Future takes shape for Dickinson Trinity

DICKINSON — Dickinson Catholic Schools (DCS) leaders are moving forward after a fire allegedly started by former principal Thomas Sander destroyed portions of Dickinson Trinity High School in early March. DCS president Steve Glasser announced April 10 that Trinity students will be back in their building when the 2014-15 school year commences on August 25. In fact, cleaning has progressed so that the graduation ceremony for the class of 2014 will be held in the Trinity auditorium on May 25.

Looking toward the future, the first step is to get the 250 students in grades 7-12 back on the Trinity campus, said Monsignor Patrick Schumacher, chairman of the Dickinson Catholic Schools board of directors. The central part of the building (which houses the main offices and library directly above) has been enclosed with walls and will likely need to be razed, he said, pending testing on steel beams, joists and masonry walls. However, the school’s west wing will be usable by the fall, which will spare DCS $1 million in annual relocation costs.

By mid-May, DCS administrators plan to have a clearer idea of what the Trinity campus will look like in the future—as well as how long it will take and what it’s going to cost. An eventual move of the DCS elementary students (who are currently housed at two schools adjacent to the Churches of St. Wenceslaus and St. Patrick) to the Trinity campus is being considered as part of the long-term plan for the school system. Administrators envision a hub of offices, gyms and cafeterias between two schools—one housing elementary students and another for grades 7-12. Schumacher compared the layout to that used on the campus of Shanley High School and Sullivan Middle School in Fargo.

Moving toward that goal, Steve Habeck, a Boston architect, will be in Dickinson with his team in early May to conduct a feasibility study on how to best use the existing facilities. In the meantime, cleaning will continue in the still-usable cafeteria and “two marquee core spaces:” the auditorium and Knights of Columbus Activities Center gymnasium, which can hold 2,900 people. Schumacher called the gym “some of the most valuable gym space from Minot to Rapid City and Bismarck to Billings.”

ServiceMaster Recovery Management has employed 60-70 people working 12-hour shifts since the fire cleaning was initiated on March 3 and the disruption to our students, the board of directors is moving in a clear direction and we are in a good position,” Schumacher said. “We have an immediate plan for the fall as well as a long-term plan for the next 50 years.”

Bishop hears concerns at Tioga forum

By Cecile Krimm

Tioga Tribune

Bishop David Kagan of the Bismarck Diocese came to Tioga March 6, facilitated by talk radio host Scott Hennen of KTOO and Tioga geologist Kathy Neteset, who hosted a forum at her company headquarters north of town.

Kagan lauded the “heroic degree” to which local leaders are attempting to meet the challenges in the Bakken region. He said the oil boom represents an opportunity for all Christians to do good works.

The discussion included other Catholic clergy, farmers, contractors, city leaders from Tioga and Stanley, along with a crew camp operator and representatives from the University of Mary, all coming together to talk about the booming population and an almost out-of-control economy.

Threaded throughout the forum were anecdotes illustrating a moral imperative in the Bakken region to address the greed among landlords and the human needs of the many “broken” people who have been attracted by the promise of high-paying jobs.

“It just breaks your heart,” said the manager of Tioga’s Pinnacle travel center. Pinnacle’s Sam Fredin described how hard it has been to cobble together a work force and want to help employees, only to learn one of them—an 18-year-old girl—was living in a tent for two months.

“As a company, we can only do so much,” he said.

Stanley City Commissioner Dennis Lindahl echoed that theme, calling on the religious community to help fill some of the gap.

“There’s an underside to this boom that we can do good works,” he said.

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Stanley City Commissioner Dennis Lindahl echoed that theme, calling on the religious community to help fill some of the gap.

“There’s an underside to this boom that we can do good works,” he said.
God lives!

FROM THE BISHOP

Bishop David D. Kagan

May 2014

By the time you receive the May issue of our diocesan newspaper, we will have celebrated our Catholic Church’s greatest feast, Easter Sunday, as the culmination of the Paschal Triduum. While the holy penitential season of Lent came to an end, we began the shortest (in number of days) but most solemn liturgical season in our year, the Paschal Triduum, beginning the evening of Holy Thursday and ending with the evening of Easter Sunday. I want to assure each of you and for the continued growth of all of us during these days for your intentions that I offered the Church’s liturgies Sunday. I want to assure each of you and ending with the evening of Easter that I offered the Church’s liturgies Sunday. I want to assure each of you and ending with the evening of Easter.

May all of us continue to have and enjoy this most sacred time in our lives! The act of supreme love which Jesus gave to us under sacramental signs at the Last Supper. He gave in His flesh to His Father for us on the altar of the cross on Good Friday. With His descent to the Father for us on the altar of the cross on Good Friday, He gave up in His flesh to His sacred time in our lives? The act of hope and charity.

Jesus Christ be praised! This is ours if we want it and seek it in her glory with Him in heaven and, all of her joys and sorrows; His glory is now and His life. His joys and sorrows were and her very person revolved about Him. She loved Him totally and her entire life with the mind and heart of His mother. Each mystery of the life of Jesus, think pray the holy rosary each day. Place to fully involve ourselves in the glory of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A good way to learn that May all of us continue to have and enjoy a most blessed Easter season. May Jesus Christ be praised!

BISHOP’S SCHEDULE

May 2014

May 1 • Liturgy for Ministry of Acolyte, Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

May 2 • Speak to Cathedral Young Adults and Catholic Credence, South 40, Lincoln, 7:30 p.m.

May 3 • University of Mary Commencement, Civic Center, Bismarck, 1:30 p.m.

May 4 • Confirmation at the Church of Epiphany, Watford City, includes the Church of Our Lady of Czestochowa, Alexander, 10:45 a.m.

May 5 • Confirmation at the Church of St. Joseph, Mandan, 7 p.m.

May 6 • Annual Mass and Pastoral Visit to St. Alexius Medical Center, Bismarck, 10:30 a.m.

May 7 • Confirmation at the Church of Ascension, Bismarck, 7 p.m.

May 8 • Confirmation at the Church of St. Bonaventure, Underwood, 7 p.m.

May 9 • Pastoral visit to the Church of St. Mary, New England, Mass at 5:30 p.m.

May 11 • Confirmation at the Church of the Sacred Heart, Reader, includes the Church of the Holy Trinity, Hettig, and the Church of the Sacred Heart, Scanton, 10:30 a.m. MT

May 12 • Confirmation at the Church of St. Anne, Bismarck, 5 p.m.

May 13 • Catholic Charities General Board Meeting, Bismarck, 12 p.m.

May 14 • Confirmation at the Church of St. Barnabas, Bismarck, Mass at 9:30 a.m. MT

May 15 • Leadership formation day with the University of Mary, Badger Holz Hotel, Bismarck

May 16 • Home on the Range Board Meeting, Home on the Range, Sentinel Butte, 2 p.m. MT

May 17 • Home on the Range Spring Banquet, Home on the Range, Sentinel Butte, 5 p.m. MT

May 18 • Confirmation at the Church of St. Patrick, Dickinson, 8 a.m. MT

May 19 • Real Presence Radio interview, 9 a.m.

May 20 • Confirmation at the Church of Corpus Christi, Bismarck, 7 p.m.

May 21 • All-staff Mass, Chancellor's chapel, 8:30 a.m.

May 22 • Directors' Staff Meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, 9:15 a.m.

May 25 • Graduation at Bishop Ryan High School, Minot, 2 p.m.

May 28 • Real Presence Radio Spring Live Drive host, 9 a.m.

May 29 • Light of Christ Catholic Schools Board meeting, Center for Pastoral Ministry, Bismarck, 11:30 a.m.

