

THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 26 No. 5 January 2012



National Vocation Awareness Week is Jan. 9–14

For over 35 years, National Vocation Awareness Week has encouraged American Catholics to pray for and to promote vocations to the priesthood, permanent diaconate, and consecrated life. Pictured above: Diocese of New Ulm seminarian Garrett Ahlers studies for class at St. John Vianney Seminary in St. Paul, where he is currently a senior. (see *Special Report*, page 6)

Signed, sealed, and delivered to the Vatican

Diocese of New Ulm quinquennial report complete; bishop to travel to Rome to meet with pope

by Sam Patet
The Prairie Catholic

NEW ULM – From March 5 to 10, 2012, Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm and 10 other bishops from Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota will visit Pope Benedict XVI in Rome.

This is no ordinary visit for these Midwestern bishops. They will be on an “ad limina” visit, an event they participate in once every five or so years.

What is an “ad limina” visit? “Ad limina” is a Latin phrase that translates as “to the threshold,” Bishop LeVoir said. He and his brother bishops “are going to cross the threshold of the See of the Apostle Peter to visit the Holy Father.”

More specifically, “ad limina” visits are opportunities for bishops to report to the pope on how their dioceses are doing. All bishops throughout the world are required to make an “ad limina” visit every five years, or less often as the pope’s schedule permits. Pope Benedict XVI has been conducting “ad limina” visits with approximately 200 bishops of the United States since November 2011; he is expected to finish these visits sometime in 2012.

Not only do these visits help the pope form a better picture as to how Catholicism is doing worldwide, but they also allow him to offer the bishops support and advice.

“It’s really an expression of communion with the Holy Father,” Bishop LeVoir said. “Each bishop has been appointed by the Holy Father, and now it’s time to go back to him and to let him know what’s happening in our dioceses and take direction from him.”

Bishop LeVoir’s five days in Rome will include meeting with the pope in large and small groups and meeting with staff members of Vatican offices.

The quinquennial report

Bishop LeVoir will not be arriving in Rome empty handed. In November 2010 he sent the Vatican a 212-page document that explained the progress of the diocese since its last “ad



Bishop LeVoir signs off on the completion of the 212-page quinquennial report, which was sent to Pope Benedict XVI. The report explains the state of the diocese over the past seven years. Looking on are the bishop’s staff members who played key roles in the completion of the report. They are (l-r): Kathy Huebert, Dan Rossini, Msgr. Eugene Lozinski, and Sam Patet. (photo by Christine Clancy)

limina” visit. Then-Bishop John C. Nienstedt made the diocese’s last “ad limina” visit in March 2004.

This report is called the quinquennial report. Quinquennial is a Latin word that means “five years.”

Bishop LeVoir put Msgr. Eugene Lozinski, chancellor of the diocese, in charge of organizing the writing of the report. In it, Msgr. Lozinski said, the “various pastoral activities of the diocese are assessed and reported on.”

While the quinquennial report and “ad limina” visit should be conducted every five years, Msgr. Lozinski

said, Pope Benedict’s busy schedule prohibited it from occurring earlier. This quinquennial report spans seven years, from Jan. 1, 2004, to Dec. 31, 2010.

For nine months Bishop LeVoir, Msgr. Lozinski, and department directors at the Pastoral Center worked on putting together the report. The 212 pages are divided into 23 sections and five appendixes. Each section examines a different part of the diocese’s ministry, including the celebration of the sacraments, Catholic education, social justice, health care, and pastoral care for immigrants.

While putting together the report was a long process, Bishop LeVoir said, it was extremely helpful for himself as a newcomer to the diocese.

“I read a good portion of the previous one (the quinquennial report from 1998 to 2003) ... and (the report) we have now,” Bishop LeVoir said, “and it just helped me to get a more complete picture of the diocese and the various trends that are occurring.” With this information, he continued, “I can better focus my ministry as bishop in the diocese to those areas that would need special care.”

(continued on page 7)

INSIDE

Page 3

Statewide Immigration Sunday

Page 8

FDA Plan B recommendation rejected

Page 11

Catholic Schools Week begins Jan. 29

Visit us online!
www.dnu.org

Publisher

Most Reverend John M. LeVoir

Editor in Chief

Dan Rossini

Editor

Christine Clancy

Reporter/Web site

Sam Patet

**Submission deadline for
The Prairie Catholic is the 10th of
each month prior to publication**

The Prairie Catholic,

the official newspaper for the

Diocese of New Ulm since

May 1972, is published monthly

except July and August.

Its office of publication is located at
1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073
(507) 359-2966.

Postmaster: Send notice on Form 3579, Prairie
Catholic, 1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073-
2099. Periodical postage paid at New Ulm and
additional mailing offices. USPS 926-760.

DIOCESAN DIRECTORY

Diocesan Pastoral Center
1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073
(507) 359-2966;
dnu@dnu.org • www.dnu.org

Vicar General

Msgr. Douglas L. Grams

Chancellor

Msgr. Eugene Lozinski

Coordinator of Staff Communications

Dan Rossini

Finance

Tom Holzer

Religious Education/Adult Faith Formation

Bryan Reising

Ecumenism

Fr. Paul Timmerman

Pastoral Administrators

Fr. Dennis Labat

Catholic Schools/Continuing Education

Karla Cross

Youth Ministry

Margaret McHugh

Worship/Lay Ministry Formation

Ann Przybilla

Social Concerns/Family Life

Christopher Loetscher

Family Life Education/Safe Environment

Sr. Candace Fier, ISSM

Missions

Fr. Philip Schotzko

San Lucas Mission

Msgr. Gregory Schaffer

Hispanic Ministry

Sr. Anna Marie Reha, SSND

Priest Personnel

Msgr. Douglas Grams

Development/Catholic Community Foundation

Wayne Pelzel

Tribunal

vacant

Permanent Diaconate

Deacon Mark Kober

Catholic Charities/Pastoral Planning

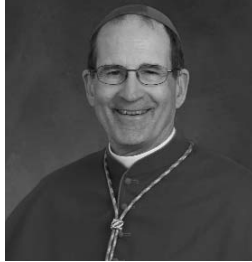
Thomas Keaveny

Vocations Team

Bishop John M. LeVoir, team leader;
Fr. Todd Petersen, director; Fr. Craig
Timmerman, associate director;
Margaret McHugh, vocation awareness

BE NOT AFRAID

“Speak Out and Pray for a Culture of Life”



Bishop John M. LeVoir

Jan. 22, 2012, is the 39th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion in the United States. Up to the time of this decision in 1973, I thought that abortion would never be legalized in our country. The legalization of abortion could take place in other countries, but not our own. How wrong I was.

The great evil of abortion continues to be practiced in our country to this day. Many have argued for and against abortion. There have been many prayers offered for the defense and safeguarding of all human life from conception to natural death. Despite the fact that in many quarters there is a general proclamation of the dignity of human life, that proclamation somehow does not apply to the unborn.

The Catholic bishops of the United States wrote in their statement

“Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics”: “We live the Gospel of Life when we live in solidarity with the poor of the world, standing up for their lives and dignity. Yet abortion and euthanasia have become preeminent threats to human dignity because they directly attack life itself, the most fundamental human good and the condition for all others.”

“They are committed against those who are weakest and most defenseless, those who are genuinely ‘the poorest of the poor.’ They are endorsed increasingly without the veil of euphemism, as supporters of abortion and euthanasia freely concede these are killing even as they promote them. Sadly, they are practiced in those communities which ordinarily provide a safe haven for the weak – the family and the healing professions. Such direct attacks on human life, once crimes, are today legitimized by governments sworn to protect the weak and marginalized” (“Living the Gospel of Life,” no. 5, 1998).

In order to end the taking of human life in the womb, there is required a change of heart or a conversion from the idea that somehow death will solve our problems. Instead of endorsing death as a solution, we are called upon as Catholics to promote a culture of life, where all human life from conception to natural death

is promoted, defended, and respected. Blessed John Paul II wrote: “We are asked to love and honor the life of every man and woman and to work with perseverance and courage so that our time, marked by all too many signs of death, may at last witness the establishment of a new culture of life, the fruit of the culture of truth and of love” (“The Gospel of Life,” no. 77).

There are some, even among Catholics, who want the Church to keep quiet about what we believe and to not bring what we believe to the public square. About the right of the Church to speak publically, the United States bishops have said: “Some question whether it is appropriate for the Church to play a role in political life. However, the obligation to teach about moral values that should shape our lives, including our public lives, is central to the mission given to the Church by Jesus Christ. Moreover, the United States Constitution protects the right of individual believers and religious bodies to participate and speak out without government interference, favoritism, or discrimination. Civil law should fully recognize and protect the Church’s right, obligation, and opportunities to participate in society without being forced to abandon or ignore its central moral convictions” (“Forming Consciences

for Faithful Citizenship,” no. 11).

