

THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 23 No. 4 December 2008



Members of the diocese gathered at Holy Redeemer, Marshall, Sunday, November 16, 2008, for the 50th Anniversary Closing Celebration which served as an opportunity to give thanks for fifty years of diocesan life, mission, and ministry. Following a brief diocesan history program and vespers, all gathered in the church basement for socializing and dinner.

(photo by Fr. Eugene Brown)

Closing 50th anniversary celebration concludes with program/vespers

Marshall, MN - The 50th anniversary year long celebration of the Diocese of New Ulm concluded last month with a closing celebration.

Parishioners from throughout the diocese were invited to gather at Holy Redeemer Church in Marshall, MN, on Sunday, November 16 for a brief program reviewing the history of the diocese followed by a prayer service. Participants then gathered for socializing and dinner in the church basement.

In his closing anniversary

celebration message, Bishop LeVoi reviewed the identity and mission of the diocese.

Bishop LeVoi's Message:

The identity and mission of the Diocese of New Ulm is really the identity and mission of the Church in general. This information comes from the Second Vatican Council and the teaching of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI.

I remember talking with Bishop Schladweiler about the Second Vatican Council and the wonderful experience he had there and how much he enjoyed meeting the other bishops, the Italian people, and working on the documents of the Second Vatican Council. As we go into the future, it is the vision of the Council that we are still working on implementing in the Church today.

The identity in the Church today

comes from our common baptism. By baptism we are all made other Christs. As St. Paul says, "we put on Jesus Christ in baptism."

That really is our identity, to be another Christ. Each of us is made that in baptism and each of us is called to act that out in our daily life by what we say and by what we do. Our identity is to be other Christs and the Church is the Body of Christ - all of the baptized united together with our Lord. The mission that we have as other Christs, is what the Lord received from his father - that we be priest, prophet, and king. Those are very ancient titles that were applied to our Lord, but they really have a contemporary meaning.

A prophet is one who speaks for God - one who reveals the truth. Jesus being God the Son Incarnate was truth itself. The prophetic role of Jesus is to teach the truth. He came to

proclaim the Gospel. As Church we strive to do the same thing - to proclaim the truth of Jesus Christ and to reveal what Jesus came to reveal to us. As he told his followers if you carry on the mission that I have to preach the Gospel, "Whoever hears you will hear me."

We have that responsibility and obligation to carry on that mission of Jesus Christ - to teach the truth. That is the prophetic role very simply.

Just like the prophetic is tied to truth, the priestly role is tied to the love of God. Jesus revealed this to us in everything he did. Love is a self gift. Jesus gave himself to us totally and completely. The two premier places where he did that were when he became one of us. We celebrate this at Christmas. This was a total self-giving by our Lord Jesus Christ. He didn't hold anything back. He didn't just appear to be human or pretend to

be human, but rather he gave himself totally and became totally human for us as well as remaining true God.

The other premier act of love for us was he gave himself to us on the cross and in the resurrection. Again our Lord didn't hold anything back. He gave everything. He gave his whole life. And so he reveals love to us and we need to have that revelation of love because we don't know what it is unless Jesus reveals it to us.

That priestly role of our Lord is the revelation of love and the Church as Christ in the world as that same mission to reveal love. We do that primarily by the celebration of the Eucharist. Everything we do that is connected with the liturgy celebrates that loving priestly role of Jesus Christ. Whether we are a priest, deacon, extraordinary minister of

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Advent Prayer Services planned in two locations in diocese

All children and families of the Diocese of New Ulm are invited to join Bishop John LeVoi on Sunday, December 14, 2008, for the annual Advent Prayer Service.

This year's event will take place in two locations in the diocese: 2:00 p.m. at the Church of St. Peter, 1801 West Broadway, St. Peter, MN; and the Church of St. Peter, 307 West 4th Street, Canby, MN.

The Second Vatican Council spoke of the family as the "domestic Church," in which the Christian faith is lived and passed on to the young, and where we all pray together. Since 2002, the diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis has planned this annual event to provide an afternoon of joyful prayer in the spirit of the Advent season.

"It is an excellent opportunity for families to grow in faith as the 'domestic church,'" stated Bryan Reising, Director of Religious Education and Adult Faith Formation for the diocese. Participants are encouraged to bring an image or figurine of the Baby Jesus, perhaps from their family Nativity Crèche, to be blessed by Bishop LeVoi during the prayer service. Bishop LeVoi

will also give a special blessing to mothers with children in the womb.

This will also be an opportunity for people to assist the less fortunate. Baskets will be available to collect new infant clothing, blankets, or layette items donated to the San Lucas Mission, Birthright, or Human Services.

Please come and enjoy this prayerful Advent celebration.

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vocation awareness

BE NOT AFRAID "November Meeting of the Bishops"



Bishop John M. LeVoir

From November 8 through November 13, 2008, I was in Baltimore, Maryland, for the Fall General Assembly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). This was the first time I had ever been to a meeting of the Bishops. Before going, I was quite apprehensive and would have preferred to stay here in New Ulm. Nevertheless, I did my duty and went. As with many things that I am apprehensive about, my worries were unfounded. I asked Our Blessed Mother to watch over me and I know now that she did.

It was amazing to see so many Bishops in one place. I was overwhelmed by seeing Bishops that I had only read about or seen on the news. I wondered what kind of reception I would receive by them. After all, I had just been ordained

for two months. But, I found the Bishops to be very welcoming. They would introduce themselves as we met in the halls, at meals, and in the general meeting rooms. On the first day that I was there, I came around a corner and almost "ran over" Cardinal Rigali of Philadelphia. Yet, he was very kind.

There were important pieces of business that were enacted at the meeting. There were several liturgical issues that were passed. One was the approval of the text for the "Order for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb." The prayers in this blessing are very touching. The Bishops also passed the ICEL (International Commission on English in the Liturgy) translation from the Latin of the *Proper of Seasons* from the third edition of the Roman Missal. This moves this translation project closer to completion. The whole translation is expected to be completed and put into use in 2011. Also, the Bishops approved the *Revised Grail Psalter* by the Monks of Conception Abbey (USA) for liturgical use in the United States. This is a very good translation of the Psalms of the Bible.

Two statements were issued by Cardinal Francis George, who is the President of the USCCB and the

Archbishop of Chicago. One was a statement expressing solidarity with those who have been negatively affected by the economic crisis. (See *entire statement on page 3 in this issue.*) Cardinal George reminded our nation that we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers. We are all in this together. He expressed the hope that these hard times will bring us together and not separate us.

Cardinal George, with the input and approval of the Bishops, also issued a statement to President-elect Obama. That statement welcomed this moment of historic transition in our country and stated that the Bishops look forward to working with the President-elect and the members of the new Congress for the common good of all. Cardinal George went on to say that the unity desired by President-elect Obama and all Americans at this moment of crisis will be impossible to achieve, if the administration's policies increase abortions, especially through what is called the Freedom of Choice Act (*the full statement of Cardinal George is included on page 3 of this issue of The Prairie Catholic*).

The Bishops voted on goals and objectives for the work of their five task forces on the priority initiatives of the USCCB through 2011. The goals that were passed were:

GOAL 1 - Cultural Diversity

To increase the Catholic community's understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity in the Church.

GOAL 2 - Cultural Diversity

To include diverse cultures in the life and leadership of dioceses, parishes and other Catholic organizations in the United States.

GOAL 3 - Strengthening Marriage

To inspire, challenge and help Catholic couples to witness to the meaning and value of marriage as a human institution and a Christian sacrament.

GOAL 4 - Strengthening Marriage

To work for laws and public policies that protect, promote, and strengthen marriage.