May 30 • Anniversary Mass, Cathedral of the Holy Spirit, 3 p.m. (See page 13)

BISHOP IN ACTION

Bishop Kagan incenses the altar to begin the 2014 Chrism Mass at Cathedral of the Holy Spirit in Bismarck. The event, held on the Monday of Holy Week, is a diocesan-wide Mass in which the sacred oils used throughout the year are blessed and consecrated. All priests of the diocese also renew their ordination vows at the Chrism Mass. (Photo by Matthew Kurtz)

Dakota Catholic Action

Reporting on Catholic action in western ND since 1941

Center for Pastoral Ministry - Diocese of Bismarck USP5011-5770
520 N. Washington Street, PO Box 1137, Bismarck, ND 58502-1137
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SOCIAL MEDIA

Search “Bismarck Diocese” on YouTube for videos from the Church in western N.D.

Sister Mary Star

vocation story

Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bismarckdiocese

Watch videos at http://vimeo.com/bismarckdiocese

Get status updates, photos, videos, and links and share them with your friends.

Follow the Diocese on Twitter @BisDiocese or follow Bishop Kagan @Vescovoddk

Visit our website at www.bismarckdiocese.com

Get news, photos, videos and more from around the diocese.

Holy Father’s Prayer Intentions for May

- Media. That the media may be instruments in the service of truth and peace.

- Mary’s Guidance. That Mary, Star of Evangelization, may guide the Church in proclaiming Christ to all nations.
The Catholic laity and parish life

By Bishop Kagan

Jesus, the Son of God, founded the Roman Catholic Church on the foundation of his Apostles and chose St. Peter to be the visible head of the other Apostles and disciples. This same arrangement of the Church has continued down through the centuries and will continue until the end of time.

The nature and visible structure of the Church founded by Jesus is hierarchical, with the successor of Peter, as a successor of the Apostles, is responsible for the Church or diocese; the pastor, appointed by the bishop, is responsible for a parish.

In practical terms, what does this mean for you, the Catholic laity? There are several important things to keep in mind when you respond to your pastor’s requests for cooperation and participation in parish life.

All of our parishes are territorial, that is, all have set boundaries. If Catholics planning within the boundaries of a parish is considered by the Church to belong to the parish.

If Catholics wish to officially belong to a parish other than the one in which they live, only the bishop can provide this service after receiving a written request.

Every parish in the Diocese of Bismarck, for civil purposes, is incorporated separately and the officers of each civil parish corporation are: bishop as president, vicar general as vice-president, pastor as secretary/treasurer, and two lay Catholic parishioners as trustees appointed by the pastor.

In a parish, only the pastor may sign any and all official documents for or from the parish, such as checks, sacramental certificates, etc.

As the pastor of the church, the pastor may allow anyone to sign such documents in the absence of the pastor.

Every parish in the Diocese of Bismarck, by the advice of the bishops, have a Finance Council and a Pastoral Council. These two councils have advisory and decision-making responsibilities. The Finance Council is to help the pastor with the financial affairs of the parish’s assets and liabilities. The Pastoral Council is to help the pastor fulfill his responsibilities regarding the educational, spiritual and liturgical life of the parish.

In every parish, the Catholic laity are encouraged to participate in its liturgical life as an extra-ordinary minister of the Holy Eucharist, sacramentals, readers, ushers and greeter, and permanent deacons; in its spiritual life as leaders of prayer groups and participants in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; in its educational life as leaders of Bible study groups, teach religious classes, and in the works of religious education, adult faith formation and RCIA.

All of these areas of parish life, in addition to being a member of the Finance Council or terms or terms on the parish Finance or Pastoral Council, are the responsibilities of the pastor to guide the spiritual and temporal benefit of all in the parish and in the diocese.

Since I became the Bishop of Bismarck two and a half years ago, I have been not only edified but overwhelming in the active practice of our Catholic faith by you, the lay faithful, but also by your good and devout participation in parish and diocesan life. Please continue this for the strengthening of your own faith and parish life and for the continued transformation of the good example for your children and grandchildren.

Finally, I ask one favor from all of you: Please consider the active practice of your Catholic faith by you, the lay faithful, but also by your good and devout participation in parish and diocesan life. Please continue this for the strengthening of your own faith and parish life and for the continued transformation of the good example for your children and grandchildren.

By Bishop Kagan

MAY 2014

The Tioga Tribune

Bishop David D. Kagan


The Reverend David A. Ring

- Will serve as assistant dean to the Bismarck deanery

The Reverend Paul C. Ebere

- Currently pastor of the Churches of St. Anthony (Mandan) and St. Joseph (Twin Buttes)
- Will be spiritual director at Dickinson-Gresham Seminary (St. Louis, Missouri)

The Reverend Roger A. Synak

- Currently pastor of the Churches of St. Anthony (New Town), St. Louis (Mandan) and Sacred Heart (Plaza) and St. Elizabeth (Makoti)
- Will be pastor of the Churches of St. Anthony (New Town) and St. Anthony (Mandan)

The Reverend Dannis Sehanavayakam, MSFX

- Will be parochial administrator of the Church of St. Joseph (Two Medicine)
- Will be as parochial administrator of the Churches of St. Joseph (Kildeer) and St. Paul (Mandan)

The Reverend Tji John Thanipilly

- Currently parochial vicar of the Churches of St. Joseph (Mandan) and Sacred Heart (Parshall, Sacred Heart (Plaza) and St. Elizabeth (Makoti)
- Will be pastor of the Churches of St. Anthony (New Town) and St. Anthony (Mandan)

The Reverend Robert F. Sheh

- Currently studying at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (Rome, Italy)
- Will be parochial vicar of the Church of St. Mary (Bismarck), as well as part-time instructor at St. Mary’s Central High School (Bismarck) and Director of Health Care for the Church of St. Mary (Bismarck)

The Reverend Sebastian Stephen

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When it comes to the game of basketball, there are a lot of numbers involved; shots, rebounds, turnovers, wins and losses. Numbers are just part of the game.

If you ask Bishop Ryan girls basketball coach (and mathematics instructor) Julie Stewart about numbers, she could probably give you a pretty good breakdown of the stats on paper, but she’d be the first to admit that beyond numbers, the kids on the floor are what’s most important.

The Bishop Ryan girls wrapped up a second consecutive undefeated season with their second consecutive Class B title on March 22 at the Fargo Dome, capping a run of 57 wins in a row that ties them with Larimore for most consecutive wins by a Class B girls team in North Dakota.

Those are numbers Coach Stewart is humbled by, but standing on a chair in the middle of a sea of purple and white at a celebratory gathering after the game, her message wasn’t about wins and losses or streaks and percentages, it was about the girls she coaches.

“These girls play for each other, for their families, for their school, and for God,” she said. “It’s important to them to do the right thing.”

According to Stewart’s coaching method, fundamentals are important and defense leads to offense, but the underlying philosophy is that what the girls do off the court—who they are and how they conduct themselves—is just as important as what they do on the court.

It’s a lesson that hasn’t been lost on the girls.

“It’s not just about learning to play basketball,” senior Anika Rovig said. “These girls and all of my coaches have made me grow as a person.”

Senior Sydney Landsiedel, who was sidelined with a knee injury during the 2012-2013 season added, “Without these girls and Coach Stewart, I wouldn’t be wearing the uniform that I was wearing tonight because last year there were times when I was struggling to get back to play basketball, and I’m so thankful for them helping me and supporting me through this.”

In a way, every team becomes family, but with this year’s Lady Lions team, “family” went a step further.

Nine of the 11 girls who played at the state tournament are “second generation” Lions with at least one parent who attended Bishop Ryan. Coach Stewart, a 1985 grad and Lady Lions basketball standout herself, knows all about “Lion Pride,” and it’s something she sees displayed every day on the court and in the classroom. She can also attest to the amazing support group surrounding the team made up of brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

“It’s these girls and all the support they have around them, I’m just lucky to be a part of it,” she said, then joked to the crowd, “I don’t even know what you’re all doing here.”

In the end, Coach Stewart says it’s something she’ll never forget. “They really are special kids and they built a foundation for our program. They’re each other’s number one fans; they love each other, and they play this game for something a lot bigger than themselves.”

“Family that reaches beyond the numbers”

By Jaimie Brunner

Students donate Nintendo Wii to retired priests

By Matthew Kurtz

Have you ever wanted to go bowling with a retired priest? Or play a round of golf? Or maybe even a boxing match? Now you can.