Speaking out in favor of life is our obligation. It will help to change hearts and thus to change the culture. However, prayer is most powerful in changing people’s hearts because it calls down God’s grace. Grace is active in people’s hearts and works for conversion from the inside. Pro-life prayers should be an integral part of our daily prayers. There are also special occasions for pro-life prayer. One such occasion is the Mass for Life held each year at the Cathedral of St. Paul. This year, Archbishop Nienstedt has asked me to be the main celebrant at this Mass on Sunday, Jan. 22, 2012, at noon. The Archbishop has also asked me to pray a prayer for life at the Minnesota Capitol at 2 p.m. as part of the March for Life, which is sponsored by the Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life. It is a privilege for me to do both, and I invite everyone, who is able, to join me in St. Paul on Jan. 22, 2012.

Immigration Sunday

In the quote above from “Living the Gospel of Life,” the United States bishops wrote: “We live the Gospel of Life when we live in solidarity with the poor of the world, standing up for their lives and dignity.” The immigrant is one of the poor of the

(continued on page 4)

Bishop’s January Calendar

- 1 New Ulm:** 9:30 a.m. Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.
- 3 New Ulm:** 9:30 a.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Diocesan Staff Meeting.
- New Ulm:** 1 p.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Vocations Team Meeting.
- 4 Olivia:** 12:30 p.m. Church of St. Aloysius. Committee on Parishes Meeting.
- 6 New Ulm:** 10:30 a.m. Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. New Ulm Area Catholic Schools Board of Directors Meeting.

- 7-13 Tucson, Ariz.:** Region VIII Bishops’ Retreat.
- 11 Sleepy Eye:** 11 a.m. Schoenstatt on the Lake. Oath of Fidelity and Profession of Faith of Permanent Diaconate Candidates.
- 15 New Ulm:** 6 p.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Lectio Divina Prayer Group Gathering.
- 17 New Ulm:** 10:30 a.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Priest Personnel Board Meeting.
- 18-20 Sleepy Eye:** Good Leaders, Good Shepherds.
- 22 St. Paul:** Mass for Life/March for Life.

- 24 Olivia:** 1 p.m. Church of St. Aloysius. Priests’ Council Meeting followed by College of Consultors Meeting.
- 28 Darwin:** 5 p.m. Church of St. John. Mass.
- Darwin:** 6 p.m. Church of St. John. Retirement Reception for Jan Crowe, Liaison for Charismatic Renewal.
- 29 Marshall:** 2:30 p.m. Church of the Holy Redeemer. Christian Unity Prayer Service.
- 30 Morgan:** 8:30 a.m. Church of St. Michael. Mass for Catholic Schools Week.

- Sleepy Eye:** 10 a.m. Church of St. Mary. Mass for Catholic Schools Week.
- Tracy:** 1 p.m. Church of St. Mary. Mass for Mass for Catholic Schools Week.
- 31 Canby:** 8:30 a.m. Church of St. Peter. Mass for Catholic Schools Week.
- Minneota:** 10 a.m. Church of St. Edward. Mass for Catholic Schools Week.
- Marshall:** 1 p.m. St. Mary’s Chapel, Holy Redeemer School. Mass for Catholic Schools Week.

Remembering our American inheritance

The following "Faith in the Public Arena" column is provided by the Minnesota Catholic Conference, which advocates on behalf of the state's bishops for public policies and programs that support the life and dignity of every human person.

by Jessica Zittlow

On Jan. 8, 2012, the Church will celebrate the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. In years past, the Catholic Church in Minnesota has also commemorated this great feast as Immigration Sunday by dedicating it to reflecting upon the plight of those who have fled their native lands and come to us looking for sanctuary, economic opportunity, religious liberty, and many of the other blessings of American life.

The Minnesota Catholic Conference continues to provide parishes that choose to observe Immigration Sunday 2012 with numerous resources dedicated to helping Catholics put their faith into action.

MCC's Web site, <http://immigrationsundaymn.org>, includes bishops' statements, 2012 liturgy guides, and ideas for parish-based activities related to the issue of immigration. As you and your parish prepare for Immigration Sunday, MCC would

like to share with you snippets from a recent address by Los Angeles Archbishop Jose Gomez to the Knights of Columbus. Archbishop Gomez, an immigrant himself, is the chair of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Migration.

The archbishop spoke as an American citizen and also as a pastor whose flock is about 70 percent Hispanic. He reminds us that, from a Catholic standpoint, America's founders got it exactly right.

Our basic human need

"Human rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are universal and inalienable. They come from God, not governments. And these rights are not contingent on where you are born or what racial or ethnic group you are born into. The human right to life, the foundation of every other right, implies the natural right to emigrate. Because, in order for you and your family to live a life worthy of your God-given dignity, certain things are required. At minimum: food, shelter, clothing and the means to make a decent living.

"In Catholic thinking, the right to immigration is a 'natural right.' That means it is universal and inalienable. But it is not absolute. Immigrants are

obliged to respect and abide by the laws and traditions of the countries they come to reside in.

"Catholic teaching also recognizes the sovereignty of nations to secure their borders and make decisions about who and how many foreigners they allow into their countries.

"However, we must always make sure that we are not exaggerating these concerns in ways that deny the basic humanitarian needs of good people seeking refuge in our country."

Our American inheritance

"Catholics especially bear the truth about all Americans, namely, that we are all children of immigrants.

"Our inheritance comes to us now as a gift and as a duty. At the least, it means we should have some empathy for this new generation of immigrants. For Christians, empathy means seeing Jesus Christ in every person and especially in the poor and the vulnerable.

"And we need to remember, my friends: Jesus was uncompromising on this point.

"In the evening of our lives, he told us, our love for God will be judged

COMING SOON

In the new year, Minnesota's bishops will be releasing a statement calling Catholics and all persons of good will to work for comprehensive immigration reform. Watch for news about the statement in "The Prairie Catholic."

by our love for him in the person of the least among us. This includes, he said, the immigrant or the stranger.

"Very few people 'choose' to leave their homelands. Emigration is almost always forced upon people by the dire conditions they face in their lives."

Our family

"Many of you are fathers or mothers. So the question you have to ask yourselves is this: What wouldn't you do to provide for your loved ones? To feed hungry mouths? To give your children a better future?"

"Those are questions we all need to ask ourselves. I only want to offer one suggestion. Our perspective on this issue will change if you begin to

see these 'illegals' for who they really are – mothers and fathers, sons and daughters – not much different from yourselves.

"They are people who are not afraid of hard work or sacrifice. They are people who have courage and the other virtues – and who value God, family and community."

Immigration Sunday gives Minnesota Catholics an opportunity to push political debates aside and do exactly as Archbishop Gomez suggests: take time to not only welcome the stranger, but to acknowledge his or her value – as mother, father, son or daughter, as family and community member.

As we take the Advent and Christmas seasons to open our hearts and minds to the coming of the Lord, we should likewise do the same for those who are in need. We also should be working more effectively for just solutions to our broken immigration system.

Jessica Zittlow is the MCC's communications associate.

Charismatic renewal liaison retires after 17 years of service to diocese



Jan Crowe, a member of the Church of St. John in Darwin, retired as the diocesan charismatic renewal liaison on Jan. 1.

In recognition of Crowe's years of service to the diocese, Bishop John M. LeVoir will celebrate a Mass at 5 p.m. on Jan. 28 at the Church of St. John in Darwin. An open house reception will follow.

Known for her efforts and dedication in the charismatic renewal movement in the Diocese of New Ulm,

Crowe has been associated with the movement since 1994 when Bishop Raymond A. Lucker appointed her charismatic renewal associate liaison, working beside Sr. Justin Wirth, SSND. Following Wirth's retirement, Crowe was appointed liaison to the bishop.

Crowe has been responsible for bringing to the diocese some prominent speakers in the movement, such as Ralph Martin, Walter Matthews, Jim Murphy, Fr. Dimitri Sala, Peter Herbeck, Fr. Jim Livingston, Fr. Matt Linn, Sr. Ann Shields, Mother Nadine Brown, and Dr. Ray Guarendi.

She has coordinated the annual Catholic Family Bible Camp, a

weekend event attended by up to 130 people. Life in the Spirit seminars, Renewal Days, Renewal Evenings, and a newsletter were other components of her service to the diocese. "This diocese had a total of 35 prayer groups who met weekly for many years. Six of those groups are still meeting," said Crowe.

"We have a wonderful gift in the Holy Roman Catholic Church," she said. "It is my prayer that all my fellow Catholic believers will see the heart of the Church in the charismatic renewal movements of the Diocese of New Ulm."

Priestly milestones in 2012

Thank you for your many years of priestly service.