GOAL 5 - Faith Formation and Sacramental Practice

To invite all Catholics to a relationship with Jesus in a context of living faith, especially at the parish level, by catechetical and educational formation on the nature of Catholic identity and an appreciation of the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist. This effort takes place within an awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity in the identity and practice of the Catholic faith in the United States.

GOAL 6 - Faith formation and Sacramental Practice

To facilitate the prospective

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Bishop's December Calendar

1 Litchfield: 6:00 p.m. Church of St. Philip. Operation Andrew Dinner.

2 New Ulm: 9:30 a.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Advent Morning of Reflection.

3 St. Paul: 11:00 a.m. Archdiocesan Chancery. MCC Board Meeting.

New Ulm: 7:00 p.m. Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. Confessions for Religious Ed.

6 Redwood Falls: 9:30 a.m. Church of St. Catherine. Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting.

St. Anthony: 5:00 p.m. Church of St. Charles Borromeo. Evening *Affirming the Faith Presentation*.

7 Lafayette: 10:30 a.m. Church of St. Gregory the Great. Confirmation.

8 New Ulm: 8:20 a.m. Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. School Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

9 New Ulm: 9:30 a.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Diocesan Staff Meeting.

New Ulm: 1:00 p.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Priests' Council Meeting.

10 New Ulm: 10:00 a.m. Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. New Ulm Ministerial Meeting.

11 Winona: 2:00 p.m. Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. Mass of Welcome for Bishop John M. Quinn.

12 Sleepy Eye: 6:00 p.m. Church of St. Mary. Mass for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

14 Olivia - 8:30 a.m. Church of St. Aloysius. Mass for the Parish.

St. Peter: 2:00 p.m. Church of St. Peter. Diocesan Advent Prayer Service.

Canby: 7:00 p.m. Church of St. Peter. Diocesan Advent Prayer Service.

16 New Ulm: 10:30 a.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Priest Personnel Board Meeting.

19 New Ulm: 6:00 p.m. Diocesan Staff Christmas Gathering.

20 New Ulm: 5:00 p.m. Seminarian Christmas Gathering.

21 New Ulm: 5:00 p.m. *Lectio Divina* Prayer Group Christmas Gathering.

24 New Ulm: 4:00. Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. Mass for the Vigil of Christmas.

25 New Ulm: 9:30 a.m. Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. Mass for Christmas.

29-Jan. 5 Jacksonville, FL: Region VIII Bishops' Retreat.

USCCB President voices hope for Obama administration, points to possible obstacles to desired unity



WASHINGTON - The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) met for their annual fall assembly November 10-13, 2008, in Baltimore.

In a statement released November 12, the end of the assembly, Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, president of the USCCB, voiced hope for the Obama Administration but pointed to possible obstacles to our desired unity.

"The bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States welcome this moment of historic transition and look forward to working with President-elect Obama and the members of the new Congress for the common good of all," he said.

He said that "the unity desired by President-elect Obama and all Americans at this moment of crisis will be impossible to achieve," if the administration's policies increase abortions.

"Aggressive pro-abortion policies, legislation, and executive orders will permanently alienate tens of millions

of Americans, and would be seen by many as an attack on the free exercise of their religion."

"We express again our great desire to work with all those who cherish the common good of our nation," he added. "The common good is not the sum total of individual interests: it is achieved in the working out of a common life based upon good reason and good will for all."

Cardinal George's remarks follow.

USCCB PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT NOVEMBER 12, 2008

The Bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States welcome this moment of historic transition and look forward to working with President-elect Obama and the members of the new Congress for the common good of all. Because of the Church's history and the scope of her

ministries in this country, we want to continue our work for economic justice and opportunity for all; our efforts to reform laws around immigration and the situation of the undocumented; our provision of better education and adequate health care for all, especially for women and children; our desire to safeguard religious freedom and foster peace at home and abroad. The Church is intent on doing good and will continue to cooperate gladly with the government and all others working for these goods.

The fundamental good is life itself, a gift from God and our parents. A good state protects the lives of all. Legal protection for those members of the human family waiting to be born in this country was removed when the Supreme Court decided *Roe vs. Wade* in 1973. This was bad law. The danger the Bishops see at this moment is that a bad court decision will be enshrined in bad legislation that is more radical than the 1973 Supreme Court decision itself.

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Eleven deacon aspirants receive full candidacy



New candidates pictured with Bishop LeVoi are: (front row l-r) Paul Treinen, St. John, Ortonville; Mike McKeown, St. Mary, Seaforth; Rick Christensen, Holy Trinity Cathedral, New Ulm; Russ Blaschko, Holy Rosary, North Mankato; Roger Osborne, St. Frances De Sales, Winthrop; Tim Dolan, St. Michaels, Gaylord; Steve Spilman, Holy Trinity Cathedral, New Ulm; (back row) Deacon Mark Kober, diocesan Director of the Permanent Diaconate Program; John Hansen, St. John, Darwin; Jason Myhre, St. Edward, Minneota; Bishop LeVoi, Bob Reitsma, St. Patrick's, Kandiyohi; Jim Guldan, Holy Trinity Cathedral, New Ulm.

Sleepy Eye - Due to the generous contributions to the annual Diocesan Ministries Appeal (DMA), eleven aspirants to the diaconate of the Diocese of New Ulm moved to full Candidacy on Saturday evening October 18, 2008, at the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye with Bishop John LeVoi presiding. Concelebrants included Msgr. Eugene Lozinski, Msgr. John Richter, Fr. Brian Mandel, Fr. Paul Timmerman and Fr. Andy Michaels.

This first year milestone moves the candidates fully into formation in preparation for possible ordination as deacons, preliminarily scheduled for April 2012.

Candidates spend one weekend per month at Schoenstatt on the Lake in Sleepy Eye where they study academics with professors of St. Meinrad's Seminary of Indiana. They also work on other aspects of formation, namely spiritual, human and pastoral. Ten weekends per year run from September through June annually and are augmented by an annual retreat in August.

The next formal step in the process of formation is the installation of the candidates as Lector of the Church, scheduled for the fall 2009.

"Solidarity at a Time of Economic Crisis" statement by Cardinal Francis George, USCCB President released November 11, 2008, during bishops annual meeting

Baltimore - As the Catholic bishops of the United States gather in Baltimore and as servants of Jesus our hope, we bring with us our concern for people in our dioceses, and we want to express our active support and solidarity with all those who are being hurt by the current economic crisis. As pastors and bishops, we see the many human and moral consequences of this crisis. Clearly, the impact is greater in some regions than others.

However, across our nation families are losing their homes; retirement savings are threatened; workers are losing jobs and health care; and many people are losing a sense of hope and security.

This disturbing and complicated situation brings home a universal truth: we are all children of God. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers. We are all in this together. Hard times can isolate us or they can bring us together. The Catholic community will continue to

reach out to those in need, stand with those who are hurt, and work for policies that bring greater compassion, accountability, and justice to economic life.

Pope Benedict XVI has outlined our goals in his 2008 World Day of Peace message: "The family needs to have a home, employment, and a just recognition of the domestic activity of parents, the possibility of schooling for children, and basic health care for all." He also insists that society and public policy should be "committed to assisting the family in these areas."

We offer our prayers for the families and individuals, our sisters and brothers, who are hurting, anxious or discouraged in these difficult times. We also pledge our prayers for our wounded nation and suffering world. We pray that, working together, we can find the courage, wisdom and ways to build an economy of prosperity and greater justice for all.

courtesy of USCCB, Washington, DC

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December 13-14, 2008 in parishes



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No Tengas Miedo....

por Obispo John M. LeVoi



Conferencia de Obispos en Noviembre

Desde el 8 al 13 de noviembre, estuve en Baltimore, Maryland, para la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos (USCCB). Esa fue mi primera reunión con los obispos. Antes de ir, estaba un poco aprensivo y habría preferido permanecer aquí en New Ulm. Sin embargo, cumplí con mi deber.