Thanks to the generosity of students at the Light of Christ Catholic Schools of Excellence 7th and 8th grade Academy, the seven retired priests living at Emmaus Place in Bismarck recently became proud owners of a Nintendo Wii entertainment system.

The new Wii at Emmaus Place was made possible by a service project at the school. Crafted after the “parable of the Talents” in the Bible, each student was given $10 that they could use however they wished.

“Joseph Richter, an eighth grader, expressed that it was pretty easy,” said TV right away, but other than Wehner said with a smile. “It really makes them feel connected to the community,” commented Theresa Mizuer, coordinator of retired priest services for the Bismarck Diocese. “A priest spends his whole life related to a faith community and to have people of all ages, especially the young people, express a desire to spend time with them brings [their lifelong service] to fulfillment.”

The purchase of the Wii “barely put a dent in the total amount of money raised” by the students at the Light of Christ Catholic Schools of Excellence. In addition to setting up the Wii, the students also helped some of the retired priests with their smart phones and iPads.

Missouri Bishop visits Minot to lead Lenten mission

Event was St. Leo's first parish mission in decades

By Grace Fisher

Having concluded what he feels was a very successful Lenten mission at the Church of St. Leo the Great in Minot, Fr. Justin Waltz has decided to make it an annual tradition for the parish. As far as anyone could determine, there had not been a mission at St. Leo’s since the days of Monsignor John Hogan in the 1950s. The event was held March 30-April 1 with Bishop Edward M. Rice of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, Mo., as the mission presenter.

“We felt this was spiritually the next step for the parish, and the people were ready for it,” Waltz said, referring to a continual increase in daily Mass attendance, daily adoration, and a substantial increase in confessions being heard at the parish. A mission for the parish would provide an opportunity for the desired encounter with Christ that so many at St. Leo’s were looking for, he said.

Waltz indicated to the parish early this year that a Lenten mission would be a key component of the spiritual aspect of his pastoral plan. He had offered the challenge of organizing this mission to his two associate priests, Fr. Jayd Nelson and Fr. Thomas Grafsaard.

They wanted the event to provide people with exposure to eucharistic adoration, confession and the recitation of the rosary and divine mercy chaplet. Searching for a speaker, Grafsaard recommended Bishop Rice, having known him since his days in seminary training. Nelson then made arrangements for the bishop to come to Minot and organized the schedule for the event.

“It was clear from day one that the mission was a success but the final night was more then we could have imagined,” Waltz noted. “I hope they’re more willing to reach out to people who are getting up there in age.”

“I think the students see that the life of a priest is rich and full,” Mizuer added. “And if God is calling some of them [to be priests], they’ll know that life [as a priest] is enjoyable...live it!”
By Matthew Kurtz

During a recent trip to the meat department at a Dickinson grocery store, Fr. Keith Streifel met a woman in need.

“My husband and I are looking for Mass. We’re looking for the sacraments...for confession,” she told him. She wasn’t speaking English.

After a short conversation in the Spanish language with the Peruvian woman, Fr. Streifel was pleased to inform her that his parish, the Church of St. Joseph in Dickinson, could indeed meet her spiritual needs.

Responding to a clear need in the rapidly changing landscape of western North Dakota, the first Spanish Mass was offered in Dickinson in June 2013. Ever since, Spanish Mass has been offered on the first Sunday of each month at St. Joseph.

PEOPLE OF GREAT FAITH

The story is very similar in Williston, the heart of North Dakota’s oil patch.

After being ordained a priest in June and beginning his first assignment at the Church of St. Joseph in Williston, Fr. Joseph Evinger quickly noticed the large Spanish-speaking population at Williston’s only Catholic parish.

“At about 80 percent of them don’t know any English at all. Their faith brought them to the Catholic parish,” Streifel said, but his confidence and comfort level increases with each non-English Mass he celebrates. He writes his homily in English, then sends it off to a parishioner’s sister on the west coast for translation into Spanish.

“Maybe in the future I can write [homilies] myself in Spanish, but for now my Spanish isn’t that fluent. I have it in my schedule to study Spanish three times a week.”

CATHOLIC MEANS “UNIVERSAL”

Last spring, Fr. Sebastian Schmidt from Richardson’s Assumption Abbey was invited to assist with a Lenten reconciliation service in Dickinson. Since he had served at the Abbey’s priory in Bogotá, Columbia and gained a familiarity with Spanish, the Dickinson priests wanted him to exclusively hear the confessions of the Hispanics who attended.

“He was there over an hour after the rest of us were done,” Streifel said.

Now, Schmidt is the main celebrant at Dickinson’s Spanish Masses, which typically draw 50-75 people. In Williston, Fr. Buji Antony, one of the diocese’s priests from India, also celebrates Mass in Spanish.

The goal is to begin educating more Hispanics about their Catholic faith and about the Mass, since many “don’t know the essence of what the Mass is,” Evinger explained, noting that many have the desire to attend Mass and learn more, but simply don’t make it a priority in their life.

“They’re looking for Jesus. They’re looking for meaning in their life,” he said.

The Dickinson and Williston communities have largely welcomed the Hispanic population, according to the priests. However, anxiety still exists for those not comfortable communicating with those who can’t speak English. Fr. Streifel says simple kindness goes a long way.

“Welcome them, receive them. Just recognize them and say, ‘I’m glad you’re here.’ For those who don’t speak English, I have some great smiles for them and they have great smiles for me.

“We don’t want to start a separate community, but rather help folks come together as one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church,” Streifel said.

Diocese receives grant to establish Hispanic ministry

Bismarck – The Diocese of Bismarck has been selected as one of 10 dioceses in the U.S. to participate in a new grant initiative offered by the Catholic Extension Society. Bishop David Kagan was notified in February.

The U.S.-Latin American Sisters Exchange Program will provide funding for three religious sisters from Latin America to come to western N.D. and help establish a Hispanic ministry program. While the sisters work and minister in the Bismarck Diocese, they will receive education and training so they can return to their religious community after five years and expand their community’s ministry.

“Bishop Kagan shared that several of our pastors had expressed concerns that their parishes were not able to minister effectively to our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters,” explained Ron Schatz, who wrote the grant application as director of stewardship and resource development for the Bismarck Diocese. “Either the pastor and/or the parish staff did not speak Spanish, or they didn’t have the necessary resources.”

There are many different areas of parish ministry in which the religious sisters will assist, including sacramental preparation, liturgical minister training and catechesis. The religious sisters will be able to help every parish in our diocese minister effectively to all of our Spanish-speaking parishioners.

“In researching this grant, I thought it would be a good fit for our diocese. I am thrilled that we have been selected for grant funding for this unique opportunity,” Schatz said.

Spanish Mass debuts in western ND

By Matthew Kurtz

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After being ordained a priest in June and beginning his first assignment at the Church of St. Joseph in Williston, Fr. Joseph Evinger quickly noticed the large Spanish-speaking population at Williston’s only Catholic parish.

“At about 80 percent of them don’t know any English at all. Their faith brought them to the Catholic parish,” Streifel said, but his confidence and comfort level increases with each non-English Mass he celebrates. He writes his homily in English, then sends it off to a parishioner’s sister on the west coast for translation into Spanish.

“Maybe in the future I can write [homilies] myself in Spanish, but for now my Spanish isn’t that fluent. I have it in my schedule to study Spanish three times a week.”

CATHOLIC MEANS “UNIVERSAL”

Last spring, Fr. Sebastian Schmidt from Richardson’s Assumption Abbey was invited to assist with a Lenten reconciliation service in Dickinson. Since he had served at the Abbey’s priory in Bogotá, Columbia and gained a familiarity with Spanish, the Dickinson priests wanted him to exclusively hear the confessions of the Hispanics who attended.

“He was there over an hour after the rest of us were done,” Streifel said.