70 YEARS
FR. ROMAN J. SCHAEFER
ordained June 6, 1942



45 YEARS
FR. JOHN G. BERGER
ordained Feb. 19, 1967



50 YEARS
FR. DENNIS E. BECKER
ordained Feb. 24, 1962



40 YEARS
FR. JAMES W. DEVORAK
ordained Aug. 27, 1972



50 YEARS
FR. JOHN H. BRUNNER
ordained Feb. 18, 1962



40 YEARS
MSGR. EUGENE L. LOZINSKI
ordained May 28, 1972



50 YEARS
FR. RICHARD C. GROSS
ordained Feb. 22, 1962



35 YEARS
FR. PHILIP M. SCHOTZKO
ordained May 29, 1977



50 YEARS
FR. PAUL A. SCHUMACHER
ordained Feb. 18, 1962



25 YEARS
MSGR. DOUGLAS L. GRAMS
ordained June 13, 1987





The Permanent Deacon *Icon of Christ the Servant*

WORD † LITURGY † CHARITY

Editor's note: As the Diocese of New Ulm approaches the ordination of its first group of permanent deacons, "The Prairie Catholic" will publish a four-part series on the vocation and ministry of permanent deacons. This is the second article in the series, which will focus on charitable service as an integral part of a deacon's ministry. The group of men are scheduled to be ordained by Bishop John M. LeVoir on April 21, 2012, at the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye.

by Deacon Mark Kober, director
Office of Permanent Diaconate

The word deacon comes from the Greek word *diakonos*, which means "servant." Furthermore, the Greek word for the role of the seven deacons in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 6, who were assigned the duty of assisting the Apostles with caring for the needy, is *diakonia*, which means "service." It makes sense, then, that a significant portion of a deacon's time is spent in charitable service.

All Christians are called to charity, but the deacon is the one who is officially sent by the Church to bring Christ and his Good News to those in need and to make Christ, as servant, sacramentally present. His ordination through the sacrament of Holy Orders enables him to share in the ministry of Christ on behalf of the Church and the world.

To be ordained a deacon is to be committed to the needs of parishes and the needs of the diocese, to be ready to integrate one's gifts into the larger pastoral commitments of the Church, and to be willing to exercise the diaconal ministry in obedience to the bishop's direction and in cooperation with the priests. Deacons are ordained for service to the diocese first. Appointments are made by the bishop and are usually to a parish, but they may also be to the diocese itself or to an institution or special service of the diocese.

The deacon empowers and supports others' works of charity by his actions and deeds, taking care not to minimize, diminish, or overshadow the efforts of others. The deacon is ordained not to be in charge in his ministries but to serve the Church in a very special way.

The work a deacon performs depends upon his own abilities, the needs of the diocese, and the local community he serves. You might see the deacon at Mass assisting the priest or the bishop, but the following are some other areas where he may be working:

- Providing pastoral counseling
- Leading prayer groups and support groups
- Working with youth
- Ministering at hospitals, nursing homes, and hospices
- Ministering to the sick, aged, and dying
- Serving the physically, mentally, and emotionally handicapped
- Helping the widowed and divorced
- Reaching out to the poor and marginalized
- Serving minority communities
- Organizing justice and peace activities
- Ministering in jails and prisons
- Working with the chemically dependent
- Promoting ecumenical efforts
- Teaching in a religious education program
- Promoting evangelization efforts
- Working with RCIA candidates
- Guiding families through sacramental preparation programs

Perhaps the most important duty of a deacon is to live out the Gospel in everyday life. He is called to be representative of Christ in the everyday activities of his family and his community at large. Often the deacon is the conduit for communication between the parish and the secular life of the faithful.

No Tengas Miedo

Hablar Abiertamente y Orar por una Cultura de la Vida

por Obispo John M. LeVoir

El 22 de Enero, 2012 se conmemora el 39 aniversario de la decisión de la Corte Suprema Roe v. Wade que legalizó el aborto en los Estados Unidos.

Hasta hoy día la aborción se sigue practicando en nuestro país. Muchos han argumentado a favor y en contra del aborto. Se han ofrecido muchas oraciones por la defensa y la salvaguardia de todo ser humano desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural. A pesar de que en muchos lugares hay una declaración general de la dignidad de la vida humana, de alguna manera esa declaración no se aplica al nonato.

Los Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos en su declaración *Living the Gospel of Life: Un Desafío a los Católicos Estadounidenses*. "Vivimos el Evangelio de la Vida cuando vivimos en solidaridad con los pobres del mundo, defendiendo su vida y su dignidad. Pero aún así, el aborto y la eutanasia se han convertido en amenazas constantes a la dignidad humana porque atacan directamente a la vida misma, el más fundamental de los bienes humanos y la condición para todos los demás."

"Se cometen en contra de los más débiles e indefensos, los que son verdaderamente 'los más pobres de los pobres.' Se les apoya con más frecuencia sin el velo de eufemismos, cuando los que

favorecen el aborto y la eutanasia reconocen libremente que esos son matanzas aun en medio de sus campañas para promoverlos. Desafortunadamente, se practican en esas comunidades que ordinariamente ofrecen un refugio a los débiles - la familia y los profesionales de la medicina. Tales ataques directos a la vida humana, que una vez se consideraban delitos, son legitimados por los gobiernos, que profesan proteger a los débiles y marginados." (*Living the Gospel of Life*, no. 5, 1998).

Para poner el fin de un ser humano en el vientre, se requiere un cambio en el corazón o una conversación de la idea que de alguna manera la muerte vaya a resolver nuestros problemas. En vez de ceder la muerte como una solución, como católicos somos llamados a promover una cultura de vida, donde se defiende y respeta a todo ser humano desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural.

Nuestra obligación es hablar abiertamente en defensa de la vida. Esto ayudará a cambiar los corazones y por ende cambiar la cultura. Sin embargo, la oración es más poderosa ya que cambia el corazón de la gente, porque descende por la gracia de Dios.

Domingo de Inmigración

Los obispos de los Estados Unidos escribieron en su declaración que: "Vivimos el evangelio de la vida en que vivimos en solidaridad con los pobres del mundo,

levantándose para sus vidas y dignidad." El inmigrante es uno de los pobres del mundo. Los obispos católicos de Minnesota han designado el 8 de enero, 2012, Epifanía del Señor, como Domingo de Inmigración en todo el estado. Como lo hemos hecho durante los últimos cuatro años, vamos a recordar a nuestros hermanos y hermanas en esta gran celebración.

Así como los magos siguieron la estrella a través de una tierra extranjera, a menudo nuestros hermanos y hermanas inmigrantes se encuentran en situaciones nuevas y extrañas. En el nombre de Cristo, somos llamados para ofrecer hospitalidad al extranjero. Al hacerlo, fortalecemos la unidad familiar, que nos hace un cuerpo, uno en comunión con Dios, nuestro creador.

El 27 de Septiembre, 2010, el papa Benedicto en su mensaje por el Día Mundial del Migrante y del Refugiado dijo: "Se trata, pues, de conjugar la acogida que se debe a todos los seres humanos, en especial si son indigentes, con la consideración sobre las condiciones indispensables para una vida decorosa y pacífica, tanto para los habitantes originarios como para los recién llegados." Les pido que rezen para que la dignidad de los inmigrantes sean respetados.

pastoral letter

(continued from page 2)

world. The Catholic bishops of Minnesota have designated Jan. 8, 2012, the Feast of Our Lord's Epiphany, as Statewide Immigration Sunday. As we have done for the past four years, we will remember our immigrant brothers and sisters on this great feast.

As the Magi followed the star through a foreign land, our immigrant brothers and sisters find

themselves in new and often strange situations. In the name of Christ, we are called upon to offer hospitality to the stranger in our midst. In doing so, we strengthen the unity of the human family, making us one body, one in communion with God, our creator.

About immigration, Pope Benedict said in his World Day of Migrants and Refugees message on Sept. 27,

2010: "The challenge [of immigration] is to combine the welcome due to every human being, especially when in need, with a reckoning of what is necessary for both the local inhabitants and the new arrivals to live a dignified and peaceful life." Please pray that the dignity of immigrants be respected.



Bishop celebrates Feast of Our Lady with Latino community in Marshall

by Sam Patet
The Prairie Catholic

Tina Quiñones, a member of the Church of the Holy Redeemer in Marshall, has always had a special place in her heart for Our Lady of Guadalupe.

She was born in Mexico City, and her home parish growing up was the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The basilica contains the original image of Our Lady of Guadalupe that was given to St. Juan Diego in 1531.

"She is our mother, and that's where we come from," Quiñones said. "The city loves the Virgin of Guadalupe."

On Sunday, Dec. 11, Quiñones and the Latino community of Holy Redeemer celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

What made this celebration special was that Bishop John M. LeVoir was the main celebrant at Mass. "To us, it was an honor," Quiñones said. "I was raised a Catholic, and

we (saw) a bishop once every 10 to 15 years. So for him to come and see us here for the second time in the last couple of years since I've been in here, has been an honor."

Sr. Anna Marie Reha, director of the diocese's Office of Hispanic Ministry, agreed with Quiñones.

The Latino communities of the diocese "really look to the bishop as their pastor, as the pastor of the diocese," she said, "and so to have the honor of even having the bishop present was very significant for them ... For them to worship in their own language – their heart language, their prayer language – and that the bishop would have taken the time and effort to learn the pronunciation: to do that meant the world to them."