Cardenal Francis George, presidente de USCCB y Arzobispo de Chicago, emitió dos declaraciones. Una fue la de expresar solidaridad a aquellos que han sido afectados por la crisis económica. Cardenal George recordó a nuestra nación que somos responsables por nuestros hermanos y hermanas. Estamos en esto juntos. Él expresó la esperanza que en este tiempo tan difícil nos unamos más y que no nos apartemos.

Cardenal George, con la aprobación de los obispos, también publicó una declaración al presidente electo Obama. Esa declaración le dio la bienvenida por este momento transición histórica en nuestro país e indicó que los obispos esperan trabajar con el presidente electo y sus miembros del congreso reciente por el bien común de todos.

Los obispos emitieron sus votos sobre las metas y objetivos para el trabajo de sus cinco asignaciones en las iniciativas de la prioridad de USCCB hasta el 2011. Las metas que se aprobaron fueron las siguientes:

META # 1 & 2—LA DIVERSIDAD CULTURAL

-Aumentar la comprensión y aceptación de la comunidad católica sobre la diversidad cultural en la Iglesia.

-Incluir culturas diversas en la vida y el liderazgo de las diócesis, parroquias y otras organizaciones católicas en los Estados Unidos.

META 3 & 4 - CONSOLIDACION MATRIMONIAL

-Inspirar, desafiar y ayudar a parejas católicas ser testigos sobre el significado y valor del matrimonio como una institución humana y sacramento Cristiano.

-Trabajar para que las leyes y las órdenes públicas vayan a proteger, promover y fortalecer el matrimonio.

META 5 & 6 - FORMACION DE LA FE Y LA PRÁCTICA SACRAMENTAL

-Invitar a todos los católicos a una relación con Jesús en un contexto de fe viva, especialmente en el nivel parroquial, por la formación catequética y educativa en el ambiente de la identidad católica y una gratitud por los sacramentos, especialmente de la eucaristía.

-Facilitar la introducción potencial, aceptación e implementación de la nueva traducción del Misal Romano a la Iglesia en los Estados Unidos.

META 7 - VIDA Y DIGNIDAD DEL SER HUMANO

De manera convincente y eficaz, volver a implementar el entendimiento cultural de los Estados Unidos para afirmar la verdad objetiva, trascendente del valor esencial de la vida humana y la dignidad del ser humano desde su inicio de vida hasta la muerte natural.

META 8 & 9 - PROMOVER VOCACIONES AL SACERDOCIO Y A LA VIDA CONSAGRADA

-Ayudar a todo individuo a escuchar y responder al llamado de Dios al sacerdocio o a la vida consagrada.

-Educar a todos los feligreses sobre la importancia de animar a otros a considerar una vocación al sacerdocio o a la vida consagrada.

Entonces, aquí termina mi informe sobre la conferencia que se llevo a cabo en noviembre en Baltimore. Les digo que fue una gran experiencia, y espero que a medida que vaya aprendiendo pueda contribuir más. ¡Que Dios los bendiga!

Welcoming our immigrant sisters & brothers

Statewide Immigration Sunday January 4, 2009

by Sr. Anna Marie Reha, SSND

The Minnesota Catholic Conference (MCC) of Bishops has invited all Catholic parishes to celebrate Statewide Immigration Sunday on January 4, 2009, the Feast of the Epiphany. The theme for Immigration Sunday, *Renewing Hope, Seeking Justice*, invites us to renew our commitment to welcome our immigrant sisters and brothers. The Feast of the Epiphany is a perfect day to celebrate Immigration Sunday because it is a day that centers on our unity as one human family, and our call to welcome everyone with dignity, respect, and love.

Though new immigrants represent a smaller percentage of Minnesota's population than they did during the late 1800s, little has changed since the arrival of Minnesota's first immigrants. Not only do today's immigrants leave their homes for the same reasons that many of Minnesota's early immigrants did, but they also face many of the same challenges - from language barriers and discrimination to culture shock and isolation.

The Statewide Immigration Sunday will be an opportunity for the Catholic community to: "renew hope and seek justice" for newcomers; educate others about the many obstacles encountered by immigrants, migrants and refugees; and act in solidarity with

National Migration Week will be observed January 4 -10, 2009. During this week, parishes are encouraged to organize events (e.g., book study, film screening and discussion, prayer group, educational forum, food and music celebration) to deepen awareness,

"...there are no more distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, but all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

- Galatians 3:28

our immigrant sisters and brothers to create peace and justice for all.

The Social Concerns Department of the Minnesota Catholic Conference has created a variety of educational materials to help parishes prepare for Statewide Immigration Sunday. The *Statewide Immigration Sunday Planning Guide* can be downloaded from the MCC Web site: www.mncc.org.

NATIONAL MIGRATION WEEK JANUARY 4-10, 2009

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB)

knowledge, and understanding of immigrant issues. Further information and resource materials can be found on the USCCB Web site. visit www.usccb.org/mrs.

The Bishops hope that increased awareness about the obstacles facing many of our immigrant sisters and brothers, and deeper understanding of Catholic social teaching, will enable Catholics to participate in compassionate and constructive dialogue about comprehensive immigration reform.

Sr. Anna Marie Reha, SSND, is the Director of Hispanic Ministry for the Diocese of New Ulm. She can be contacted at (507) 233-5321; email: areha@dnu.org

Be not afraid

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introduction, reception, and implementation of the new translation of the *Missale Romanum*, *editio typica tertia*, to the Church in the United States.

GOAL 7 - Life and Dignity of the Human Person

In a compelling and effective way, to re-establish the cultural compass of the United States to affirm the objective, transcendent truth of the intrinsic value of human life and the dignity of the human person from the inception of life to natural death.

GOAL 8 - Promotion of Vocations to Priesthood & Consecrated Life

To help individuals hear and respond to a call by God to the priesthood or consecrated life.

GOAL 9 - Promotion of

Vocations to Priesthood & Consecrated Life

To educate all of the faithful on the importance of encouraging others to consider a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life.

There is no significance to the order of the goals and each goal has its own accompanying objective. The objectives are available to read on the USCCB Web site www.usccb.org.

On another note, some have been concerned about the funding of ACORN by the Bishops. It was announced at the Bishops' meeting that the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), the national anti-poverty program of the

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has ended all funding to the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN). This was due to a major case of embezzlement eight years ago which raised serious concerns about ACORN's financial accountability, transparency, governance, and organizational integrity.

So ends my report on the November Bishops' meeting in Baltimore. It was a good experience, and I hope to be able to contribute more as I continue to learn more.

Advent: a time of anticipation and hope

by Sr. Anna Marie Reha, SSND
Director of Hispanic Ministry

Two important liturgical celebrations in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary fittingly occur during the Season of Advent. They are the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on December 8 and the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12.

The Blessed Virgin Mary, under the title of her Immaculate Conception, is the patroness of the United States of America. Under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe, she is patroness of the Americas.

The two celebrations are closely related to each other, for Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared for the first time to Saint Juan Diego on

December 9, 1531, which, at that time in the Spanish Empire, was the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

In appearing to Saint Juan Diego, she identified herself as "the Perfect Ever Virgin Holy Mary, Mother of the Most True God." In Mary's Immaculate Conception, Christ's work of the Redemption was anticipated, that is, Mary, from the first moment of her life, was freed from all sin and filled with the Holy Spirit (Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 490-493).

The Mother of God has shown her particular affection for the entire continent of America by her appearances to Saint Juan Diego in 1531. The Blessed Virgin Mary came to the continent to show her loving care and to bring her sons

and daughters to her Divine Son, the Mercy of God Incarnate.

In the Hispanic community, it is customary to observe a nine-day novena leading up to the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, a devotion celebrated in homes. On the feast day itself, the community gathers very early to honor Our Lady by singing a morning serenade called *Mañanitas*. The main service is solemn Mass which includes a variety of elements: processions, costumed native dances (called *matachines*), and people offering bouquets of roses to Our Lady.