Now, Schmidt is the main celebrant at Dickinson’s Spanish Masses, which typically draw 50-75 people. In Williston, Fr. Buji Antony, one of the diocese’s priests from India, also celebrates Mass in Spanish.

The goal is to begin educating more Hispanics about their Catholic faith and about the Mass, since many “don’t know the essence of what the Mass is,” Evinger explained, noting that many have the desire to attend Mass and learn more, but simply don’t make it a priority in their life.

“They’re looking for Jesus. They’re looking for meaning in their life,” he said.

The Dickinson and Williston communities have largely welcomed the Hispanic population, according to the priests. However, anxiety still exists for those not comfortable communicating with those who can’t speak English. Fr. Streifel says simple kindness goes a long way.

“Welcome them, receive them. Just recognize them and say, ‘I’m glad you’re here.’ For those who don’t speak English, I have some great smiles for them and they have great smiles for me.

“We don’t want to start a separate community, but rather help folks come together as one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church,” Streifel said.

Diocese receives grant to establish Hispanic ministry

Bismarck – The Diocese of Bismarck has been selected as one of 10 dioceses in the U.S. to participate in a new grant initiative offered by the Catholic Extension Society. Bishop David Kagan was notified in February.

The U.S.-Latin American Sisters Exchange Program will provide funding for three religious sisters from Latin America to come to western N.D. and help establish a Hispanic ministry program. While the sisters work and minister in the Bismarck Diocese, they will receive education and training so they can return to their religious community after five years and expand their community’s ministry.

“Bishop Kagan shared that several of our pastors had expressed concerns that their parishes were not able to minister effectively to our Spanish-speaking brothers and sisters,” explained Ron Schatz, who wrote the grant application as director of stewardship and resource development for the Bismarck Diocese. “Either the pastor and/or the parish staff did not speak Spanish, or they didn’t have the necessary resources.”

There are many different areas of parish ministry in which the religious sisters will assist, including sacramental preparation, liturgical minister training and catechesis. The religious sisters will be able to help every parish in our diocese minister effectively to all of our Spanish-speaking parishioners.

“In researching this grant, I thought it would be a good fit for our diocese. I am thrilled that we have been selected for grant funding for this unique opportunity,” Schatz said.
My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Our 57th Annual God’s Share Appeal is upon us. This appeal is very important to the diocese as your gift helps to fund the spiritual, pastoral, educational and temporal works critical in forming our families, children and all individuals yearning for the love and mercy of God.

This year’s goal is $3,200,000. With your donation, we will be able to provide the critical funding that enables the Catholic Church in western North Dakota to form our youth and adults in our faith, promote the dignity of life and marriage, and foster vocations to the priesthood.

Your gift to the God’s Share Appeal helps provide all of the programs and services that are highlighted in the following pages. Please read on to learn how these offices dispense the Lord’s tender mercies to thousands of individuals and families in our diocese.

I have chosen, “Give alms from your possessions... Almsgiving is a worthy offering in the sight of the Most High for all who practice it,” Tobit 4:7, 11, as the theme for our 2014 appeal. When you reflect on this theme, I hope you are inspired to prayerfully discern how God has showered you and your family with so many gifts and blessings.

You play a very important and necessary role in our diocesan family! I need you and your prayers and financial support to keep our church alive and vibrant to serve you and your loved ones for generations to come. We simply cannot continue to do the Lord’s work without your support.

I am so profoundly grateful to you for your continued prayers and financial support you give to the annual God’s Share Appeal. May the Lord’s abundant blessings be yours today and always.

May God bless you and all that we hope to accomplish in the powerful and loving presence of Jesus Christ.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David D. Kagan
Bishop of Bismarck

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“Give alms from your possessions... Almsgiving is a worthy offering in the sight of the Most High for all who practice it.”

- Tobit 4:7, 11
Doing God’s Work

For more interesting pictures and information on each office, please visit our diocesan website: www.bismarckdiocese.com

STEWARDSHIP AND THE GOD’S SHARE APPEAL

The God’s Share Appeal is based on the concept of Christian stewardship. Stewardship is centered on the daily recognition that we are not the absolute owners of ourselves, our time, our talents, or material goods. Rather, we have received every gift of nature and grace from God. Through baptism we are called to use our time, talent and treasure in a responsible manner for the benefit of our families, our parish communities, the pastoral, educational and religious ministries of the diocese, and for the global ministries of the universal Church. Stewardship is not about just giving in order to fill a need. It is about living a life that shows gratitude to the Lord for our lives, our skills and our resources.

STEWARDSHIP IS...

Receiving God’s gifts gratefully
Nurturing God’s gifts responsibly
Sharing God’s gifts joyfully
Returning God’s gifts abundantly

This year’s God’s Share Appeal theme, “Give alms from your possessions...Almsgiving is a worthy offering in the sight of the Most High for all who practice it” (Tobit 4:7, 11) reminds us that our sacrifices are pleasing to God. By supporting the work and ministry of the programs and services funded by the God’s Share Appeal, you are able to work in communion toward fulfilling your role as a devoted steward.

Please consider one percent of your income as a gift to the 2014 God’s Share Appeal. Make your pledge today. Thank you for being good stewards of God’s grace.

CONSIDER DIFFERENT POSSIBILITIES

1. Make a pledge rather than a one-time gift.
2. Have your gift automatically deducted from your checking or savings account.
3. Use your credit card or debit card to make your gift.
5. Increase last year’s gift by a percentage or a specific dollar amount.
6. Pledge one percent of your income.
7. Make your gift using stocks, bonds, grain, livestock, securities, real estate, or other personal property, which may have greatly increased in value. Should you be considering this type of gift, contact the Office of Stewardship and Resource Development at (701) 222-3035 for assistance.

Your donation supports all of the programs offered through the Office of Family Ministry. Four of the many programs are the Premarriage Workshops for couples planning to become married, the Retrouvaille Program that helps parishioners who are in hurting marriages, the annual Celebration of Marriage Day, and the annual Town and Country Celebration.

WE RESPOND AS DISCIPLES...

After reflecting on the importance of the indispensable works of formation, outreach and education funded through the God’s Share Appeal and how you can help, please reflect on the many gifts you have received from God, including your financial blessings.

Next, pray about how God wants you to use the gifts He has entrusted to your care. Then, decide how you will share your blessings with those in need and support the mission of your diocesan Church.

Please prayerfully discern how you will respond to God’s generosity in your life by making a generous pledge to the God’s Share Appeal that impacts thousands of lives in western North Dakota each year.

“Give alms from your possessions...Almsgiving is a worthy offering in the sight of the Most High for all who practice it.”

- Tobit 4:7, 11

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Your gift supports the Office of Vocations. Currently, we have 12 seminarians in formation, and one of them is scheduled to be ordained on June 12, 2014.

Your donation supports all of the programs offered through the Office of Permanent Diaconate which coordinates the recruitment and training of deacon candidates. Currently, we have 79 Deacons with 18 men in formation.

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Your contribution supports all of our 13 retired priests who are a tremendous gift to our diocese. Fr. Mary Klemmer, Fr. Ray Aydt, Fr. Ed Wehner and Fr. Jerry Kautzman enjoy visiting with friends and family.

Your donation supports all of the programs offered through the Office of Adult Faith Formation. One of these programs is the training offered to each parish so they can conduct the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) which is the process for welcoming adults into the full communion of the Catholic Church. Bishop Kagan poses here with the RCIA catechumens and candidates.

The Office of Youth Ministry coordinates the Search weekends, the High School Youth Rally and the Jr. High Youth Rally. Your donation to the God’s Share Appeal helps keep our future leaders active and alive in our Catholic Church.

Your donation supports numerous programs and services provided through the Office of Family Ministry. Four of the many programs are the Premarriage Workshops for couples planning to become married, the Retrouvaille Program that helps parishioners who are in hurting marriages, the annual Celebration of Marriage Day, and the annual Town and Country Celebration.

