



May 2021

# The Compass

IN THE

# Bulletin

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## Rural Life Day Mass celebrated at St. Mary Magdalene in Waupaca

BY SAM LUCERO | THE COMPASS

**WAUPACA** — After the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of Rural Life Days last year, the Diocese of Green Bay decided to proceed this year with an abbreviated celebration. Rather than hold two separate events at different rural parishes, as has been tradition, one Rural Life Day Mass took place April 10 at St. Mary Magdalene Church.

Due to the pandemic, people attending were asked to reserve a seat for the Mass, to wear face masks and to sit a safe distance from others. No luncheon or guest speaker followed the Mass, which was livestreamed on the parish's Facebook page.

Because of a death in his family, Bishop David Ricken was unable to celebrate the Rural Life Day Mass. Instead, Fr. John Girotti, vicar for canonical services and associate moderator of the Curia for the Diocese of Green Bay, served as principal celebrant and homilist. He was joined at the altar by Fr. Xavier Arockiasamy Santiago, pastor of



SAM LUCERO | THE COMPASS

Fr. John Girotti, principal celebrant of the Rural Life Day Mass held April 10 at St. Mary Magdalene Church in Waupaca, blesses seeds brought by local farmers.

St. Mary Magdalene Parish, and Deacon Bob Precourt, pastoral leader at St. Mark Parish in Redgranite and Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Poy Sippi.

"I have served in parishes large and small, but the happiest days of my priesthood were spent in rural areas, small country parishes, so I am honored to be with you today," Fr. Girotti told guests, including farm fami-

lies, who brought seeds to be blessed before spring planting.

In his homily, Fr. Girotti reflected on a family photograph taken in the early 1970s, as well as the Parable of the Sower and the challenge of recognizing the master gardener who plants the seeds of life.

Our full story appears in the April 16 issue.

### FRANKLY, FRANCIS



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The church is a great school of prayer. Many of us learned how to whisper our first prayers on our parents' or grandparents' laps. We might, perhaps, cherish the memory of our mommy and daddy who taught us to say our prayers before going to bed. These moments of recollection are often those in which parents listen to some intimate secret and can give their advice inspired by the Gospel. Then, as they grow up, there are other encounters, with other witnesses and teachers of prayer. This is good to remember.

The life of a parish and every Christian community is marked by liturgical moments and moments of community prayer. We become aware that the gift we received with simplicity in infancy is a great heritage, a rich inheritance and that the experience of prayer is worth deepening more and more.

+ Pope Francis, April 14, 2021

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## 'I'm excited to be here,' Bishop-elect Felton tells people of Duluth

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

**ALLOUEZ** — Even though the skies were cloudy and rainy, it was a day of bright excitement and hope for the 400,000 people of the Diocese of Duluth.

"I'm just so excited to be here," said Bishop-elect Dan Felton as he was introduced as the 10th bishop of Duluth. "Really, it's new life for me, and resurrection," he

said at an April 7 press conference.

Bishop-elect Felton, 66, who has been a priest of the Diocese of Green Bay for 40 years and, most recently, its vicar general and moderator of the Curia, began his time in Duluth in his usual fashion — with a song.

"Glory and Praise to our God," Bishop-elect Felton sang.

The bishop-elect gave "glory and praise" to God for his appointment, for Pope Francis,

the Holy Spirit, his personal family (including his mother, Carol, and late father, Ken, and his four sisters), the people of Duluth ("my new family"), his friends, parishioners and "brother priests" in the Diocese of Green Bay, and the "the holy men and women who have gone before us, but are still with us, guiding us."

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# 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

## Feast of the Visitation

BY PATRICIA KASTEN | THE COMPASS

**1** The Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary is May 31. The feast commemorates the meeting of Mary and Elizabeth after the Annunciation (Lk 1:39-57.)

**2** The Visitation feast dates to 1263 and to the Franciscans under the guidance of St. Bonaventure.

**3** The feast has been celebrated on various dates. Most common in the past was July 2, eight days after the feast of the Birth of John the Baptist (June 24).

**4** In 1969, the feast was moved to May 31, closer to the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord (March 25).

**5** Mary journeyed from Nazareth to Ein Karem, a village near Jerusalem where Elizabeth lived with her husband, Zechariah. The distance is about 90 miles.

## In Christ, the victory has been won

Dear friends and followers of Jesus:

It is so easy to look at all the challenges around us and become very discouraged. It seems that every realm of life and society is being tested beyond its limits: family



### BISHOP'S CORNER

Bishop David Ricken

life, political life and church life. We face challenges to our physical, mental and spiritual health. Watching the news, we see stories about economic insecurity, joblessness and what feels like a never-ending stream of senseless violence.

Just naming these stressors out loud is taxing on our souls. It's no wonder that so many people struggle with fear, worry, anxiety and depression. What we are experiencing now seems to be very similar to what the disciples must have felt after Jesus' death on Good Friday before the first Easter. Their hopes and dreams were dashed, they were scattered and everything seemed to be shrouded in darkness.

As Pope Francis has said on several occasions, this time is "not simply an epoch of changes, but an epochal change." In other

words, we are entering a new time in human history. It is during these times, when things feel dark and uncertain, that we must continue to renew our faith by keeping our eyes focused on the person of Jesus, remembering that the victory has already been won. When Christ died on the cross, he paid the full price of our redemption. In other words, he bought us back (redemption) from the powers of sin, death and darkness. He has already won the victory; the price for each one of us has already been paid in full!

Remember that in the Scriptures and in the heavenly realms, one day is the equivalent of 1,000 years and 1,000 years are the equivalent of one day (2 Pet 3:8). Jesus began his ministry with 72 disciples and chose 12 from among them to be his inner circle of apostles. Since then, the population of Christianity has grown from those first followers to 1.2 billion Catholics and over 2 billion when we count all believers in the church today. This doesn't even take into consideration the countless believers who have also been won for Christ in the past 2,000 years. That is not bad when we consider that all of this has been done in two days according to heavenly calculations.

Read the entire column in the April 23 issue.

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## Parish SNAPSHOT



Holy Family School in Brillion held a Penny Challenge March 7-11 and raised \$735. The money collected was used to purchase various items needed by the local foster care system. Each class was given a bucket designated for their class. The 3K class were winners of the Penny Challenge.

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