The dates and times for the celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe can be found at the diocesan Web site www.dnu.org under *Hispanic Ministry*.

Springfield Nativity Pageant marks twenty-third year

Springfield, MN, will abound in holiday spirit and excitement and use a natural outdoor setting to stage its twenty-third annual Christmas pageant on Friday, December 12 and Saturday, December 13 with one performance each evening at 7:00 p.m. The pageant is presented free of charge, a gift from the community of Springfield. It is held in Riverside Park with seating in the north bleachers in Springfield.

The 40-minute pageant will tell the story as Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem, find there is no room in the inn, and arrive at the stable for the birth, as angels hover and proclaim the *Good News*.

Shepherds watch over their flocks with wise men arriving later. With an all local cast representing the

characters of the Nativity, a live manger scene – including camels – and special lighting and music, featuring a community chorus.



The pageant is endorsed by the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce and Springfield churches, whose members give freely of their time and talents. The pageant is funded

by proceeds from a summer celebration, a holiday luncheon and cookie sale, and donations from individuals, civic and church organizations.

Visitors are encouraged to dress warmly for the outdoors and bring stadium blankets and quilts. Ample seating and parking are available.

EVERYONE INVITED TO CELEBRATE!

During this Advent Season, the Hispanic communities throughout the diocese invite you to come join them during their customary Advent celebrations.

HOST PARISHES INCLUDE:

St. Andrew, Fairfax;
St. Pius X, Glencoe;
St. Philip, Litchfield;
Holy Redeemer, Marshall;
St. Joseph, Montevideo;
Holy Redeemer, Renville;
St. Mary, Sleepy Eye;
St. Mary, Willmar; and
St. Anastasia, Hutchinson.



Celebration dates/times can be found on the diocesan Web site: www.dnu.org; or call the Office of Hispanic Ministry, (507) 359-2966.



NOVENAS FOR OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

will be celebrated in each of the parishes. For the schedule, please contact the parish.

Philanthropist?

Passing on the faith to future generations

by Wayne Pelzel,
Director of Gift Planning,
Catholic Community
Foundation

I'm not wealthy enough to be a philanthropist, you say. Well, philanthropy is not just for the wealthy. In the truest sense of the word, it is for all of us. Derived from the Greek philanthropia, philanthropy literally means love of mankind in general. In practice, it refers to helping people less well-off than oneself for the purpose of increasing the well-being of humankind.

Gifts large and small are important and necessary for the health of our Church. There are many ways in which you can make a gift that will leave a legacy while meeting your

personal financial needs during your lifetime.

Here are just a few examples:

- Remember the Church in your will. Some suggest the biblical standard of leaving 10 percent for the church; others suggest the church be treated as another child, and receive what would be given to one of your children. Whatever your decision, including your parish, Catholic school, or other Catholic organization as a beneficiary of your estate is easy, and does not impact your current finances.

- Charitable Gift Annuities make sense and dollars. Today, a CGA can provide you with a 5 percent to 10 percent guaranteed return

(continued on page 9)

Finding God in your life through a Riverbend TEC retreat experience

by Monica Simmons

With over 220 retreat experiences under their belt, the Riverbend TEC (Together Encountering Christ) community is alive and growing in the Diocese of New Ulm. Young people have been focused upon the Paschal Mystery of Christ by participating in this three-day Catholic event since 1977.

From new participants called Tecites to team who do every job needed, Riverbend TEC has become a strong, vital family sharing their lives and their faith.

As a member of the Riverbend TEC family for the last seven years, I am forever amazed at what it means to be part of such a community - virtual strangers who come together to show people that faith is a personal life with Christ that you share in your home and local Church.

What I love the most about my Riverbend TEC family is their honesty. My "family" knows that at times life is hard and that we all go through tough times. They also know that God gave us each other to hold on to and support as well as challenge. When a TEC team member gives a talk, it is from the heart and gets to the core of where God should be in our lives.

If you are looking for something more than the everyday life of maintaining the same old thing, TEC might be a place where you can learn from the finest of everyday people who have seen life in new ways.

TEC is where I met God. TEC is where I learned about God's real love. TEC is where I help others meet God and learn about God's real love. It becomes very simple for me to say "yes" to helping on a TEC weekend because this "family" loved me before I even stepped in the door. They prayed for me by name when I first signed up. They have prayed for me as I



2009 Riverbend TEC schedule

TEC #221
January 17-19, 2009
Bird Island, MN

TEC #222
Feb. 14-16, 2009
Winsted, MN

TEC #223
Mar. 28-30, 2009
New Ulm, MN

TEC #224
June 27-29, 2009
Bird Island, MN

TEC #225
Aug. 1-3, 2009
Winsted, MN

participated as a team. I have been given the honor to pray with them for strangers who become friends and family.

Riverbend TEC is a Catholic, Christian retreat. But it's really an encounter with the Living God through the people who come together to look at their lives, respond to God's love, and accept

the call to share Christ with others. When God calls you to Riverbend TEC, I invite you to dare to come and spend three days in a community of youth and adults who want only the best for you and your life. They know how knowing Christ makes all the difference.

Check out the Riverbend TEC Web site for more information and applications for participants and team at www.riverbendtec.org. Your parish pastoral leader, youth minister, or director of religious education can also provide you with an application form.

Want to learn more?

There are programs available through the New Ulm Diocesan Media Resource Center explaining Riverbend TEC for youth and adults. Contact Joan Weicherding, Media Center Coordinator at (507) 233-5330; email: jweicherding@dnul.org.

Riverbend TEC is part of the youth ministry provided by the Diocese of New Ulm and has the full support of Bishop LeVoir.

For more information about Riverbend TEC contact Fr. Denny Labat, Riverbend TEC Coordinator and Spiritual Director, at 112 W. Van Dusen St., Springfield, MN 56087 or phone (507) 723-4141; riverbendtec@newulmtel.net.

Monica Simmons is the Faith Formation Director at St. Raphael's, Springfield.

Reising part of NET team



Andrew Reising

Giving time in acts of service requires careful attention, planning, and energy. Sharing our experiences can become a way of sharing ourselves and our faith! This year a young man from the Diocese of New Ulm is giving the gift of a year of his life for that purpose. Andrew Reising, son of Linda and Bryan Reising of St. Mary's Parish in New Ulm is serving on NET team # 6. Reising graduated from Cathedral High School last May and trained for NET in August. He is currently traveling all over the U.S. as part of a team that gives retreats and shares the *Good News* of Jesus Christ with youth and young adults.

Little Critter's 'little sister' visits St. Anthony library in New Ulm



Sister Mary Charles Mayer, Director of the Office of Communications for the Diocese of New Ulm, is the actual 'little sister' in the Mercer Mayer "Little Critters" series of children's books. Recently Sister Mary Charles, whose brother is the well-known author, Mercer Mayer, recently delivered a donation to the St. Anthony Library by Mayer which included two newly published Little Critter books, an original colored illustration, and a poster all autographed by Mayer. Pictured is Sister Mary Charles presenting the gifts to students McKenna Berdan, Tyler Mack, St. Anthony librarian Jessica Mixdorf, Alayna Spaude, and Ethan Mixdorf.

Marshall students involved in community and school projects



Since the school year began, students at Holy Redeemer in Marshall have been involved in a lot of projects. Pictured above, the 7th grade class took part in an Adopt-A-Class program which partners the students with the kindergarten and 1st grade students. Activities included a clothespin bat project, a bat themed word find, and reading Halloween books. The younger students loved having a "big kid" to look up to.