The Office of Communications assists Bishop Kagan in communicating with people of all ages in a variety of ways—through the Dakota Catholic Action newspaper, weekly video messages on the diocesan website and through his Twitter account.
UPCOMING EVENTS

**NFP instructor training**
Interested in becoming a certified NFP instructor for the Bismarck Diocese? A training in the Bingham Method of Natural Family Planning will be held in Bismarck on June 5-8, 2014. Why become a Bingham Method teacher? You will be joining teachers in over 100 countries around the world in teaching the simplest yet scientifically researched method available. Candidates need not be current users of the method to apply. Women are able to teach as an individual or a married couple. For more information, including an application to teach as an individual or a married couple.

**Catholic Action**
For more information including an application to teach as an individual or a married couple.

**Quilt show**
Deacon Edwin Wesolowski
Deacon Edwin A. Wesolowski, 75, passed away on March 24, 2014, at St. Vincent’s Care Center, Bismarck.

Ed was born March 27, 1938 in Grand Forks, the son of Edwin and Catherine (Ebertowski) Wesolowski of Warsaw. At age 5, his mother died so he spent most of his time at a farm near Warsaw with his maternal grandparents, John and Martha Ebertowski.

In February 1957, he volunteered to serve in the Army. He was stationed in Heidelberg, Germany and worked with classified information as a clerk typist for two years. He returned to the United States in February 1959 and remained on active reserve until his honorable discharge in July 1963.

Ed graduated from the University of North Dakota in 1966 and worked for the U.S. Geological Survey in Bismarck as a hydrologist, at the USGS as a water quality specialist and supervisory hydrologist, and for the Bureau of Reclamation to work on the Shasta Project.

In February 1962, he married Joy Korynta of Ardoch and the couple raised four children. Ed was a Fourth Degree Knight of Columbus and was very active at the Church of St. Anne, serving as a lector and eucharistic minister for many years. He was involved with many diocesan programs including pre-marriage preparation, baptismal classes and Bible studies.

Ed was ordained a deacon in 1999 at the Church of St. Leo in Minot. He served as a deacon at the Churches of St. Anne, Ascension and St. Mary in Bismarck until he retired from active ministry in 2006.

**Jeanne d’Arc**
Sister Jeanne d'Arc was born March 27, 1925 to Peter and Celestine (Tschider) Last, the oldest of nine children. Following high school, Viola attended Mount Marty College in Yankton, S.D. and graduated with a major in history and a minor in education. In 1966 she graduated an MBA at the University of Notre Dame. Viola entered Sacred Heart Convent in Yankton in 1944. She was given the name Del Rey. Following her profession of Monastic Promises, she was sent to Selfridge, N.D. where she began her teaching career. Sister Del Rey also taught at Stephan Indian Mission, Aberdeen, Kranzburg and Pierre, S.D.; Glen Ullin and Richardton, N.D.; and York, Neb. In 1961, she became a founding member of Mother of God Monastery.

She is survived by two sisters (Alma Jean and Kathleen), two brothers (Pat and Richard), numerous nieces and nephews and the Sisters of Mother of God Monastery. She was preceded in death by her parents, sisters (Irene, Gladys and Donna) and brother Victor.

**Diocese seeks scouts for St. George Trek**
BISMARCK – The Bismarck Diocese Catholic Committee on Scouting is seeking male and female applicants for the St. George Trek on July 8, 2015 in Albuquerque, N.M.

The St. George Trek is a high-adventure hiking trip at the Philmont Scout Ranch designed to help young men and women discern their vocation. Youth, under the guidance of selected priests, religious and seminarians, spend 11 days hiking the beautiful trails of Philmont Scout Ranch in the Sangre de Cristos range of the Rocky Mountains in northern New Mexico. The National Catholic Committee on Scouting sponsors the event.

Candidates must be 15 years of age or on or before July 1, 2015 and must be able to handle the physical demands of mountain backpacking.

The registration form can be found at http://accc-bsa.org under the “Youth” tab. Completed forms should be sent by June 1, 2014 to: Deacon Harvey Hanel, 1918 S Grandview Ln, Bismarck, ND 58503.
Bismarck seminarian Douglas Krebs is handed the paten during Mass April 6 where he received the Ministry of Acolyte. As an acolyte, Krebs is commissioned to serve at the altar of Mass, assist in the purification of communion vessels, and take Holy Communion to the sick.

Key facts: Human Life Amendment

BACKGROUND
North Dakota voters will have an opportunity to enact the proposed Human Life Amendment this November. The proposed amendment to North Dakota’s state constitution provides as follows:

“The inalienable right to life of every human being at any stage of development must be recognized and protected.”

The proposed amendment was passed by a bi-partisan majority of both the House and the Senate of the state legislature.

PURPOSE
North Dakota’s legislature has passed a variety of strong, common-sense pro-life laws. These include ensuring that women are given full disclosure of information prior to an abortion, making sure parents are notified if their daughter is seeking an abortion, and prohibiting children who are partially born from being killed by an abortionist before their birth can be completed.

Unfortunately, the wealthy abortion industry regularly challenges North Dakota’s pro-life laws and attempts to persuade judges to invent a state constitutional right to abortion as a way of overturning these laws. The Human Life Amendment will give the state needed legal protection against a judge inventing a right to abortion, as recently happened in Fargo.

Ruling on the validity of two laws passed by the legislature to protect the health and safety of women receiving abortions, Judge Wickham claimed that the North Dakota constitution contains an implicit right to abortion. The Human Life Amendment will give the state needed legal protection against these attacks.

AMENDMENT SUPPORTERS
The amendment is supported by “ND Choose Life,” a coalition of pro-life, pro-family, women’s and religious organizations including the North Dakota Catholic Conference, North Dakota Family Alliance, North Dakota Life League, Love Them Both, North Dakota Right to Life and the North Dakota chapter of Concerned Women for America LAC, among others. The coalition’s web site is NDChooseLife.com.

AMENDMENT OPPONENTS
Groups such as Planned Parenthood and the Center for Reproductive Rights oppose the amendment just as they oppose any common-sense law that reduces abortion. In a prior campaign in North Dakota regarding religious liberty, the abortion industry was responsible for virtually all of the funds used to oppose the amendment.

TAKE ACTION
To stay up-to-date with the latest information regarding the ND Human Life Amendment, sign up to receive email updates at NDchooselife.com or follow ND Choose Life on Facebook & Twitter. Printed with permission by ND Choose Life.

Bismarck, North Dakota - The North Dakota Catholic Conference, speaking on behalf of the Roman Catholic bishops of North Dakota issued the following statement on the announcement by Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem that the Red River Women’s Clinic is dismissing its attempt to nullify new safety laws for abortions.

Statement of the North Dakota Catholic Conference on Settlement of Abortion Lawsuit

Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem announced today that the Red River Women’s Clinic is dismissing its attempt to nullify new safety laws for abortions.

The North Dakota Catholic Conference welcomes this development. So long as abortion is legal, the health and safety of women having abortions must be protected. We are pleased that the abortion clinic decided to comply with this common sense law rather than tie up the courts with its attempt to invent an undefined right to abortion.

Nevertheless, North Dakotans should be concerned that the clinic and its disregard for women’s health and safety is to pass the Human Life Amendment on the November ballot. The amendment, which will be Measure One, will prevent judicial nullification of reasonable legislation that protects human life, including the lives of women having abortions.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: March 14, 2014
Contact: Christopher Dodson, Executive Director
(701-269-2644)

Catholic Bishops Welcome Settlement, Warn of Other Attacks on Common Sense Laws

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THE BLUE MASS AT CATHEDRAL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, BISMARCK

The Blue Mass is an opportunity to pray for all active, retired and deceased law enforcement officers, firefighters and emergency medical personnel.

The Blue Mass is July 30th, 2014, 6 p.m. All are invited.
Bringing “being” back to human beings

With summer right around the corner, the pace of daily activity seems to pick up. On the one hand, our schedules are absolutely elated to get out of the house after such a long winter, but on the other hand, they fear escalating into pure busyness. Don’t let yourself and your family get ensnared in the busyness trap once Memorial Day weekend begins.