A special Mass

As Mass began, the 200 participants congregated at the back of church with Bishop LeVoir and the servers. Each person had a rose, and after processing to the front of the church, they placed their roses in front of a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Before this procession began, however, a group of dancers known as the *matachines* had already started the celebration. Adorned in bright red skirts, t-shirts bearing the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, and hundreds of noise-making shells, these *matachines* danced down the center aisle to the beat of a large drum.

"Because she was an Indian, they are supposed to be Indian people dancing," said Quiñones. "It's a way of showing their love for the Virgin of Guadalupe."

After the opening processions, Mass proceeded as usual, with Bishop LeVoir celebrating in Spanish. While he stumbled over some words, the Latino community of Marshall appreciated him celebrating the Mass in their native tongue, a fact evidenced by the applause they gave him at the end of Mass.

In his homily, Bishop LeVoir highlighted how the appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe helped bring about peace for the people of



Above: A young female mariachi band from St. Paul provided joyful music at Mass and at the celebration that followed.

Right: The *matachines* carry an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe as they dance down the center aisle.

(photos by Sam Patet)



Mexico. She is still relevant for a 21st-century society, he continued, that does not value human life and that does not have peace.

"During one of his (Pope John Paul II's) visits" to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bishop LeVoir said, "the pope entrusted the cause of life to Mary's loving protection

and placed under her motherly care the innocent lives of children, especially those who are in danger of not being born. ... We honor the Blessed Virgin today as we gather to celebrate her feast and ask her intercession for peace in our hearts, our families, in our country, and in the world."

ENDOW women prayer groups expanding throughout diocese

by Sam Patet
The Prairie Catholic

Learning about the Catholic faith has been a lifelong endeavor for Ronda Mathiowetz of the Church of the Japanese Martyrs in Leavenworth. As a convert to Catholicism, many of the teachings and practices of the Church have been new to her.

One program that has sparked Mathiowetz's desire to learn even more about the Catholic faith is ENDOW (Educating on the Nature and Dignity of Women). ENDOW is a Catholic educational program, open only to women, that presents the Church's views on the inherent dignity and beauty of women. It does this through small study groups, seminars, and retreats.

"There's always been a little bit more that I've wanted to learn through the years," Mathiowetz said, "and this was just another opportunity to learn more about the Church."

On Oct. 8, Mathiowetz and 24 other women gathered at the Church of St. Catherine in Redwood Falls to participate in a day-long ENDOW seminar. They studied Pope John Paul II's 1995 "Letter to Women."

Bishop John M. LeVoir is a strong supporter of ENDOW, in large part because it presents the Church's teachings on the nature of women clearly and joyfully.

"There are many contradictory views about women in our culture," he said. "Many are demeaning to women. The Church, however, has been teaching on the nature and dignity of women in a particularly clear and insightful way in recent decades. It is essential for women to know that they are images of God, that they are persons with an infinite dignity, value, and worth."

While women can participate in ENDOW through seminars and retreats, the most common way they participate is through small study

groups. Each group has eight to 12 members. As they meet for their two-hour, weekly or bi-weekly meeting, the groups slowly but surely make their way through one of ENDOW's 14 study programs.

Jan Noyes, a parishioner of the Church of the Holy Redeemer in Marshall and mother of five girls, attended the ENDOW seminar on Oct. 8. She enjoyed the experience so much that she started a small study group in her area. They have been meeting since the beginning of November.

"I had been wanting to start some sort of women's study here in Marshall," Noyes said. "When I heard about this, I just felt it would be very beneficial to the women in our parish, to gain a better understanding of what the Church teaches about women and how important the Church feels they are."

Noyes wasn't the only one who started a group after attending the

Oct. 8 seminar. Seven other women have completed facilitator training and are in the process of starting ENDOW groups, including those in New Ulm and Minneota.

The process of starting an ENDOW group was easy, Noyes said. First, she had to apply and train to be a facilitator.

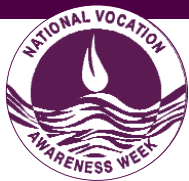
"A facilitator is not a teacher," she said. Rather, she's "the one who leads the group in understanding the text and helps keep the group on track. So I didn't feel like I had to know everything about the Catholic faith."

To become a facilitator, she completed an application form and listened to a three-hour training CD. The CD introduced her to the ENDOW program, talked about John Paul II's "Letter to Women," and gave ideas for recruiting women to join a group. In addition, she had to be approved by the diocese's Office of Family Life Education.

Sr. Candace Fier, director of that office and contact person for the ENDOW program, wants women to know that the diocese is willing to help them join an ENDOW group or start one of their own. Missing the Oct. 8 seminar, she said, does not mean that a woman cannot become a facilitator or become part of an ENDOW group.

"Definitely consider joining a group," said Mathiowetz. "It's a great opportunity for learning more about our faith or just spending time with other women and supporting them in prayer, and thoughtfulness, and whatever support may be needed."

For information about ENDOW or starting an ENDOW group in your area, contact Sr. Candace: cfier@dnu.org; 507-359-2966. Also visit the program's Web site: www.endowonline.org.



Prayer for Vocations

Lord, God, we praise and bless your holy name. We ask that you give the Church of New Ulm holy priests, dedicated women and men religious, selfless deacons and zealous missionaries. Inspire in the hearts of our youth a spirit of generosity to commit their lives to the message and ministry of Jesus, your Son. We ask all this through Him who lives and reigns as our Lord, forever and ever.

Amen.

Mary Mother of the Church, Pray for us.

National Vocation Awareness Week is Jan. 9–14

Please pray for our diocesan seminarians and religious women



Deacon Jacob Niemand
Fourth Year Theology
Saint Meinrad Seminary,
St. Meinrad, Ind.
St. Joseph, Montevideo



Deacon Aaron Johanneck
Fourth Year Theology
Pontifical North American
College, Rome
St. Mary, Seaforth



Samuel Wagner
Second Year Theology
St. Paul Seminary,
St. Paul
St. Mary, Sleepy Eye



Garrett Ahlers
College Senior
St. John Vianney
Seminary, St. Paul
Holy Redeemer, Marshall



Andrew Illikman
College Senior
St. John Vianney
Seminary, St. Paul
St. Mary, New Ulm



Alex Rabaey
College Junior
St. John Vianney
Seminary, St. Paul
St. Edward, Minnetonka



Andrew Dieter
College Sophomore
St. John Vianney
Seminary, St. Paul
St. Francis, Benson



Sr. Mary Ruth Huhn
Temporarily Professed
Franciscan Sisters
of Dillingen
Hankinson, N.D.
St. John, Darwin



**Sr. Gloria
Therese Leven**
Perpetually Professed
Carmelite Sisters of the
Most Sacred Heart
of Los Angeles
Alhambra, Calif.
St. Paul, Nicollet



**Sr. John Mary
of Laudem**
Gloria McKeown
Temporarily Professed
Sisters of Reparation
to the Most Sacred
Heart of Jesus
Steubenville, Ohio
St. Mary, Seaforth



Sr. Lisa Maurer
Temporarily Professed
St. Scholastica Monastery
Duluth
St. Mary, Sleepy Eye



Sr. Elizabeth Miller
Postulant
Dominican Sisters of
Mary, Mother of
the Eucharist
Ann Arbor, Mich.
St. Mary, New Ulm



**Mother Mary
Clare Roufs**
Temporarily Professed
Handmaids of the
Heart of Jesus
New Ulm
Holy Trinity, Winsted



**Sr. Maria Mater
Compassionis Schmitz**
Temporarily Professed
The Servants of the Lord
and the Virgin of Matará
Viterbo, Italy
St. Raphael, Springfield



Sr. Roxanne Seifert
Temporarily Professed
Sisters of the
Presentation of the
Blessed Virgin Mary
Aberdeen, S.D.
St. Anastasia, Hutchinson



**Little Sister
Hallel Verly**
Temporarily Professed
Community of the Lamb
Saint-Pierre, France
Holy Redeemer, Marshall



Sr. Katie Wallyn
Temporarily Professed
Servant Sisters of the
Home of the Mother
Priego, Spain
St. Anastasia, Hutchinson

Proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ leads to vocations

by Fr. Todd Petersen

This year National Vocations Awareness Week will be Jan. 9–14. It starts Jan. 9 because the week always begins on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which is transferred to Monday this year.



The theme is “Proclaim Good News.” On its surface, this theme might seem more likely for the New Evangelization to which Mother Church continues to call us, rather than to pray and raise awareness of vocations. All the same it is a fitting theme. But why?

First, there is truly good news about vocations to be proclaimed. Seminaries throughout the country

have higher enrollments than in the past. The seminarians attending are by and large more mature and spiritually aware.