In October, the 7th and 8th grade students raked leaves and washed windows throughout the city of Marshall. A notice was put in the parish bulletin asking for people interested in this community service to contact the school. The thankful tears, smiles, and well wishes made the effort all worth while.

Ubl's music composition selected for publication



Kyle W. Ubl

World Library Publications, a Chicago-based international publisher of Catholic sacred music, has announced its selection of *Hail, Holy Queen* by Kyle W. Ubl for publication. His late grandmother, Dorothy Moldan, formerly of Sleepy Eye, was ardently devoted to the Blessed Virgin and the Rosary. Inspired by her constancy to Mary, this choral setting of the traditional Catholic prayer is dedicated in her memory.

Ubl, the son of Bill and Wanda Ubl of New Ulm, is a member of the Church of St. Mary in New Ulm. He began piano instruction at age five under Mary Beth Hauser of Lafayette, MN. With her influence, he developed a heartfelt interest in liturgical music ministry, serving as cantor and accompanist at the two local parishes – the Church of St. Mary and the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm. Ubl, a 2006 graduate of Cathedral High School, was also a liturgical musician at Cathedral High School, where he was an active leader of the Cathedral High School Liturgy Club. When

visiting his hometown, he continues to minister at the Church of St. Mary in New Ulm and the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye.

Ubl currently resides in Indiana where he is studying English and music theory at the University of Notre Dame. He is additionally employed by the University's Office of Campus Ministry serving as the assistant director and accompanist of the Notre Dame Celebration Choir and sings in the Notre Dame Folk Choir. The Notre Dame Celebration Choir is a Catholic ministerial choir that provides music for campus liturgies and service projects in the greater South Bend area. The Notre Dame Folk Choir is an internationally recognized Catholic liturgical choir that has its exclusive library of music and recordings published through World Library Publications.

In the Notre Dame Department of Music, Ubl studies under internationally acclaimed scholars, including Dr. Paul Johnson, Dr. Peter Smith, and Dr. Susan Youens. He is additionally studying piano performance under Dr. Daniel Schlosberg and organ performance under Ms. Karen Schneider Kirner.

Upon completion of editing negotiations, World Library Publications has projected that the composition will be available in print in 2010 from major national sheet music vendors and World Library affiliates.

Kids Against Hunger

Redwood Falls -
This past October, parishioners of St. Catherine's held fund-raisers for



over eight months preparing for their all parish service project to help Kids Against Hunger, a national initiative that brings people together to assemble meals for children in third world countries. Parishioners filled nearly 15,000 meal bags for those in need.

Two members of diocese receive state honor; recognized as outstanding seniors

Don Brand of New Ulm and Betty Wenner of St. Peter, received top honors as Outstanding Seniors at the Minnesota State Fair this past summer.

Brand, who with his wife Myrtle, received the Brown County Outstanding Senior Award at the Brown County Fair, was named Minnesota's Outstanding Senior Man. He was cited for the many ways he has served New Ulm and Brown County.

Brand has received numerous awards this year, including the Community Service Award from the St. Joseph Catholic Aid Society, co-recipient of the Service to Mankind Award from the New Ulm Sertoma Club, and co-recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Humanitarian



2008 Outstanding Seniors

Award from the New Ulm Area Catholic Schools. He assisted in the creation of Loretto Park, and the maintenance of the Way of the Cross in New Ulm. Brand is a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Aid Association, and a lifelong member of the

Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm where he has served 44 years as lector as well as many years as Eucharistic minister in addition to other parish responsibilities.

The Outstanding Senior Woman is Betty (Mrs. Gene) Wenner of St. Peter, and the Nicollet County Outstanding Senior Woman. Wenner is involved in numerous city, church, and county activities and is past president of the New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. For over a decade, Wenner has received the "Certificate of Volunteerism" from St. Peter High School and many awards from the Council of Catholic Women.

story/photo courtesy of New Ulm Journal

A century of faith

Marshall parishioner's values stem back to Catholic education

Marshall, MN - When Emma Zwach was born 100 years ago near Milroy, MN, her only option for an education was to attend the one-room country school with 20-25 other students, ranging in age from 6 to 17. Her parents didn't have an option to send their eleven children to Catholic school, so she made the trek every day. "Two miles, uphill both ways," she said with a laugh.

Emma married Hubert H. VanKeulen in 1933 at the Church of St. Michael in Milroy. They raised their family on a farm northeast of Ghent where they were members of St. Eloi's parish. At that time the parish had 'pew rent' which helped support the parish's school.

It was never discussed whether or not the VanKeulen children would attend Catholic schools, "We automatically sent them. It was never a question. We knew that the Catholic school instilled God's love in them and taught them to trust in God and ask for his help in tough times."



100 year-old Emma VanKeulen recently shared some of her thoughts from the VanKeulen legacy while visiting in the classroom of two of her great-grandsons, Trey Nelson and Chase VanKeulen.

Also pictured is Holy Redeemer School 4th grade teacher, Mrs. Mary Frandson.

VanKeulen is currently a member of Holy Redeemer parish in Marshall and her family lives in the Marshall area. Her grandson and his wife, Pat and Karen VanKeulen, tallied up how many descendants of Emma and Hubert attended Catholic schools, from St. Eloi, Holy Redeemer, Central Catholic High School, up to the Colleges of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica, St. John's University and the University of St. Thomas. The count is close to 60!

When asked what she would tell her grandchildren and great-grandchildren who are wondering why they should send their children to Holy Redeemer School, she said that she would tell them that there is better discipline, they become better prepared for life's trials, and that the main reason is that religion is the main focus of the day.

Holiday stress *what you can do to alleviate it*

by Tami Dale M.S. NCC LSW
Catholic Charities Counselor

The holiday season can be a time of joy, peace, and love. But for some this can be a difficult time of year. Especially for those whose personal experience of the holidays differs greatly from images portrayed.

Things that may trigger holiday stress include: conflicted relationships, overspending/ financial difficulty, physical demands associated with shopping, decorating and meal preparation, or emotional pain as you face the holiday season after a loss.

It is important to know that there are a few things that can help alleviate holiday stress. First, be aware of your stress level. Are you experiencing increased fatigue or feelings of being overwhelmed? Be sure that you take a break to refresh enough to handle the things you need to do. Stick to your regular self care habits by getting plenty of rest and exercise, and eat healthy. Be flexible; forget about perfection. This is a great opportunity to accept imperfections in yourself and in

others. Plan ahead as much as possible and stick to a budget. Be assertive and learn to graciously decline requests from others. Accept only what you really want to do.

If you have recently experienced loss due to death, divorce, or are unable to be with those you love over the holidays, it may be helpful to acknowledge and express your feelings. For some people, journaling, drawing, joining a support group, or talking with friends or family can help. You may want to obtain support by spending time with family, friends, or by attending religious services or other community events.

Seek professional help if needed. If you are experiencing prolonged symptoms of tearfulness, sad mood, physical complaints, insomnia, irritability or feelings of hopelessness, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.

If you want to see a Catholic Charities counselor about a difficult issue the holiday season is presenting, call 1-866-670-5163 for a confidential appointment.

Maintaining a safe environment within the Church for children and young people

In the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in June 2002 and revised in June 2005, the bishops of the United States affirmed the Church's commitment to deal appropriately and effectively with cases of sexual abuse of minors by priests, deacons, and other Church personnel and to reach out to victims of sexual abuse and their families. The bishops also pledged to work with parents, civil authorities, educators, and various organizations in the community to create and maintain a safe environment within the Church for children and young people.

The Diocese of New Ulm as mandated by the USCCB's *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, maintains a "safe environment" program through VIRTUS, a "Protecting God's Children" training session program.

VIRTUS is conducted cooperatively with parents, educators, and the community to provide education and training for



employees, parents, ministers, educators, volunteers, and others about ways to make and maintain a safe environment for children and young people. Response from participants has been favorable.

