall, what would it be? It would of course be vandalism, but it would also just be a piece of metal with some paint on it. If you take that same piece of painted metal and put it out by the road, it actually effects a real outcome, it causes the motorists to stop.

Ok, so why all this discussion about sacraments and efficaciousness? Pope St. John Paul II made the bold claim in Theology of the Body that our bodies are, in a sense, sacramental. Think about it, a sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible reality, that of divine grace. Our bodies, therefore, are sacramental in two ways. First of all, our bodies are sacramental because they reveal who we are. They are a visible sign of the interior person, in fact, they are the person. We are our bodies. Our bodies and souls are inextricably integrated as the whole person. Secondly, our bodies are sacramental because they reveal deeper truths about God himself. Since we are made in the image and likeness of God, our bodies communicate a deeper theological reality. Our bodies reflect and reveal some of the mystery of who God is. This is why John Paul II could claim, "In some way, therefore – even if in the most general way – the body enters into the definition of sacrament, which is a visible sign of an invisible reality."



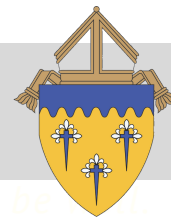
EFFECTIVE SIGNS OF GOD'S LOVE (CONTINUED).

One saint whose body even more particularly manifested sacramental signs of the spiritual reality of God, was St. Padre Pio. In September, we celebrate his Feast Day on the 23rd. Of course, there is much we can learn from this compelling saint who lived closer to our time than most. One of the most significant things we can learn from his witness is the fact that he allowed himself to become an effective sign of God's love to the world. One could name a thousand things Padre Pio did to show God's love to others, but because of his profound witness, he was also given ethereal gifts while on the earth which point to the deeper spiritual realities. Padre Pio was known to be able to read souls and could disclose to the penitent any sins they forgot or withheld in confession. It was documented that he could bilocate (being in two places at once), and he also bore the mark of the stigmata, a sign in the flesh of the physical and spiritual realities of Christ's crucifixion. All of this to say, Padre Pio should be our example of how to live as effective signs of God's love to the world.

By this, I am not saying we all need to receive divine knowledge or walk through walls, but we can start to live here and now more closely aligned to how we are going to live in our eternal home. When someone lives in the present and it begins to mirror our future state in heaven, we call them a mystic. It's also what happens at every Mass. During the Mass we get a foretaste of what heaven will be like, of our future state. So, whether you already have been given the gift of bilocation or not, let's all focus during this month on the example of Padre Pio and ask for the grace to become effective signs of God's efficacious love to the world.



Joy is a net of love by which we catch souls. -Mother Teresa



Trust in God, all will be well.

-St. Joan of Arc

RESPECT LIFE MONTH

OCTOBER 2021

In October, the Catholic Church in the United States celebrates Respect Life Month, and the first Sunday of October is designated as Respect Life Sunday. To support these annual observances, the USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities provides materials to help Catholics understand and value the gift of human life and help build a culture that cherishes and protects it.

These materials are designed to be brought to life as tools in your hands. These resources may be downloaded, printed, and reproduced for use in your parish, school, or ministry

<https://www.respectlife.org/respect-life-month>



FALL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 29, 2021

“Home to the Father”

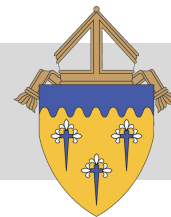
Diocese of Superior’s 59th Annual Fall Conference

After much prayer and discernment, we have decided not to hold the Fall Conference in-person this year. Instead, we will provide a recorded message from Bishop and our awesome keynote speaker, Ryan O’Hara. We ask that you please still set aside this day for much needed prayer and community. Prior to October 29, we will send you a program to follow in your local parish and school. If you wish to join together with neighboring parishes and/or schools to be in community as you follow the program we are sending, please do so! Please stay tuned for conference materials in late October!

Questions regarding the conference should be directed to Kathy Drinkwine,
kdrinkwine@catholicdos.org or 715 394 0216.



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DISCOVER CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

Discover Catholic Schools: November 14-20, 2021

The current theme is "Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service."
Catholic schools have a specific purpose to form students to be good citizens of the world, love God and neighbor and enrich society with the leaven of the gospel and by example of faith.

You can find daily themes and resources at the [NCEA website](https://www.ncea.org).



VOCATIONS WEEK

November 7-13, 2021

The Diocese of Superior Vocations team has created a beautiful website "Called North" (callednorth.org) check it out for ways to learn more about vocations and ways to celebrate them. Remember to use your Vianney Vocations lesson plans! If you'd like another copy of the registration code, please contact Grace Geisler at ggeisler@catholicdos.org



HIGH SCHOOL DISCIPLESHIP WEEKEND

NOVEMBER 12-14, 2021

Where: CrossWoods, Mason WI

When: 8:00 pm Friday - 2:00 pm Sunday

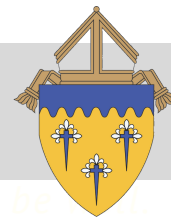
Presented by: The Missionaries of the Word

Registration information and a flyer found here:

<https://catholicdos.org/high-school-discipleship-weekend>



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Trust in God, all will be well.

SAVE THE DATE - 2022

Men's Retreat

- January 15-16, 2022

March for Life

- January 19-23, 2022

Women's Retreat

- February 19-20, 2022

EFC Dates

- June 12-17, 2022

- June 19-24, 2022

Fall Conference

- November 4, 2022

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

ANNUAL REPORT REMINDER

Each year, both religious education and schools, complete a diocesan annual report. This report helps us to evaluate how parishes are operating in regards to diocesan policy, but also helps the Office of Catholic Formation understand what assistance is needed within the parishes. The survey will be distributed soon with a due date of December 1. A full report will be available to the parishes at the Parish Catechetical Leadership Conference in August. The schools' annual report survey will be distributed soon with a due date of November 1. The full report will be available in February.

CONFIRMATION RETREATS

Over the course of the year we receive many requests for help locating Confirmation retreats. Please contact the Bishop Hammes Center if your parish will be hosting a Confirmation retreat this year and are willing to open it up to students from other parishes.