Something to keep in mind: Satan hates you—everything about you! He not only wants your time but wants you to be separated from God, but he wants to destroy your body, too. If he can’t keep you from God through mortal sin, he’s going to try to distract you from the mission God has entrusted to you—the thing that only you can do. The world screams to be a human doing rather than a human being.

It’s like part of The Lord of the Rings where Frodo, the one who’s chosen to carry the ring symbolizing temptation and sin, collapses to the ground out of sheer exhaustion ready to give up on his mission when Galadriel, an elf likened to our Blessed Mother, appears to him in a vision, extends her hand to him and says, “This mission has been appointed to you, Frodo of the Shire. If you do not find a way, no one will.” He takes her hand and is pulled back up with renewed strength and vision.

To ensure that Satan doesn’t get the upper hand in our lives, we need to prioritize the activities we put off. St. John Paul the Great encouraged us in his 1998 writing Dies Domini, “Do not be afraid to give your time to Christ: Yes, let us open our time to Christ, that He may cast light upon it and give it direction. He is the One who knows the secret of time and the secret of eternity.”

Here’s where you can start:
1. Time for God: When are you going to spend time in conversation with God today? If you’re too busy to pray, you’re too busy, period. Prayer is a must! Stop the excuses. If you’re too busy to pray, you’re too busy! Stop the excuses. If you’re too busy to pray, you’re too busy! (priesthood, consecrated life)

2. Your primary vocation (priesthood, consecrated life, or marriage): This, by profession or vocation, includes your work to holiness, so this must trump all of your activities apart from your time with God. Make the time you do so should be of this or others involved with your vocation meaningful—they want your love, not more things. Remember that ’70s song “Cat’s in the Cradle”? Don’t let that be the ballad of your life.

3. Rest/recreation/holy leisure: Do you spend as much time as you enjoy, what makes you fully come alive, for the sake of your work? This is why we get burned out! God gave us Sundays to relax, worship Him, and to spend time being with others. Plus, we need a snippet of this daily, not just Sundays. “The alteration between work and rest, built into human nature, is willed by God himself...[Rest] is something ‘sacred,’ because it is man’s way of withdrawing it from the excessive demanding cycle of earthly tasks in order to renew his awareness that everything is the work of God” (Dies Domini).

4. Work: This is a necessary part of life—there’s no getting around it. However, it can overwhelm us, and take precedence over the people in our life. How are you being a light in the workplace? How are you trying to make someone else’s day better? The immortal souls God places in our path are more important than the most pressing project.

Time is a free gift we are given, but with this gift comes great responsibility. Every action we do should be ordered to our ultimate end: heaven.

C.S. Lewis shares in his book Mere Christianity, “If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of others. I have always been sorry for those psychologists who have lately ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective...Am at heaven and you will get earth ‘thrown in’; aim at earth and you will get neither.”

Ask yourself: How do I want to spend my time? vs. How am I spending my time?

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Duppong is director of adult faith formation for the Bismarck Diocese.

Responding to God’s grace: A choice

The presentation of the calf in the birthing canal of the heifer was perfect. The delivery was difficult. I could feel the calf’s head then its body, then its legs moving through the calf’s chest cavity. I noticed the calf was not breathing. I kneel on the ground, reached down, wiped the calf’s nose, and clamped its mouth shut, blocked one nostril and puffed into the other nostril, hoping to initiate its breathing. Five seconds later I started to massage its chest and diaphragm, like its mother would do with her calf.

All the newborn heifer calf had to do was accept the air that was everywhere. I prayed it would—and miraculously I could see breathing start. The breathing was labored at first, eventually developing into a rhythm, accepting the air and breathing it with love.

The call still had some hurdles to overcome. I continued to massage the calf, rubbing its nose, head, underbelly and legs. It became more and more alert and I whispered “Thank you, God.”

So, as I wiped the dirt, amniotic fluid and other cerebral foils off of my hands, I thought of the presence of God’s grace. The calf had access to all the air in the world. It just had to start to breathe and want to live. Air is everywhere, a necessity to sustain life.

In my present, God’s grace is everywhere—and God gives me that grace unconditionally. God’s assistance through grace is infinite. The key is that I have to be open to accepting and to using the grace in a way that is good and pleasing to God. Rising off my knees, I began a self-examination. God is always there and God is present in so many ways. God wants me to answer the call to be a disciple. The decision—just like the calf’s decision to breathe the ever-present air of this earth—is mine.

As I walked over to attend to the new mother cow, my head was reeling with images of how God gives me the freedom to decide how I will be part of God’s world. My lot in life is a series of conscious choices that I make. Living with God through the Trinity should be a delightful experience. There is everything easy, goes my way and strokes my ego. Rather, the delight in living means accepting the challenges of life and turning them into the joy of being a disciple of Jesus. True discipleship of Jesus means serving God by serving others. This means accepting God’s grace offered constantly in life. It means commitment to being open to God’s love in the many forms manifested to me.

Life presents many situations—and it is up to me to turn challenges into opportunities in which I can show God’s ever present love in life. I hope I can answer the call. Care to join me?

---

Odermann lives with his wife Leona on the family farm in Bottineau County. They are members of the Church of St. Patrick in Dickson and assist with eucharistic celebrations there as well as at the Churches of St. Bernard (Belfield) and St. Mary (Medora).

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

The Diocese of Bismarck is firmly committed to the health and protection of our children, young people and vulnerable adults. With the hope of healing the pain and suffering from sexual abuse in the Catholic Church, we encourage anyone who has suffered from this abuse to please come forward and let us know. To report allegations of sexual abuse, please contact: Dale Eberle, Chancery Office of Bismarck, PO Box 367, Bismarck, ND 58502-1373. Phone: 701.223.1345 or 1.877.465.7435. The complaint form and policies can be found on the diocese's website at http://www.bismarckdiocese.com.

CODE OF PASTORAL CONDUCT

The Catholic Church holds its clergy, Congregation staff, volunteers and parishioners as its call to an exemplary way of life, which reflects the values and virtues of the Gospel. The Code of Pastoral Conduct is defined for the Diocese of Bismarck and it provides a foundation for implementing effective and enforceable standards for all personnel. The Code of Pastoral Conduct can be found at http://www.bismarckdiocese.com.

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The danger of ideologies
Reflecting on 20 years with the ND Catholic Conference

This spring marks my twentieth year with the North Dakota Catholic Conference. People often ask what I have learned about politics and politicians during these twenty years. Three lessons stand out to me.

First, most people, including most lawmakers, are neither entirely “conservative” nor “liberal.” The truth is that most of us live in a world of shades. Even the most tight-fisted fiscal conservative will loosen the purse strings for a cause close to her heart. Self-proclaimed “progressives” can shudder at the breakdown of social norms. Second, most legislators want to do what they think is right for their constituents and the broader population. Self-interest, power grabbing and revenge make for good political dramas on television—and they do exist—but most legislators are there because they care about making society better for others.

Third, the greatest barrier to progress for any area of legislation is partisanship and ideology. This might seem to contradict the first two observations. After all, if most legislators are not completely conservative or liberal and they want to do the right thing, why would partisanship and ideology get in the way?

There are a few possible explanations for this apparent paradox. First, like it or not, the two-party system is entrenched in the United States. It is the setting in which any elected official must work. With that comes party discipline which can curb and sometimes quash the will and ability to do what the legislator thinks is right. Sometimes this comes with the ultimate goal of doing good in mind. Frequently a legislator must decide to “go with the party on this one” so that he or she can influence the party on another issue. Additionally, two-party politics has, in more recent decades, tended to greater differences rather than commonalities. This was not always the case. Party fronts use to teach that the United States had a history of having two only slightly different centrist parties, unlike Europe. Both parties moved toward the center to capture the majority vote. When the voters moved “left” or “right,” the center moved with them.

Whether the parties are following the people or the people are following the parties, both parties have more recently moved away from the center. This puts more pressure on legislators to stay disciplined and to break party ranks less frequently.