In addition, Fr. Stephen Rossetti (author of the study “Why Priests are Happy,” Ave Maria Press, 2011) and even “Forbes Magazine” (Sept. 2011 print edition or <http://www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2011/09/12/the-ten-happiest-jobs/>) have concluded that priests are some of the happiest, most satisfied persons in their “career.” Even in religious life, there is a growing awareness of the gift of this vocation and some religious orders are experiencing growth.

But the theme is appropriate for more fundamental reasons. Evangelization (proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ who saves us from sin and restores to us

grace) is our first conscious introduction to the Christian life. The hearer of the message opens his or her heart to the Lord, moved to conversion and a change of heart and mind. This openness leads to a change of life, and evaluating one’s choices in the light of that Good News (Does it let me live in conformity with the Gospel, or live apart from it?)

It is here that the connection is clear. Evangelization leads to vocation! Where the Gospel is boldly and faithfully proclaimed, men and women, young and old, are drawn to Christ, and in response to him, live their vocations completely.

For information about a vocation to the priesthood or religious life, contact Fr. Todd Petersen, director of the Office of Vocations, 507-359-2966; toddpetersen@me.com.

Upcoming vocation events

World Day of Consecrated Life Mass of Celebration will be held Feb. 4 at 4:30 p.m. at the Church of St. Mary in Bird Island. A reception will follow the Mass. The celebrant will be Bishop John M. LeVoir.

Come & See Discernment Weekends with the Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus in New Ulm will be held Feb. 10–12 and March 23–25. Open to young women ages 18–30. Call Sr. Regina Marie, 507-276-9128; handmaids1@gmail.com.

Operation Miryam Dinner sponsored by the diocesan Office of Vocations will be held Feb. 29 from 6–8 p.m. at Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye. All young women high school age and older who are open to a religious vocation are invited to pray evening prayer and have dinner with Bishop John M. LeVoir. Contact Margaret McHugh, 507-233-5327 or 507-359-2966.

Report on state of the diocese

(continued from page 1)

Some of the areas Bishop LeVoir identified as needing special care included:

– The number of Catholics attending Mass on Sunday. In 2004, 44 percent of Catholics attended Mass every Sunday; by 2010, this number had dropped to 37 percent.

– The shortage of priests. “A primary pastoral challenge,” Bishop LeVoir wrote in the report summary, “is the declining number of priests in the diocese and their increasing age.” At present there are 42 priests who serve 76 parishes. There are eight priests over the age of 70 (retirement age) who continue to serve in parish assignments. There are 14 priests who are in their 60s.

– The decrease in population. The total population of the 15-county area of the diocese dropped from 285,453 people in 2004 to 281,319 people in 2010, a reality also seen in the diocese’s Catholic population, which dropped from 68,943 to 62,917. “The decrease in population, especially the decrease in the number of young people,” Bishop LeVoir wrote, “is manifested in fewer sacraments being celebrated in the parishes, Catholic school student population decreasing, and parish membership decreasing.”

– The influence of secularism. This influence, prevalent in our culture, manifests itself in a variance from Catholic Church teaching on religious practices, as well as on moral, political, social, and economic issues.

Report helpful to diocesan staff

For Ann Przybilla, director of the diocese’s Office of Worship and principal author of the report’s section on the celebration of the sacraments, finding out that Sunday Mass attendance had dropped by 7 percent was a surprise.

“I was hoping that it would remain the same,” she said. “It was very disheartening to see the challenges that we’re facing there.” Despite this challenge, Przybilla hopes the diocese can draw more people back to the Mass through catechesis on why Catholics worship God in the first place.

“We worship,” she said, “to become

holy and to give praise and glory to God. I think we’ve forgotten why we come together in that way.”

Karla Cross, director of the diocese’s Office of Schools, wrote much of the report’s section on Catholic education. Even though she and her staff had to spend 80 hours putting it together, the finished product was well worth it, she said.

“It (was) a good time to reflect on what we actually did” from 2004 to 2010, she said.

The report required the office to collect data on public schools and their student populations. This information was not asked for in the previous report, she said.

“It is the most useful data that I gained from the whole experience,” Cross said. “Because now, assuming that what we collected is fairly accurate, I can see and compare the retention rates of the public schools with our retention rates.”

This information, she continued, will help the diocese as it plans for the future. “We’ve never historically been good at marketing,” she said. “We never brag about what we have and what we offer, and we have to start being better at that and sharing the good news of Catholic schools.”

Hope for the future

Despite the challenges that the Diocese of New Ulm faced from 2004 to 2010, Bishop LeVoir said, there were many positive things he was able to highlight in the report.

– The priests of the diocese. “The priests and pastoral administrators are very hard-working people,” he said. “It’s amazing the amount of work that they get done given the travel.”

– Twelve candidates for the permanent diaconate. The diocese’s permanent diaconate formation program, established in 2007, will God-willing see 12 men ordained this April. “I’m sure they’ll be able to help out in the parishes,” the bishop said, “whether that be sacramental ministry, whether it be some administrative work; it depends on the talents and abilities of each of the deacons.”

– The Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus. Established in 2009, this

Diocese of New Ulm Statistical Information (as reported in the parish self-studies of 2004 and 2010)

	2004	2010
Total population	285,453	281,319
Catholic population	68,943	62,917
Parishes	80	76
Missions	2	0
Priests (total)	71	67
Priests in active ministry	44	42
Religious sisters serving in diocese	63	54
Seminarians	6	7
Average Sunday Mass attendance	30,233	23,475
Percentage attending Sunday Mass	44%	37%
Infant baptisms	998	850
Converts (RCIA)	46	36
Canonically celebrated marriages	217	168
Mixed marriages	157	121
High school enrollment (9–12)	470	369
Elementary school (Pre-K–8)	2,770	2,014

diocesan religious order of women will help out in parishes however they can, he said.

– The newly established Office of Family Life Education. This office, he wrote in the report, will be able to promote the Church’s teachings on a number of moral issues, including “Natural Family

Planning, chastity, the Theology of the Body, the dignity of women, marriage between one man and one woman, the dignity of human life from conception onward, and ethics within the hospital setting.”

Being as he has never been on an “ad limina” visit, Bishop LeVoir

does not know what to expect. However, he is confident that the meeting will be fruitful for him and his brother bishops.

Two major fundraisers of diocese on track

by Sam Patet
The Prairie Catholic

NEW ULM – The Diocese of New Ulm’s “Christ our Life” Capital Campaign and its Diocesan Ministries Appeal (DMA) have achieved important milestones in recent weeks.

As of mid-December 2011, the capital campaign had raised approximately \$11 million, over two-thirds of its \$15 million goal. At the same time, the DMA had reached over 70 percent of its \$680,000 goal.

“I’m just very pleased with how things are going,” said Wayne Pelzel, director of the diocese’s Office of Development. “People have responded very positively.”

The end of November saw Bill Maloney, the Steier Group’s lead consultant on the capital campaign, complete his onsite work at the

Pastoral Center. Pelzel and campaign administrator Steve Spilman will now take the lead in bringing the campaign to completion.

Maloney had worked at the Pastoral Center for 17 months, helping the diocese to organize the campaign, identifying potential major givers, and assisting a large number of parishes in training volunteers for in-home visits and conducting in-pew appeals.

A second consultant from the Steier Group, Corey O’Shaughnessy, did similar work for a different group of parishes from April to October of this year.

Maloney and O’Shaughnessy were both on hand to review the campaign’s successes at the final meeting of its executive committee on Nov. 22 at the Pastoral Center. They also provided the diocese with a Campaign Final Report, detailing

various strategies the diocese could pursue to help ensure attaining its \$15 million goal. This will include launching a special Lenten mini-campaign in 2012.

Despite the fact that they’re no longer onsite, Pelzel said, “they’re only a phone call away, and we have the real option of calling those guys any time we want. ... Not only were they business partners with us, but they became friends in the process of working together.”

According to Pelzel, ten parishes have integrated their portion of this year’s DMA target into their capital campaign effort. As of mid-December, the DMA had raised \$503,000, less than \$200,000 away from its \$680,000 goal. “That’s a little behind where we were last year,” he said, “but the decrease hasn’t been as great as I thought it would be. Many of our parishes have already reached their goal.”

Health and Human Services protects children in vetoing FDA Plan B recommendation

by Sr. Mary Ann Walsh

Health and Human Services (HHS) acted to protect kids Dec. 7 when HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius rejected a recommendation of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to let stores sell powerful hormonal drugs to children over the counter.

Promoters of contraceptives immediately criticized this decision about Plan B-One Step, a morning-after pill and mega-dose of contraceptives, and by definition pretty strong medicine. To their mind, anything that curtails the maximum distribution of contraceptive use, even to minor children, must be wrong, common sense aside. The FDA wanted the medicine available over-the-counter to anyone who could get pregnant, which would include pre-teens. There seems to be no consideration that a medicine designed for adult women can have a completely different effect on a child. For example, adult anti-depressants and psychotropic drugs that may help adults with depression are known to create suicidal thoughts in teens. The FDA plan was the Teva pharmaceutical company's dream – their pills, which were not selling well as a prescription drug, would now be right up there on the shelf with meds for childhood illnesses like the common cold.