All employees in the diocese, as well as volunteers who work unsupervised with minors, are required to attend a VIRTUS session.

The introductory VIRTUS session is attended once. Follow-up training for employees and volunteers is done online annually or quarterly depending on one's status as determined by the diocesan safe environment coordinator.

UPCOMING VIRTUS SESSIONS

December 3 in Winsted;
December 9 in Bird Island;
January 12, 2009 in Redwood Falls.

Contact your local Catholic parish for further information.

If you or someone you know has been sexually exploited by a member of the clergy and you need to talk with someone about abuse, exploitation, or harassment, please contact the Diocese of New Ulm Victim Assistance Coordinator or the Bishop's Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct by Clergy, 1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; phone: (507) 359-2966.

Si usted, o alguien a quien conoce, ha sido explotado sexualmente por un clero y necesita hablar con alguien sobre abuso, explotación o acoso sexual, por favor ponerse en contacto con el Coordinador de Asistencia para Víctimas de la Diócesis de New Ulm o con el Delegado del Obispo en Asuntos que Pertencen al Abuso Sexual por Cleros de la Diócesis de New Ulm, 1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; número de teléfono (507) 359-2966.

USCCB president's statement

(continued from page 3)

In the last Congress, a Freedom of Choice Act (FOCA) was introduced that would, if brought forward in the same form today, outlaw any "interference" in providing abortion at will. It would deprive the American people in all fifty states of the freedom they now have to enact modest restraints and regulations on the abortion industry. FOCA would coerce all Americans into subsidizing and promoting abortion with their tax dollars. It would counteract any and all sincere efforts by government and others of good will to reduce the number of abortions in our country.

Parental notification and informed consent precautions would be outlawed, as would be laws banning procedures such as partial-birth abortion and protecting infants born alive after a failed abortion. Abortion

clinics would be deregulated. The Hyde Amendment restricting the federal funding of abortions would be abrogated. FOCA would have lethal consequences for prenatal human life.

FOCA would have an equally destructive effect on the freedom of conscience of doctors, nurses, and health care workers whose personal convictions do not permit them to cooperate in the private killing of unborn children. It would threaten Catholic health care institutions and Catholic Charities. It would be an evil law that would further divide our country, and the Church should be intent on opposing evil.

On this issue, the legal protection of the unborn, the bishops are of one mind with Catholics and others of

good will. They are also pastors who have listened to women whose lives have been diminished because they believed they had no choice but to abort a baby. Abortion is a medical procedure that kills, and the psychological and spiritual consequences are written in the sorrow and depression of many women and men. The bishops are single-minded because they are, first of all, single-hearted.

The recent election was principally decided out of concern for the economy, for the loss of jobs and homes and financial security for families, here and around the world. If the election is misinterpreted ideologically as a referendum on abortion, the unity desired by President-elect Obama and all Americans at this moment of crisis

will be impossible to achieve. Abortion kills not only unborn children; it destroys constitutional order and the common good, which is assured only when the life of every human being is legally protected. Aggressively pro-abortion policies, legislation and executive orders will permanently alienate tens of millions of Americans, and would be seen by many as an attack on the free exercise of their religion.

This statement is written at the request and direction of all the Bishops, who also want to thank all those in politics who work with good will to protect the lives of the most vulnerable among us. Those in public life do so, sometimes, at the cost of great sacrifice to themselves and their families; and we are grateful. We express again our great desire to

work with all those who cherish the common good of our nation. The common good is not the sum total of individual desires and interests; it is achieved in the working out of a common life based upon good reason and good will for all.

Our prayers accompany President-elect Obama and his family and those who are cooperating with him to assure a smooth transition in government. Many issues demand immediate attention on the part of our elected "watchman." (Psalm 127) May God bless him and our country.

courtesy of USCCB, Washington DC

Further information about the USCCB annual fall general session can be found on the internet. Visit www.usccb.org.

from the desk of the Council President



Jeane Appel
DCCW President

The Advent Season gives us another opportunity to "prepare the way of the Lord." The word Advent means in Latin - the Lord is coming.

Advent gives us a vision and shows us the possibilities of life as Christians. It is two-fold as we look back to the first coming of Christ at Bethlehem, and it looks to the future when Christ will come again. Christ came to show us what life can and should be. He formed the Church around the concept of a people held together by love. In that community we discover unlimited possibilities and meaning.

The motto of the Council of Catholic Women: "Catholic Women

United in Prayer, Study & Service" clearly advocates the Advent theme.

Council of Catholic Women work to keep the coming of Jesus the center of attention during this Holy Christmas Season.

Some activities we promote are:

- ▶ Display and use the Advent Wreath (explain the significance to the children);
- ▶ Send religious Christmas cards, use Nativity postage stamps;
- ▶ Greet each other with "Merry Christmas";
- ▶ Make the "true" meaning of Christmas the center of social events such as hosting an Advent Tea - a time to share fond Christmas memories;
- ▶ Make a birthday cake for Jesus, celebrate His birthday;
- ▶ Gifts can be priceless - they include: The gift of "time" to visit a home-bound person, a nursing home resident, an elderly relative.

Through giving to less fortunate families, the food shelf, or military personnel, we can teach others, especially children, the joy found in sharing our gifts and talents.

To cope with the declining economy, give gifts from the heart and hands. Some of my most precious memories are when my children sat around the table painting, coloring, sewing, putting together Christmas gifts for others - an element of each person went into the gift. Handmade gifts from grandparents are "treasures" for a lifetime.

I have found the following Web sites to be sources of good information:
www.catholic.org/Advent/
www.CatholicMom.com
www.faihandfamilylive.com

Advent is our time to become more involved, more caught up in the meaning and the possibilities of life as a Christian community through the Council of Catholic Women organization - "Women of Faith, Women of Action."

May the infant Savior, Son of God and Son of Mary, bless you and your families on Christmas and throughout the new year.

Jeane Appel is a member of St. Genevieve parish, Lake Benton.

Search begins for 2009
CCW Woman of the Year!

by Chris Heiderscheidt
1st DCCW Vice President

It's that time again to nominate the Woman of the Year for CCW from your parish. Who will you nominate?

Every parish has a woman worthy of this award. However, she will only be chosen if she is nominated. The New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women will again be presenting the Woman of the Year Award at the annual convention to be held at the host parish of St. Raphael's in Springfield on Saturday, April 25, 2009.

I remember years ago as a CCW Parish President the fun we had in submitting our nomination for this very special award. I remember getting the phone call that our nominee had been selected. You too have a woman very deserving in your parish. Just consider for a moment the women who are always ready to say "yes" when called upon, who are a shining example of service and faith, and who do so much in your CCW organization and parish.

Then, pool together with a few other women and submit the necessary information for her nomination. Each parish president has a nomination form. Each nominee will be judged on how she has carried on the mission of Christ in her family, her Church, the community, and especially her involvement with the Council of Catholic Women.

Each nominee's name and parish are left off the form so that she is judged solely on her accomplishments. You may submit more than one name. Names submitted in the past must be resubmitted to be considered for the current year's award. Current CCW Diocesan Board members and past recipients are not eligible. All recommendations are kept confidential.

The deadline for nominations is January 12, 2009. Don't delay! Send your nomination in early.

Chris Heiderscheidt is DCCW 1st Vice President and a member of St. Mary's, Sleepy Eye.

passing on the faith (continued from page 5)

for the rest of your life and a tax deduction. CGAs can be established with a minimum gift of \$10,000 and can out-pace the CD you might now have. Charitable Remainder Trusts function like a CGA but require a minimum gift of \$100,000. Upon your death, CRTs can become a permanent family endowment and leave a legacy of giving for your children.

• Establishing a Donor Advised Fund is like creating your own family foundation. You can establish a DAF with a minimum seed gift of \$5,000, which is invested and grows over time. A DAF simplifies your charitable giving managing, all your

donations from one source and providing you with one statement of deductions for tax time.