Ideology contributes to the problem because, even if most people are not completely conservative or liberal, they often think they are entirely one or the other. No matter what their views, people identify themselves according to ideologies such as “conservative,” “libertarian,” “progressive,” “anarchist.”

When it comes to political activities, it becomes too common and convenient to think of ourselves not as Catholics, but as progressives, Republicans, conservatives, or whatever. As a result, it becomes too easy to let ideology and parties get in the way of what we believe is right.

Pope Francis has recently reminded us that all ideologies fall short of expressing the whole truth of the human person. No ideology, whether it be socialism, libertarianism, liberalism, scientism, secularism, or any other “-ism” can answer the essential questions about our existence. Much less provide comprehensive guidance to questions about public policy. Turning to ideology or parties for political answers risks engaging in a form of idolatry. Rather than turning to the party or philosophies, the first question a legislator should ask when confronted with a proposal should be, “Based on what I know about my faith and what my conscience tells me, is this the right answer?”

So let’s pray that our lawmakers have the wisdom to discern the difference between the Truth and ideologies, between following Him or following parties, and the strength to act according to an in conscience. And while you are at it, please pray for me and the work of the North Dakota Catholic Conference.

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**Public Invitations to Clerics and Laity of the Diocese of Bismarck**

With joy and thanksgiving to God, please join the Church of the Diocese of Bismarck as they gather with Bishop David Kagan for the Anniversary Mass of the Ordination to the Holy Priesthood for:

- Rev. Msgr. James B. Braaten (85)
- Rev. David G. Morman (25)
- Rev. Victor Fesor, OSB (50)
- Rev. Raymond Dietlein, OSB (60)
- Rev. Dennis R. Schafer (25)
- Rev. John P. O’Leary (60)
- Rt. Rev. Lawrence Wagner, OSB (60)
- Rev. Msgr. Joseph Senger (60)

Friday May 30, 2014 • 3 p.m.

at Cathedral of the Holy Spirit

520 N. Pointon Street, Bismarck, ND

Reception to follow 4–5:30 p.m.

(in the lower level of Cathedral)

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**Find yourself throwing plates?**

Try a pocket Gospel, Pope says

It’s often a struggle for ordinary people, like you and me, to relate the Gospel to our lives each day. Thankfully, Pope Francis knows this.

Have you ever noticed that he’s all about practicality? He understands what everyday life in the world entails and he wants to meet us there. Simply put, he wants his words to be practical enough to make a difference in our homes and families. As usual, Pope “Frank” uses himself as an example. He’s already acting on what he challenges us to everyday. Recently, he’s been encouraging people to start focusing on the Gospels each day. But he’s practical about it. How can we focus on the Gospel throughout the day when we are constantly going from one thing to the next? Pope Francis suggests we do what he does—carry a small portable copy of the Gospel with us, in our purse or even in our pocket.

“At any time in the day I take the Gospel out of my pocket and read a little something, a short passage. There we find Jesus, Who speaks to us, in the Gospel! Think about this. It is not difficult, and it is not even necessary to have all four of them: we can carry one of the Gospels, a little copy, with us at all times.”

Pope “Frank” is clear with us. His suggestion is simple. And to make it even easier, at his regular Sunday Angelus in St. Peter’s square on April 6, he handed out thousands of pocket-sized copies of the Gospel to the people there. He’s determined to get people to focus on what’s most important—Christ—throughout their days...even if that means he has to put a copy of the Gospel right in their hands. Why is this so important to Pope Francis? He’s frank about that, too.

“Then, as always, he relates these everyday struggles to Christ. We are human, he said, so we shouldn’t be discouraged when arguments happen.

“Love is stronger than the moments in which we argue. Keep alive the link with God, which is at the basis of the marital bond.” This happens through prayer—or even a “little gesture: a caress.” A very physical and concrete suggestion from our pope.

“We’ve seen it time and time again, but the example of the pocket Gospels and plate throwing can remind us that our pope is someone who is real...and relatable. Just like Jesus. So it’s the least we can do to hear what he has to say. Hopefully we will remember ‘Pope ‘Frank’ and turn to the Gospel next time we find ourselves throwing plates in the kitchen.”

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**Balancing Church & State**

**Christopher Dodson**

**Featured Columnists**

**Pope Frank**

**Abbey Nagel**

**Rev. Msgr. Joseph Senger (60)**


**Rev. Dennis R. Schafer (25)**

**Rev. John P. O’Leary (60)**

**Rev. Lawrence Wagner, OSB (60)**

**Rev. Msgr. Joseph Senger (60)**

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The person who takes a bath saying, “I take a bath once a during Easter. This is like our annual communion says that we must confess. Priests have to go to in His Name. With the Living God whose foremost about an encounter with him. Reconciliation is first and who receives absolution from of that forgiveness as anyone. The priest is as much in need to priests, is still God’s power. Power to forgive sins, Confession is not about We need to hear and receive. Another person present. We intends us to encounter importantly because God others—and more. Because our sins hurt the sacrament of penance. Among married men and women who undergo surgical sterilization through a vasectomy or a tubal ligation, it has been estimated that anywhere from ten to twenty percent will come to regret the choice. Sometimes there may be an immediate awareness of wrongdoing following the surgery, while in other cases, as Patrick Coffin, radio host and author of Sex au Naturel notes, sterilized couples may...drift for years before acknowledging that something between them has no longer in sync. After the initial pregnancy fear subsides, and the vision of 1001 erotic nights turns out to be something of a scam, spouse may (subtly) turn against spouse while doing their best to ignore the silent, disturbing ‘presence’ of the unknown. Their decision to seek out a permanent form of contraception can also affect their marriage in other important ways. John Billings has noted: there is “an effect that is even more tragic than the clinical, and it is that in many cases the use of contraceptive methods in marriage has been followed by an act of infidelity of the spouses. It would seem that contraception diminishes the mutual respect of husband and wife...Additionally, the abandoning of self-control diminishes the capacity to exercise this self-domination outside the marriage.” The “abandonment of self-control” that can follow permanent sterilization raises ongoing spiritual and moral challenges for couples who have undergone a vasectomy or a tubal ligation. A unique and vexing problem arises because sterilized individuals may find themselves, as Patrick Coffin observes, “sorely tempted to delight in the very sex-without-babies mentality that led to the sterilization in the first place.” Repentant couples, out of an abundance of spiritual caution, may thus wonder what they should do, and whether they are obliged to get a surgical reversal of the procedure. The Church has never declared this to be a required step, in part because of the risks and burdens associated with surgical interventions, in part because of the high uncertainty of a successful outcome, and in part because of the potentially significant expenses involved. Even though a reversal may not be feasible, a temporary abstention, the repentant couple may nonetheless become aware of the need to order their sexual activity and appetites in the face of their original sterilization decision and its extended consequences. They may recognize a pressing intention to act anew in the virtue of marital chastity and to engage in a lifestyle that authentically embodies their new, albeit delayed, rejection of the contraceptive mentality.

In these situations, clergy and spiritual advisors will often encourage couples to pattern their lives after models of marital abstinence that fertile couples follow when using Natural Family Planning (NFP). During times of abstinence the couples actively exercise self-control, thereby reordering the sensual and sexual appetites. This strengthens spouses in their resolve to not reduce each other to objects for pursuing sexual-self-gratification. This is important first because various forms of contraception, including permanent sterilization, often involve the phenomenon of the woman feeling as if she is being “used” by her husband. Abstinence, therefore, assists couples in expressing their mutual love in other ways. St. John Paul II explains this perspective in his famous work Love and Responsibility, wherein he emphasizes the essential character of continence as a virtue: the conviction that the love of man and woman consists not necessarily as a result of temporary abstention from erotic experiences, but on the contrary, a culture of life might reasonably be expected to occur among some sterilized couples who resolve to live out an NFP lifestyle, perhaps becoming more open to adopting a child, or more open to other forms of spiritual parenthood in their communities such as Big Brother/Big Sister programs. By abstaining during fertile times, then, the sterilized couple reiterates the same positive behaviors that they might have practiced had they not chosen to be sterilized at all. Thus, the science of NFP offers the repentant sterilized couple a school of opportunity to acquire a virtue within their marriage and their cultural relations.