It is hard to imagine that any parent or teacher who ever has known an 11-year-old could disagree with the HHS decision. That's true regardless of one's view on the morality of contraception or one's level of concern about the prospect that some of these drugs can serve as abortifacients. The Catholic Church has serious concerns about contraceptive use and doesn't think Plan B is good for anybody, no secret there. But you don't have to be a supporter of the Church's position to know that pushing Plan B to kids is wrong on many levels.

Childhood is a time of immaturity and making mistakes, but adults usually try to see that youthful



In December, Sr. Candace Fier, director of Family Life Education for the diocese, was interviewed by KEYC-TV, Mankato, about the Dec. 7 HHS veto of the FDA's Plan B recommendation. Sr. Candace focused on the importance of informed consent and the adverse health effects of the drug.
(photo by Sam Patet)

missteps do not become fatal ones. There are 10-year-olds who can drive, but only the foolhardy would advocate their doing so. Such choices just don't belong to children.

One would think that permitting kids to use their birthday money to buy meds without their parents' or guardians' knowledge would be beyond the pale. Clearly if a child is scared enough after having sex to worry about pregnancy, she also might be scared enough not to read the instructions on the box or the list of problems that might arise. In a child's mind, if taking one pill might make the problem go away, taking two would be even better, and three would virtually guarantee the results being sought. Panicky kids also are apt to ignore the instructions about side effects, such as nausea, pain and, bleeding, and the recommendation to contact a doctor if side effects occur.

Children also might miss the fact that if Plan B reduces chances of getting pregnant, it doesn't wipe them out. The young, who can see themselves invulnerable, certainly can be easily misled into thinking Plan B is a free pass when engaging in risky behavior. Misinformation can have long-term consequences in this instance.

Teen pregnancy is a serious social problem, but it is not one addressed by leading kids to think they can

engage in "safe sex." There is no such thing as safe sex for children. Plan B's manufacturer admits its product does not prevent other serious problems such as AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases that come with irresponsible sexual activity. Would an anxiety-ridden child take time to read such a disclaimer? Would they have read the recent report in "The New York Times" that these drugs can actually increase the risk of contracting AIDS?

The move by Sebelius may be one of a mother who remembers when her children were 11. President Obama, father of teen and pre-teen daughters, referred to them when he defended Sebelius's decision to the media. There's nothing like real experience to drive a message home.

After she announced her veto, Sebelius was criticized for making a political decision which might please the Catholic vote. This decision would be more apt to please the parent and grandparent vote. People with pre-adolescent and adolescent children probably hope their offspring are not sexually active. They certainly hope they aren't secretly self-medicating with anything as serious as Plan B.

Sr. Mary Ann Walsh is director of media relations for the Untied States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

March for Life Jan. 22 join Bishop LeVoir and hundreds others as they pray and rally to end abortion

ST. PAUL – An annual ritual since the mid-1970s will unfold at the State Capitol grounds on Jan. 22, 2012, as abortion opponents rally to mark the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 decision (Roe v. Wade) to legalize abortion. This year marks the 39th anniversary of the decision.

March and pray with the bishop
As in the past years, area Knights of Columbus and several Council of Catholic Women parish groups will sponsor a bus from Marshall to the State Capitol in St. Paul for the annual MCCL (Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life). It will begin at 2 p.m.

Prior to the march there will be a noon Mass sponsored by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis at the St. Paul

Cathedral. In the absence of Archbishop John C. Nienstedt, Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm will be the main celebrant, with Bishop Paul D. Sirba of the Diocese of Duluth concelebrating. Archbishop Nienstedt will be leading hundreds of youth of the archdiocese on his annual bus trip to the Capitol in Washington, D.C. for the national March for Life rally.

Not from the Marshall area?

The bus can be arranged to stop in Redwood Falls and other spots along the way. To reserve your spot, contact Shirley Timmerman, 320-855-2311, or Lori Timmerman, 507-537-1290. Participants should bring a sack lunch; warm clothing is recommended.

Forty days of peaceful prayer for life making a difference

by Sam Patet
The Prairie Catholic

NEW ULM – Judy Haag, a member of the Church of Our Lady in Manannah and the DCCW's Reverence Life Coordinator, strongly supports 40 Days for Life. It's a life-changing experience, she says.

What is 40 Days for Life?
"It's a program set up to put an end to abortion," Haag said.

40 Days for Life events are peaceful prayer vigils that happen outside abortion clinics across the country, Haag said. People sign up to pray outside these clinics for 40 consecutive days at different hours of the day. Others who have not signed up for a specific hour are encouraged to come whenever they are able. They are normally held in the fall and during Lent.

While Planned Parenthood facilities in St. Cloud and Mankato do not perform surgical abortions, Haag said, they do refer women to have

surgical abortions and provide them with the morning after pill.

Haag has organized five 40 Days for Life events outside St. Cloud's Planned Parenthood facility since 2009. She said parishioners from six parishes in the Diocese of New Ulm – including St. Anthony of Watkins, St. Philip of Litchfield, Holy Family of Silver Lake, and Holy Trinity of Winsted – participated in these events.

"God's really blessing St. Cloud," Haag said. For example, "every campaign we're pulling in more and more young people. ... This campaign was the first time we had Students for Life from both St. Ben's-St. John's campus and St. Cloud State campus."

Another 40 Days for Life event, Haag continued, was hosted outside Mankato's Planned Parenthood facility for the first time this past fall. Parishioners from eight parishes in the Diocese of New Ulm

(continued on page 10)





from the desk of _____ the DCCW President

by Audrey Prokosch

Happy New Year to all of you from the New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women!

It is hard to believe that it is the New Year already. Have you made your New Year's resolutions yet? Maybe one of your resolutions could be to be more active in your parish Council of Catholic Women. I know that all parish CCW's are looking for more members to come to their meetings.

Some ways you can be more available to your council are:
– Be on a welcoming committee to welcome new members

– Lead the Rosary before Mass
– Join a Bible study group or a women's study group such as ENDOW (Contact Sr. Candace Fier at the diocesan Pastoral Center in New Ulm, 507-359-2966; or visit <http://endowonline.org> for more information.)

– Be available to help with CCW events such as bake sales, rummage sales, ice cream socials, and soup/sandwich luncheons
– If you like to do work with computers, volunteer to make posters, send out meeting notices, or organize a mailing list

Remember, if you are a woman from the Diocese of New Ulm, you are a member of the Council of Catholic Women. Let's make it a great year for all parish CCWs and become an active member.

Mark your calendar

The annual New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Convention will be held on Saturday, April 28, at the Church of the Holy Redeemer in Marshall.

The keynote presenter will be Leslee Unruh, pro-life activist and founder of the Alpha Center, a pregnancy support center, and the Omega Maternity home in Sioux Falls.



Through the organization VoteYesForLife.com of which she is executive director, Unruh led South Dakota to be the first state to attempt to ban abortion through a popular vote.

Carmelite prayer group forms in diocese

by Jane Gahlon

Recently at Our Lady of the Lakes in Spicer, a number of people from around the diocese have begun to meet for prayer and study as a Secular Discalced Carmelite prayer group.

The Secular Discalced Carmelites are in the category of what the Church has traditionally referred to as Third Orders. Members of a Third Order traditionally live the charism of the religious community with which they are affiliated while still remaining "in the world" of their vocations and jobs and family life.

This group, which is in the process of formation, was initiated by four definitively professed Secular Discalced Carmelites from the diocese who belong to a community from Excelsior, located in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. They have been given permission by that community, the community's spiritual assistant, and their Carmelite Provincial in

Wisconsin to begin taking steps towards forming a new community in the Diocese of New Ulm.

The Secular Carmelite Order is a branch of the Carmelite Order that includes all lay people who follow the Rule of St. Albert and the Constitutions and Statutes for the Secular Order of Carmelites, and who meet as approved Carmelite communities. The secular/lay Carmelite is a true member of the Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel.

The primary charism (spiritual "work") of Carmel is prayer. All Carmelites hold the jewel of silence and solitude in their heart as they strive for that loving gaze into the light of God called contemplation. A secular Carmelite shares in this unique spirit of Carmel and, led by the Holy Spirit, has an influence on the life of the entire family of Carmel, the Church, and the world. Carmelite saints such as St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and St. Therese of Lisieux ("The Little

Flower") are important examples and guides that secular Carmelites look to as examples of prayer and apostolic life.

Since the Second Vatican Council the laity has become more visibly involved in the public life of the Church at every level. This is true for Christians who wish to pursue their baptismal contemplative vocation in the midst of their ordinary lives. This is "the deepest level of discipleship," writes Fr. Anthony Morello, a discalced Carmelite, "and satisfies the deepest hunger of the human being," as Jesus himself was a contemplative. "The Secular Order of the Discalced Carmelites," he continues, "exists to give lay contemplatives to Christ and his Church."