Planned giving, which refers to the tools described above, can be

"By making a planned gift or leaving a bequest . . . , we leave a legacy that has a lasting impact on the next generation."

funded with a variety of resources including cash, appreciated stocks, land, real estate, and even your IRA account in some cases.

To learn more about planned giving, I encourage you to complete the reply card included in this issue of *The Prairie Catholic*.

The Catholic Community Foundation is aligned with the Diocese of New Ulm to assist people with their charitable intentions for the Church.

Please don't hesitate to return the card today for a personal response to your individual giving desires.

In closing, it is our blessed duty to help build our Catholic community by financially supporting the good work of the Church. By making a planned gift or leaving a bequest that helps put our Church on sound financial ground, we leave a legacy that has a lasting impact on the next generation.

Are you aware?

IRA charitable rollover has been extended

by
Wayne Pelzel

If you are 70 1/2 or older with an IRA, you have an opportunity to make a gift to charity of up to \$100,000 from your IRA without reporting it as taxable income. *The Pension Protection Act of 2006* has been extended through the end of this year allowing this tremendous tax saving opportunity.

When you began your IRA, one of the advantages of it was that you could defer taxes on that income until you drew it out - likely after you retired. At that point in time the

entire amount would be treated as taxable income.

To take advantage of this law, the tax free distribution from the IRA must go directly to a qualified charity such as your parish, Catholic school, or the diocese. All charitable distributions count toward the required minimum distribution (you must draw out a portion of your IRA beginning at age 70 1/2). If given to a charity, the distribution generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction. Even if you don't itemize your tax return, you can still receive the tax saving benefit. For more information call Wayne Pelzel at (507) 359-2966 or your tax advisor. Take note - charitable rollover deadline is December 31, 2008.

Wayne Pelzel is Director of Finance for the Diocese of New Ulm.

WHAT CATHOLICS BELIEVE

the sacrament of confirmation



by Bryan Reising, director
Office of Religious Education/
Adult Faith Formation

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you" (Acts 1:8).

Last month we read about the sacrament of baptism. This month we continue our subject on the sacraments and learn about the sacrament of confirmation.

Springing forth from baptism, we have the second sacrament of initiation, confirmation. Many have the practice that confirmation is a sacrament of "graduation," but to the contrary, it is a sacrament of initiation and a sacrament of mission. In the Acts of the Apostles, the gift of the Holy Spirit was bestowed upon the apostles and some other followers of Christ. This indeed was their experience of this sacrament, and it was at the beginning of the book of Acts, not the end. It ushered in their ministry to proclaim the *Good News* to all who would listen, to build up the early communities of Christianity, and to extend this mission and the Church to the ends of the earth.

In the same way and in our practice today, we need to teach that confirmation is only a beginning to learn about the faith at a deeper level, to commit our time and talents to the various ministries of our parish, to be involved in reaching out to those in need, and helping to transform society. This gift of the Holy Spirit is a powerful experience, and it is the same Spirit that was within Jesus, Peter, Mary,

Lydia, Paul, and other men and women of the New Testament. The miracles they performed and the words they proclaimed can have the same impact today!

In the Diocese of New Ulm, it is our practice to confirm young people during their junior year of high school. It is the hope of the Church that after they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, that they raise the bar in their learning about the faith and their involvement within their parishes and society.

Regarding those who are in the RCIA process, at the Easter Vigil, those who have not been baptized receive baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist at the Easter Vigil. Those who have been baptized receive confirmation and the Eucharist either at the Easter Vigil or another suitable time. They too receive this gift of the Holy Spirit at confirmation. From that moment on, they begin their life as Catholics, active in both their parishes and society.

Confirmation is a sacrament worthy of proper preparation, proper liturgical celebration, and proper follow-up. Preparation includes good catechists dedicated to this ministry of formation, parental involvement, approved curriculum for formation, apprenticeships in a parish ministry and in an act of charity and justice within society, choosing a faith-filled sponsor, experiencing a retreat to grow closer to God, and writing a letter to our bishop explaining how the candidate is ready for this sacrament.

Editor's Note: *The Prairie Catholic, with the assistance of the diocesan Office of Worship and the Office of Religious Education, continues the series, What Catholics Believe. This 7 part series will explain the sacramental system in the Catholic Church and explore the specific purpose and characteristic of each of the Seven Sacraments.*

The liturgical celebration is within a mass setting. The music, the readings, and homily points to the gift of the Holy Spirit. During the rite, they receive this gift as the bishop confers the sacrament with the sacred chrism and the words, "Be sealed with the Holy Spirit." It is to be a beautiful and unforgettable celebration.

The follow-up includes the expectation that they experience the life of the Church more deeply: learning about the faith throughout their lives and sharing their gifts with their parish and with society.

The sacrament of confirmation is indeed about beginning! It is about our mission to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, to build up the Body of Christ, and to extend this mission to our neighborhoods, our campuses, our workplaces, and yes, even unto the ends of the earth.

To obtain a copy of any previous articles in this series of seven, please contact The Prairie Catholic, 1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; (507) 233-5332; email: cclancy@dnu.org

Extraordinary form of Mass allowed - with stipulations

by Ann Przybilla

In September 2007, Pope Benedict XVI gave permission in certain circumstances to use the Mass of Blessed John XXIII, what is correctly termed as the extraordinary form of the Mass. Many wondered if the intention of the Pope was to restore Latin altogether in all the rituals of the Church. Latin speaking seminary professors, veil-clad women worshippers, and Gregorian chant is what immediately came to many imaginations.

When the Pope allowed the extraordinary form last year, he did so with the stipulation that this only be done using the Missal from 1962, which happens to be in Latin. Some believe this Mass is the "unchanged" Mass. However, it is the seventh version of what was originated in 1570 after the Council of Trent (thus it is sometimes referred to as the Tridentine Mass) and was edited in 1604, 1634, 1884, 1911, 1920, and finally in 1962. Pastors are to permit this form of the Mass, provided there is a group of the faithful requesting it. Priests have the right to celebrate the extraordinary form privately, but they cannot arbitrarily schedule these for the parish. A priest that celebrates the extraordinary form must be suitably qualified by knowing the gestures (rubrics) and the Latin language. The readings may be taken from those of the current Lectionary but the calendar of feasts and saints differs from that of the calendar of the rest of the universal Church. The bishop oversees the use of the extraordinary form in his diocese and in certain cases the bishop may

wish to designate certain churches for the extraordinary form. In the Diocese of New Ulm, St. Michael's parish in Morgan offers the extraordinary form once a month.

So what was the Pope's reason for allowing the extraordinary form? It most certainly is not to exclude the ordinary form, the Mass that has been normative since 1970. Following Vatican Council II, there was an ever increasing liturgical development that tended to go further than the intentions of the council. Eventually theologians and other specialists, including the then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, sought to draw the Church toward a greater understanding of the organic features of the ecumenical council. Some say he is allowing the extraordinary form, hoping that it will serve as a catalyst for all worship to become more reverent, prayerful, and directed toward God.

Some argue that the use of the extraordinary form will create disunity, disregarding the vision of Vatican II that calls for "full, active and conscience participation" in liturgical prayer (SC, 14). The Church will have a better idea of the impact of the extraordinary form when, after three years, the bishops are asked to report back to the Holy See about the experience of celebrating it. In the meantime, all should strive for every encounter with our Lord, in private and public prayer, to be one that actively seeks the reverent, beautiful and mysterious attributes of God.

Ann Przybilla is Director of Worship for the Diocese of New Ulm.