Test yourself!

1: Which Pope called for the Second Vatican Council?
2: What          was the first diocese established in the United States? Who was their first bishop?
3: Which three sacraments use Sacred Chrism within the rite?

Questions I was afraid to ask

FR KEITH STREIFEL

A path of renewal for the Catholic sterilized couple

PHR TAD PACHOLczyk

Among married men and women who undergo surgical sterilization through a vasectomy or a tubal ligation, it has been estimated that anywhere from ten to twenty percent will come to regret the choice. Sometimes there may be an immediate awareness of wrongdoing following the surgery, while in other cases, as Patrick Coffin, radio host and author of Sex au Naturel notes, sterilized couples may...drift for years before acknowledging that something between them has no longer in sync. After the initial pregnancy fear subsides, and the vision of 1001 erotic nights turns out to be something of a scam, spouse may (subtly) turn against spouse while doing their best to ignore the silent, disturbing ‘presence’ of the unknown. Their decision to seek out a permanent form of contraception can also affect their marriage in other important ways. John Billings has noted: there is “an effect that is even more tragic than the clinical, and it is that in many cases the use of contraceptive methods in marriage has been followed by an act of infidelity of the spouses. It would seem that contraception diminishes the mutual respect of husband and wife...Additionally, the abandoning of self-control diminishes the capacity to exercise this self-domination outside the marriage.” The “abandonment of self-control” that can follow permanent sterilization raises ongoing spiritual and moral challenges for couples who have undergone a vasectomy or a tubal ligation. A unique and vexing problem arises because sterilized individuals may find themselves, as Patrick Coffin observes, “sorely tempted to delight in the very sex-without-babies mentality that led to the sterilization in the first place.” Repentant couples, out of an abundance of spiritual caution, may thus wonder what they should do, and whether they are obliged to get a surgical reversal of the procedure. The Church has never declared this to be a required step, in part because of the risks and burdens associated with surgical interventions, in part because of the high uncertainty of a successful outcome, and in part because of the potentially significant expenses involved. Even though a reversal may not be feasible, a temporary abstention, the repentant couple may nonetheless become aware of the need to order their sexual activity and appetites in the face of their original sterilization decision and its extended consequences. They may recognize a pressing intention to act anew in the virtue of marital chastity and to engage in a lifestyle that authentically embodies their new, albeit delayed, rejection of the contraceptive mentality.
When losing is winning

Matthew Kurtz

Editor

“This is better than One Direction coming!” the fourth grader shrieked.

Girls screamed, grabbed, hugged and took pictures with Darius Sparks, a surprise visitor to the aply (and unmistakably) named Sparks’ traveling basketball team. Dreamy boy-band's aside, none of the girls cared that Sparks had recently lost a basketball championship.

They didn’t know that when Sparks was their age, finding his next meal and place to sleep was his primary concern. Not basketball.

A week earlier, Sparks and some of his teammates made another surprise visit. This time, the eyes of a team of fourth grade boys widened as their idols entered the gym. After some five-on-five, autograph signing and a game of lighting with the star-struck kids, Darius and his fellow seniors on the St. Mary’s Central High School boys basketball team started to realize they were a part of something bigger than themselves.

Four days earlier, the season ended for Sparks and his fellow Saints—a seven point loss in the state championship game. The sting of defeat and a sense of failure hit the team…hard.

The sting of defeat and a sense of failure hit the team…hard.

For Weisbeck, it was the bite of losing the season I had to remind myself the season that it was over. Why does Weisbeck play basketball? “It’s to make an impact, to affect others and change lives.”

For Dvorak, it was the "sadness that it’s gone;" the loss of a brotherhood and the realization that life is quickly moving beyond the walls of SMCHS. While the basketball season offered a convenient distraction, he recognized that some "big decisions" in life are now looming.

In the case of Sparks, it was a familiar taste. "I’ve lost so much in my life," he said. "And I always find a way to get back up."

Sparks wasn’t just talking about basketball; he was always looking for a way to make it back on a team until the seventh grade. He arrived at SMCHS for the first time as a vulnerable freshman with a broken past. First taken into foster care at age 12, he moved from home to home and learned to "shoot the three ball" at the park near Jeannette Myhre Elementary School.

"I didn’t have a father growing up to show me what was right and what was wrong or to show me sports," Sparks said.

Instead, he found a team. "Great guys" that prayed with him, challenged him and taught him throughout his high school career. Friends, brothers, role models. A family centered on faith.

"No matter if you win or lose, you’re still playing," Sparks said, referring to the team’s pre-game habit. "It’s like outside in the real world with life. When something goes wrong, you shouldn’t stop praying, you shouldn’t forget about your faith. It’ll just go worse then. With your faith, you feel stronger. You feel like you have hope and there’s a brighter day."

THE REAL REASON

If you looked closely—really closely—you would have noticed a mark on Ben Weisbeck’s basketball sneaker this season: G.W.

"Many times throughout the season I had to remind myself the reasons why I was playing," Weisbeck said. "It’s a gotten to be a deep one if you let it sink in. Why do we do what we do?"

Those initial are one reason why Ben plays basketball. G.W. stands for Gene chronically dizzy, uncoordinated and off-balance. Once an active man who loved playing horses, the accordion and bowling, he hasn’t been the same since.

"For 10 years he hasn’t given up. He has perseverance to move on. That inspired me so much," Ben said. "I might lose, I might have a bad game, but it’s about so much more. If my grandpa can make it through all the suffering he’s been through, I can do that, too.”

Gene wasn’t at the state championship game to see his grandson lose. In fact, he never made it to one of Ben’s basketball games. But he listened to every game, thanks to the radio.

Ben may never fully understand how his career impacted his grandfather; what went through his mind as he sat—suffering, listening and imagining his grandson driving to the hoop.

"The real reason is to make an impact, to affect others and make a difference in the world. We didn’t take home the state championship, but I think we took home a lot more." Dvorak ponders his father’s future—which he admits may not include basketball—he knows that championship trophies are nice, but it’s the intangibles that change lives.

"Playing basketball" made me a better man by allowing me the opportunity to sacrifice every day," he said. "It took emotional fortitude to get to practice every day. By putting it all on the line, we sacrificed for each other."

Sparks doesn’t know what his life would look like if it didn’t include the sacrifices his basketball brothers made for him…or the love he’s received from his foster parents and fans (including the infatuated fourth graders).

"Whenever I look back on my life, that’s the one thing that comes to mind: I’m very blessed,” Sparks said. “I have everything that I could ever want. Now that I’m at that place, I feel like I need to be doing more and giving back to underprivileged kids or young adults who go through struggles. Kids need to see that there is hope. Once you’re given opportunities, you need to go far.”

“I’ve got the rest of my life to look forward to,” Weisbeck said in light of the loss. “We all do.”

Take Care of Today

Take care of today said grumpy-old coach. As we players sat around and waited, attempting to listen and find the approach to play the tough game future dated. “Nothing can stop you,” he said to us, “From working your hardest on every play!”

The only thing we had left to discuss was the prayer we would say that day. Lord, let us be focused on the task at hand, that we may use our skills and not be weary of our opponents but we stand by with thy mother’s intercession, ‘Hail Mary…”

Darius Sparks, a senior at SMCHS in Bismarck, is raising funds to benefit the students of St. Bernard Mission School, a part of the Bismarck Diocese’s Catholic Indian Mission in Fort Yates, N.D.

Sparks, once a student at the reservation school, would like to improve its playground equipment. Checks can be sent to light of Christ Catholic Schools of Excellence and mailed to St. Mary’s Central High School: 1025 North Second Street, Bismarck, N.D. 58501. Enter “St. Bernard’s Mission School” in the memo.

By Grant Dvorak

Sparks spearheads fundraiser for playground equipment
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