If you would like more information about this group or would like to know more about what a secular Carmelite is, call Jane Gahlon at 320-222-6432 or e-mail jgahlon@en-tel.net.

Finding your spiritual focus in a blurry world

God Alone Suffices

by Connie Rossini

The beginning of a new year prompts us to reflect on our lives. How did your spiritual life fare in 2011?

Perhaps it went something like this: You read about abandonment to Divine Providence and the "Little Way" of St. Therese. You started weekly Eucharistic adoration and tried to pray the Rosary more often. You strove to practice the presence of God and to observe the Hour of Mercy. You volunteered at Catholic Charities and went to confession once a month. Your family made a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Schoenstatt. You subscribed to "Magnificat" magazine. Yet, at the end of the year you found your spiritual life stagnating. How could this be?

Perhaps the problem lies in your lack of focus. Because there are so many good religious practices that are brought to our attention, it is tempting to try them all, at once or in succession. But an athlete does not get to the Olympics by trying his hand at every sport. Instead, he concentrates on one and puts all his time and energy into it. We likewise need to choose a focus for our spiritual lives in order to make real progress. I suggest you make a resolution this year to seek the specific spiritual path that God desires for you.

How do you go about finding this path? First, think about the practices that move you the most. What do you feel most drawn to? Which one(s) accord best with your personality and situation in life? Maybe some of your current practices are really the passion of your spouse or a friend, and you do them half-heartedly. If so, it may be best to weed them out.

Who are your favorite saints? Why? What is it about their spirituality that attracts you? Is there a

community or apostolate based on their writings or teachings? If not, could you start a study group with some like-minded friends?

The Church has an abundance of apostolates, movements, associations of the faithful, and orders. Pray for direction as you explore some of these. Making a commitment to a community of Catholics with a similar outlook to yours can do wonders for your spirituality.

Several years ago an acquaintance invited me to a meeting of the Secular Order of Discalced Carmelites. I was hooked. Carmelite spirituality seemed to fit me. I felt at home. The focus on daily mental prayer was just what I needed, because prayer had been such a struggle for me. Now I had specific direction for my life and concrete ways to measure progress (or the lack of it). I had friends to support and encourage me, and monthly teachings that made me continually re-evaluate my life in relation to God. I was changed forever.

When I made my temporary profession as a Carmelite, I was asked to choose a new name consisting of two saints and a mystery. I chose to be known in Carmel as Mary Francis of the Divine Mercy. This helped me narrow my spiritual focus even more. I study St. Francis de Sales' writings to lay people and try to apply them to my life as a secular Carmelite. Devotion to the Divine Mercy helps me combat both pride and despair, two of my greatest temptations.

So my spirituality is generally like that of my Carmelite brothers and sisters, but also very unique and personal. I am still refining it, and resolving to follow it more carefully in 2012. I encourage you to do the same with yours.

Connie Rossini is a parishioner of the Church of St. George, West Newton Township, and a member of the DCCW. She is a permanently professed member of the Third Order of Discalced Carmelites.

Prayer service for Christian unity to be celebrated in Marshall on Jan. 29

by Fr. Paul Timmerman, director
Office of Ecumenism

The Second Vatican Council's "Decree on Ecumenism" regarded personal growth in holiness and prayer for the unity of Christians as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement.

"All the faithful should remember," the decree states, "that the more effort they make to live holier lives according to the Gospel, the better will they further Christian unity and put it into practice. For the closer their union with the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, the more deeply and easily will they be able to grow in mutual brotherly love. This change of heart and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, should be regarded as the soul of the whole ecumenical movement" (nos. 7 and 8).

Each year we set aside a week to pray that the unity of all Christians may one day become a reality. We



WEEK OF PRAYER FOR
**CHRISTIAN
UNITY**
Jan. 18–25

need to continue to pray for unity, as this is one of the key elements of the "soul of the ecumenical movement." This year's theme is, "We Will All Be Changed by the Victory of Our Lord Jesus Christ," which references 1 Corinthians 15:51-58.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity begins Jan. 18 and ends with the Feast of the Conversion of St.

Paul on Jan. 25. Different denominations take turns hosting prayer services during the week. This year Catholics will host a prayer service on Sunday, Jan. 29 at 2:30 p.m. at the Church of the Holy Redeemer in Marshall (503 West Lyon Street). Several Christian denominations will be represented and there will be time for fellowship and refreshments afterwards.

Those who live in the Marshall area are encouraged to join Bishop John M. LeVoir and other denominations' representatives in praying for Christian unity at this prayer service. If you do not live near Marshall, consider attending a prayer service for Christian unity in your local area. Let us all pray for Christian unity so that Jesus' prayer that all Christians be one may become a reality.

Perpetual adoration – a place of comfort and rest

by Jo Anne Griebel
Cathedral of the Holy Trinity,
New Ulm

Perpetual adoration is one of the greatest gifts we receive. That hour of quiet, of prayer, of reflection, and of listening to our Lord is what helps me keep up with day-to-day living.

An article in the January 1995 "U.S. Catholic" magazine titled, "Could You Not Wait One Hour With Me?," shares thoughts of the adorers at the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Winona, Minn. One of the adorers, Anne, has the midnight to 1 a.m. hour on a Saturday. She relates how perpetual adoration is a part of her faith journey. She says, "It just keeps me together."

In perpetual adoration we can visit with Jesus in the Eucharist at any moment, day or night. When we

need to share news or need to make a decision, Jesus is always there. He invites us to come to this quiet place to be with him.

I find the quiet perpetual adoration chapel at St. Mary's in New Ulm to be a place of comfort. Sometimes I just sit and try to listen. The Lord doesn't always "converse" as we would like. He may ask us to wait or to further discern or reflect.

I also use this time with the Lord for reading. One book I recommend is "The R Father" by Mark Hart, which talks about 14 ways to respond to the Lord's Prayer. Another book I enjoyed is "God, Help Me: How to Grow in Prayer" by Jim Beckman.

Perpetual adoration is a time of rest with our Shepherd. Give yourself the gift of quiet time. Make perpetual adoration a regular stop on your faith journey.

Preparing for the birth of Jesus

Olivia hosts annual diocesan Advent Prayer Service

OLIVIA – Each year during the Advent season, people of the diocese are invited to gather with the bishop to pray and focus on Advent in preparation for the true meaning of Christmas, centered on the birth of Jesus. On Sunday, Dec. 11, Bishop John M. LeVoir led the annual Advent Prayer Service. The Church of St. Aloysius in Olivia hosted this year's event.

In his homily, Bishop LeVoir reflected on the Blessed Virgin Mary and her prayer, the *Magnificat*, as recounted in the Gospel of Luke. Pregnant with our Savior, Mary prayed this prayer while visiting her cousin Elizabeth, who was pregnant with St. John the Baptist. Bishop pointed out that Mary does not give herself credit for being the mother of our Savior. Rather, she praises God who has given Elizabeth pregnancy and through the power of the

Holy Spirit, has brought about Jesus' conception in her. "Sometimes we close ourselves out from God and think that we are responsible for all the good things that happen to us," said Bishop LeVoir. "But ultimately, God is responsible because God has made us and works through us to do all kinds of different things. ... We should always be like Mary."

During the service, the bishop gave a blessing to families, and in keeping with the Advent season, a "swaddling clothes" collection (blankets, sleepers, layette items) was taken for babies in need and given to the San Lucas Mission and area Birthright Centers.



During the annual Advent Prayer Service, families brought forth the baby Jesus figure from their home nativity set to be blessed individually by the bishop.

(photo by Sam Patet)

prayer vigil for life (continued from page 8)

participated in the event, including members from Holy Rosary in North Mankato, St. Peter in Canby, Holy Redeemer in Marshall, St. Raphael in Springfield, and St. Clotilde in Green Valley.

An important part of all 40 Days for Life events, Haag said, is that they are peaceful. "We're trying to put an end to abortion," she said, "but we're trying to do it in a peaceful way."

Haag said while it is sometimes difficult to be peaceful when you know what is being promoted inside the facilities, it is one of the best ways to help others see the truth about abortion.

"Being peaceful really helps when people come to actually talk to us," Haag said. "If they're throwing questions at you and they're really angry, if we're responding peacefully back, they usually will change to a peaceful manner in talking with you. We really have to listen to them, even if we don't like what they say."

There are many ways one can become involved in 40 Days for Life. Among the most important ways, Haag said, are by praying, fasting, and offering up sufferings for an end to abortion during the 40 Days for Life events. She encouraged all Catholics in the diocese to come out to the prayer vigils. "It changes you forever," she said. While it can be intimidating, "if you're sold on it yourself, bring at least one other person with you, because it's a lot easier to go with another person."

Editor's note: 40 Days for Life prayer vigils will be held from Feb. 22 to April 1, 2012, in both St. Cloud and Mankato. To learn more about these events or to sign up for an hour of prayer, visit their Web sites: www.40daysforlife.com/stcloud and www.40daysforlife.com/mankato. You can also contact the coordinators of these events: Judy Haag (St. Cloud), 320-453-7592, judy4life@meltel.net; Beverly Miller (Mankato), 507-514-2425, ssppyyouth@hickorytech.net.