Upcoming Events

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION,
Dec. 8, 2008 (Holy day of obligation)

GOOD SHEPHERD SERRA CLUB - will meet Thursday, Dec. 4, at Divine Providence Chapel and Marian Conference room, Sleepy Eye. The evening will begin with rosary

and Mass at 7:00 p.m., followed by a program and lunch. Guest speaker, Msgr. Eugene Lozinski of Sleepy Eye will share his vocation story. Everyone welcome.

NATIVITY OF THE LORD, Dec. 25, 2008 (Holy day of obligation)

A MAN IN LANCIANO, a one man play, will be held at the Marshall High School on Jan 21 at 7 p.m. Tickets are on sale for \$5. Call (507) 532-3602 to reserve a ticket.

Giving thanks for 50 years of diocesan history



Members of the diocese gathered with Bishop LeVoir November 16 at Holy Redeemer, Marshall for the 50th Anniversary Closing Celebration of the Diocese of New Ulm.



(photos by Fr. Eugene Brown and Joan Weicherding)

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Holy Communion, server, reader, a liturgy director - whatever we are - when we are involved in prayer in the liturgy, we participate in that priestly loving office of Jesus Christ.

So, prophetic is tied to the truth, and the teaching of the truth that the Church does. The priestly role is that role of love that Jesus had and we

too as other Christs have.

And finally the role as *king*.

Jesus was a king in different ways. In one way he had a self discipline about himself. He had a way to govern himself so that he could give himself, so that he could love.

Secondly, Jesus always used the things of this world for the good of others. Our Lord was in no way selfish or egotistical. He always

thought about the good of others and used things for the benefit of others. He changed water into wine. He fed the thousands with loaves and fishes and he gave us his body and blood as he changed bread and wine into his very self.

Berakhah House continues to serve those afflicted with HIV/AIDS

Sioux Falls, SD - Along a busy street in Sioux Falls, the one place in the diocese where people with AIDS can go, continues to provide the care, blessings, and comfort of home as it has since it was started back in 1995. Berakhah House was developed through the efforts of the late Fr. Howard Carroll, the Presentation Sisters, the Benedictine Sisters, and the diocese of Sioux Falls. It is the only such facility between Minneapolis and Omaha. Because of that geography, Berakhah House has been home to residents from all over a several state region.

Currently, Sister Joanna Bruno, PBVM and Sister Liz Remily, PBVM, are the directors and caregivers for the house. "When this house was built 13 years ago, even though we said it is not a hospice, it is not a nursing home, elements of both were included because people die here," said Sister Joanna.

Back then at the outset of its mission, Berakhah House was full. Now, occupancy is at 50 percent as

drug treatments for AIDS have been developed and life expectancy for persons with AIDS has grown. So the mission of the house has

December 1, 2008, is the 20th anniversary of World AIDS Day. The theme this year is "Stop AIDS, Keep the Promise."

changed. "It is more of a halfway or transitional house," said Sister Joanna. "Assisted living is what it is."

Berakhah House continues to welcome anyone with AIDS. Sister Joanna and Sister Liz came on the scene after working with the Presentation Sisters medical mission in Guatemala.

What they have found is the face of AIDS and the status of people with the condition have changed. When the house was started, there was little that could be done to prolong the lives of people with AIDS. Today, while still ultimately deadly, AIDS patients with treatment can live 13 to

15 years or longer. Berakhah House receives no money from the government and depends completely on the generosity of others and their donations of money, materials, or time and talent through volunteering. The sisters encourage families, individuals, school classes and anyone interested to call and set up a visit, where more can be learned about Berakhah House, its residents, its mission, and AIDS.

For more information on Berakhah House, call (605) 332-4017 or write to: Berakhah House, 400 North Western Avenue, Sioux Falls, SD 57104-5608

story courtesy of The Bishop's Bulletin, Sioux Falls, SD.



For information about Support Groups or any type of care for those living with HIV/AIDS, contact **FR. PAUL A. SCHUMACHER, Director of AIDS Ministry for the Diocese of New Ulm, PO Box 49, Ivanhoe, MN 56142; (507) 694-1402; email: skyp93@hotmail.com.**

These are the two things that Jesus did in his kingly role and again the Church does the same thing. The Church has that self discipline that comes primarily through the Church law and the rules and regulations that are involved in the operation of a diocese and then the using of things for the good of others - that persons are always more important than things.

We have organizations such as, Catholic Charities, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, the food shelf, all things that take care of the basic physical needs of others. The Church is involved in that role. So the Church too participates in the kingly role of Jesus Christ.

As we move into the future, it is good for us to review in our minds the basic things about ourselves - our identity that we are to be Jesus Christ and we are to be Jesus for others. We do that by imitating those things that

Jesus himself did: by handing on the truth, no matter where we are, in whatever situation we find ourselves; by loving; by giving of ourselves; by thinking of others before we think about ourselves; by a life of prayer; by thinking of God and giving ourselves to him; and finally by that *kingly* role - disciplining ourselves and then seeing to the needs of the poor and less fortunate.

As we go into the future, our identity and our mission as followers of Jesus Christ are good things to keep in mind. As I go into the future with you, I hope to lead in these ways. The vision of the Second Vatican Council and John Paul II and Benedict XVI is a clear vision. It is something you will hear me talk about and repeat so that in our lives we continually show forth the loving face of Jesus to others in our diocese.

God bless you.

The Prairie Catholic Staff wish all our readers a prayerful Advent and blessed Christmas.

THE DRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 23 No. 4 December 2008



Lord, bless all who
look upon this manger;
may it remind us of the
humble birth of Jesus,
and raise up our
thoughts to him, who is
God-with-us and Savior
of all, and who lives and
reigns forever."

(excerpt from Prayer of Blessing of the
Christmas Manger, Book of Blessings
#1541-1589)

(photo by Bill Moeller)

catholic trends

Washington - A recent Zogby poll of Catholics nationwide showed overwhelming support for reform of our national immigration laws, with Catholics supporting a path to citizenship for the estimated 12 million undocumented persons in the country.

The poll conducted October 17-20, 2008, included a sample of 1,000 people who self-identified as Roman Catholics and was commissioned by Migration and

Refugee Services of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (MRS/USCCB). It had a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percentage points.

About 69 percent of Catholics polled supported a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, provided they register with the government; 62 percent supported the concept if they were required to learn English. The U.S. Catholic bishops have long endorsed a path to citizenship for

undocumented persons that would include requirements to register with the government and to learn English.

"These results show that, like other Americans, Catholics want a solution to the challenge of illegal immigration and support undocumented immigrants becoming full members of our communities and nation," said Johnny Young, executive director of Migration and Refugee Services of the USCCB. "It is clear that those opposed to a legalization of the undocumented are a minority," he added.

In other findings, 64 percent of Catholics opposed the construction of a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico, while three out of four Catholics agree that the church has a moral obligation to help provide for the humanitarian needs of immigrants, regardless of their legal status.

Todd Scribner, education coordinator for MRS/USCCB, stated that the poll results

demonstrated that the efforts of the U.S. bishops to educate Catholics on the realities of immigration are bearing fruit.

"Catholics are generally in agreement with their bishops that there needs to be a comprehensive and humane solution to our immigration problems," Scribner said. "The strong educational efforts of the bishops, through the Justice for Immigrants Campaign and their own teachings, have helped generate support in the

Catholic community for comprehensive reform."

The U.S. bishops launched an educational initiative in 2005, entitled the Justice for Immigrants Campaign, to educate Catholics on the need for comprehensive immigration reform. Copies of the poll results are available by contacting Mar Muñoz-Visoso at mar.munoz-visoso@uscgb.org.

STATEWIDE IMMIGRATION

SUNDAY!

January 4,
2009

"You shall love your
neighbor as yourself..."
Mark 12:31



Join Catholic parishes throughout Minnesota in celebrating Statewide Immigration Sunday as a way to renew our commitment to welcome our immigrant sisters and brothers.