Catholic Schools Week begins Jan. 29

2012 theme focuses on faith, academics, and service



Each day of Catholic Schools Week, Bishop John M. LeVoir visits and celebrates Mass with the students and staff of a Catholic school in the diocese. Above, Bishop LeVoir is pictured with students of John Ireland School in St. Peter, who took part in last fall's Children's Holy Field Trip at the Cathedral in New Ulm. Also pictured is fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Sharon Miller.

(photo by Sam Patet)

The theme for Catholic Schools Week 2012 is "Catholic Schools: Faith. Academics. Service." This year the annual event will be from Jan. 29 through Feb. 5. Schools typically celebrate Catholic Schools Week with Masses, open houses, and activities for students, families, parishioners, and the community at large.

Second collection to benefit schools
Last year Bishop John M. LeVoir announced that a second collection

would be taken up for Catholic schools during Catholic Schools Week. This year's second collection will be taken on Jan. 28 and 29.

If an area faith community has a Catholic school, 75 percent of the monies raised will be returned to its school(s). Monies that are raised by AFCs that do not have a Catholic school are split between two diocesan endowment funds that support Catholic schools.

Last year's second collection brought in \$36,849. Consequently, \$19,570 was directly returned to the schools of the diocese, and \$8,639 was invested in both the Bishop John M. LeVoir Catholic School Endowment and the Bishop John C. Nienstedt Catholic School Scholarship Endowment funds.

Catholic schools benefit from CUF annual raffle

The third annual Catholic United Financial Catholic Schools Raffle will be held Jan. 13 through Feb. 24. In the Diocese of New Ulm, 12 Catholic schools will be participating.

Catholic United Financial (CUF) is a fraternal benefit organization serving more than 74,000 members in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

CUF provides the promotion, printing, and prizes involved in the raffle. "Every penny of the money raised goes directly into school accounts," said Karla Cross, director of the Office of Schools for the Diocese of New Ulm.

"Ten of the schools in the diocese

are returning this year, after raising \$62,325 in 2011," said Cross.

At stake for those who purchase tickets is a new car or \$25,000, two seven-day Caribbean cruise packages, three downtown St. Paul family escape packages, iPads, Kindles, Playstations, and more.

"From the beginning, we wanted every penny raised by this raffle to pay for the needs of our Catholic schools," said Michael McGovern, president and board chairman of Catholic United Financial. "It is our hope that we can repeat this program every year," he said.

A complete list of all raffle winners will be available on CUF's Web site, www.catholicunitedfinancial.org/links/raffle/.

www.catholicunitedfinancial.org/links/raffle/.

The schools sell the tickets at \$5 each and keep every penny. The tickets are collected by CUF. The official drawing is March 1, 2012. Watch for specific information at participating Catholic schools and parishes.

Participating schools in the diocese include St. Mary, Bird Island; St. Peter, Canby; St. Pius X, Glencoe; St. Anastasia, Hutchinson; St. Philip, Litchfield; Holy Redeemer, Marshall; St. Edward, Minnetonka; New Ulm Area Catholic Schools; St. Mary, Sleepy Eye; St. Raphael, Springfield; St. Anne, Wabasso; and Holy Trinity, Winsted.

Pillatzke recognized for hospice care to patients/families



Marlys (Mrs. Eugene) Pillatzke of Bellingham and a member of the Church of St. James in Nassau, recently was awarded the 2011 Patient/Family Support Award from the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) for her many years of volunteer service.

In addition to direct patient care and bereavement support, Pillatzke provides volunteer leadership and office support to the Rice Hospice satellite offices in Dawson and Ortonville.

"Marlys has shared her heart, soul, and love of people through active listening, offering respite care and rides through the county, giving hand massages, and playing hundreds of card games," said Evy Hatjstilianos, Rice Hospice volunteer coordinator.

Pillatzke has been an active Rice Hospital volunteer since 1993. Over the years she has ministered to 88 patients and bereaved family members for a total of 7,793 hours, and she has driven 72,263 miles through western Minnesota.

Pillatzke was presented the award on Oct. 7 in San Diego by ABC Family Star Torrey DeVitto during the annual NHPCO conference.

Upcoming Events

Silent Weekend Retreats for Men and Women will be held Jan. 13-15 (men) and Jan. 27-29 (women) at the Christ the King Retreat Center, Buffalo. Retreat theme is "Renew My Heart," presented by King's House Preaching Team. Suggested offering is \$140. Call 763-682-1394; christtheking@kingshouse.com.

Good Shepherd SERRA Club meets Feb. 2 at Divine Providence Chapel and Marian Conference Room in Sleepy Eye, beginning with Rosary and Mass at 7 p.m. A program and lunch follows. Speaker will be Fr. Jeff Horejsi, who will share his vocation story. Call 507-747-2181.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend will be held Feb. 10-12 in Windom and March 16-18 in Frontenac. To register, call 507-644-3532; jrek@redred.com; or visit www.wmweSection8.org.

Join Bishop LeVoir on a PILGRIMAGE TO ITALY!

Sept. 4-13, 2012

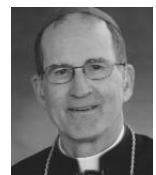
Visit www.dnu.org to download a brochure or call Magi Travel, 952-949-0065.

Tune in for
Christmas Radio Messages
from Bishop John M. LeVoir

Broadcast on

KNUJ Radio (860 AM)
daily through Jan. 14
at approximately 7:30 a.m.

KDUZ Radio (1260 AM)
daily through Jan. 14
at approximately 8:05 a.m.



THE DRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 26 No. 5 January 2012



(photo by Sam Pate)

On Sunday, Dec. 11, Bishop John M. LeVoir joined the Latino faith community of Holy Redeemer in Marshall as they celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. In keeping with Latino tradition, participants processed to the front of the church prior to the celebration of Mass to place a rose in front of a statue of Our Lady.

(Read more, page 5)

Pope John Paul II, in his 1999 homily during the Solemn Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, entrusted the cause of life to Our Lady's loving protection. He placed under her motherly care the innocent lives of children, especially those who are in danger of not being born. As we approach Jan. 22, the 39th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion (Roe v. Wade), Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm reminds us that "we are called upon as Catholics to promote a culture of life, where all human life from conception to natural death is promoted, defended, and respected."

catholic trends

WASHINGTON – With 15 percent of all Americans, including nearly 1 in 4 children, living in poverty, the Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development (JPHD) of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) is renewing its poverty awareness campaign, Poverty USA, complete with a revamped Web site, a new social media presence, and a Poverty Awareness Month event in January.

"Our culture of life begins with a love that binds us to the hopes and joys, the struggles and the sorrows

of people, especially those who are poor or any way afflicted," said Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento, Calif., chairman of the bishops' domestic anti-poverty effort, the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD). "We march with immigrant families toward a society made stronger and safer by their inclusion," he said. "We embrace the mother and her unborn child, giving to both of them hope and opportunity."

The campaign will promote awareness about domestic poverty with updated statistics on the

Poverty USA landing page of the USCCB Web site (www.usccb.org/about/catholic-campaign-for-human-development/povertyusa/), as well as with other resources, including an interactive poverty tour and a newly launched presence on Facebook (www.facebook.com/povertyusa).

For Poverty Awareness Month, the new page on Facebook will also launch a month-long event on Jan. 1. Catholic families and individuals are encouraged to take part in daily activities that build a greater understanding about poverty U.S.

VATICAN CITY (CNA/EWTN News) – Pope Benedict XVI formally recognized miracles attributed to Bl. Marianne Cope and Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha on Dec. 19, clearing the way for both women to be canonized.

The two women, who both lived in the United States, were among numerous individuals whose sainthood causes were advanced by decrees authorized by Pope Benedict XVI.

The Congregation for the Causes of

Saints had already approved Bl. Cope's second official miracle, which involved the medical recovery of a woman in Syracuse who was cured of a fatal and irreversible health condition.

Born in western Germany in 1838, Bl. Marianne Cope entered religious life in Syracuse, N.Y., where she served as a teacher and principal and established two hospitals before traveling to Hawaii, where she spent several years caring for lepers. She died in 1918 and was beatified in 2005.

Bl. Kateri Tekakwitha, known as "the Lily of the Mohawks," was born in 1656 in upstate New York. Her father was a Mohawk chief and

her mother was an Algonquin who was raised Catholic. A smallpox epidemic killed both of her parents and left her with poor eyesight and a badly disfigured face at a young age.

Despite objections from her relatives, she was baptized at age 20. An outcast from her community, Bl. Tekakwitha lived a life of deep prayer, with a strong devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. She died in 1680 at the age of 24. Witnesses said that the scars on her face disappeared after her death. Bl. Tekakwitha was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 1980, the first Native American to be declared blessed.

