

# THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 23 No. 6 February 2009



World Marriage Day is February 8. This special day is sponsored by Worldwide Marriage Encounter.

To learn more!...see page 8

## U.S. bishops address opportunities, challenges for new president, Congress

**Washington** - The U.S. bishops addressed opportunities and challenges in January 13 letters to President Barack Obama and Congress and promised "to make this period of national change a time to advance the common good and defend the life and dignity of all."

The letter, which outlined "an agenda for dialogue and action," was signed by Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, President of the United States Conference of

Catholic Bishops. A corresponding letter was sent to Vice-President Joseph Biden and each member of Congress.

The letter listed several areas of concern.

On **economic challenges** the bishops called for "strong, prudent, and effective measures to address the terrible impacts and injustices of the economic crisis" and promised to "advocate a clear priority for poor families and vulnerable workers in the development and implementation of economic recovery measures, including new investments while strengthening the national safety net."

On **health care** they called for "truly universal health care coverage which protects all human life including pre-natal life" and which includes "a variety of options and ensuring respect for the moral and religious convictions of patients and providers."

On **international affairs**, the bishops noted a need for "a responsible transition in an Iraq free of religious persecution." They also urged efforts for "an end to violent conflict and a just peace in the Holy Land" and continued U.S. leadership in the fight against HIV-AIDS and other diseases in ways that are both "effectively and morally appropriate." The bishops also promised "to be a voice for the poor and vulnerable in our country

and around the world who will be the most adversely affected by any dramatic threats to the environment."

They urged repair of "a broken **immigration** system which harms both our nation and immigrants." They said such reform "will include a path to earned citizenship with attention to the fact that international trade and development policies influence economic opportunities in the countries from which immigrants come."

They emphasized support for **marriage** which, they said, is "a faithful, exclusive, lifelong union of a man and a woman and must remain such in law."

On **education**, the bishops promised to "continue to support initiatives which provide resources for all parents, especially those of modest means, to choose education which best addresses the needs of their children."

The bishops welcomed government leaders' "commitment to empower faith-based groups as effective partners in overcoming poverty and other threats to human dignity." Such partnerships, they said, "do not encourage government to abandon its responsibilities, and do not require religious groups to abandon their identity and mission."

Most fundamentally, they also promised to **work to protect the lives of the most vulnerable and**

**voiceless members of the human family**, especially unborn children and those who are disabled or terminally ill. "We will consistently defend the fundamental right to life from conception to natural death," they said, and "we will encourage one and all to seek common ground that will reduce the number of abortions in morally sound ways that affirm the dignity of pregnant women and their unborn children." They said they will "oppose legislative and other measures to expand abortion" and "will work to retain essential, widely supported policies which show respect for unborn life, protect the conscience rights of health care providers and

other Americans, and prevent government funding and promotion of abortion." They warned that "efforts to force Americans to fund abortions with their tax dollars would pose a serious moral challenge and jeopardize the passage of essential health care reform."

To read the bishops' letter visit the *United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Web site* [www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2009/09-013.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2009/09-013.shtml) or contact the *diocesan Office of Communications*, (507) 359-2966 for a copy.

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MN Catholic Conference SPECIAL REPORT

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## Diocese partners with university for online learning

Imagine taking an adult faith formation course without ever leaving your door...no travel time...no extra gas cost...just a home computer and internet access! It is now possible here in the Diocese of New Ulm as the diocese has partnered with the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation.

Since 1995, the University of Dayton developed a vision to have user-friendly adult faith formation available on the internet. Since 1999, when the first dioceses began collaborating with the University of Dayton's Virtual Learning

Community for Faith Formation, popularly known as VLCCF, forty dioceses and six other organizations are partners with the University of Dayton. Among the newest partners is our very own diocese, the Diocese of New Ulm.

**WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?** Any adult member of the Diocese of New Ulm can learn more about their faith at a discounted rate. Normally a \$90, 5-week course costs only \$40. And, a \$70 3-week seminar costs \$30. Some parishes and schools may consider further discounts for their catechists, youth

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**Sr. Margaret McHugh, DSMP,**

**vocation awareness**

## BE NOT AFRAID

### “Fourth Plan for Parishes, 2009-2014”



Bishop John M. LeVoi

The Diocese of New Ulm is now embarking on the development of the fourth *Plan for Parishes*. Five years ago, the third *Plan for Parishes* introduced the Area Faith Community (AFC) model to the Diocese of New Ulm. The model brought together from two to five parishes which shared historical cluster relationships, geographic proximity, school districts, and shopping patterns.

An AFC calls for greater collaboration among the parishes with regard to personnel, ministries, programs, and resources. AFCs were asked to develop a common ministry plan for the area, establish an Area Pastoral Council (APC), set up area ministry committees, and select a name for the AFC. The *Plan for Parishes, 2003-2008* called for the establishment of twenty-three AFCs and the designation of ten parishes as proposed future oratories.

All parishes were organized into AFCs except for four parishes: St.

Anthony, Watkins; Holy Rosary, North Mankato; St. John, Faxon Township; and St. Joseph, Henderson. They were to be involved in collaborative relationships with parishes from other dioceses. All twenty-three AFCs have submitted their initial plans. Four AFCs are working on a second plan. About half of the AFCs have established an APC. Eight have selected a name for their AFC.

Of the ten proposed oratories, two petitioned the Bishop to close; St. Anthony, Regal, and Saints Cyril and Methodius, Taunton. Both of these parishes have been closed. Four parishes became oratories; St. Joseph, Clements; Visitation, Danvers; St. Thomas, Jessenland; and St. Thomas, Sanborn. The remaining four proposed oratories will retain their classifications into the next plan.

Evaluations from pastoral leaders and AFC leadership have indicated that the AFC model has been accepted, that every AFC can point to some progress, that the degree of progress varies from AFC to AFC, and that many people see the AFC as the way that “parish” will be experienced in the future. The evaluations also indicate that the AFCs have initiated all types of new collaborative activity, from sharing staff, ministries, and programs, to beginning new ministries, as well as expanding others. There have also been innovations, such as sharing a single staff for the AFC and rotating priests throughout the AFC at weekend Masses.

In order to build on the *Plan for Parishes, 2003-2008* and to develop the *Plan for Parishes, 2009-2014*, each AFC and the four parishes with collaborative relationships with parishes from other dioceses will be asked to meet. They will view a PowerPoint presentation on the present status of the diocese and will provide input for the fourth plan. The *Plan for Parishes, 2003-2008* did more than introduce new organization into the diocese. The *Plan* brought a new vision for Catholic Schools, Hispanic Ministry, and for five key priority areas.

The *Plan for Catholic Schools* calls for greater collaboration in AFCs and among AFCs for the support of Catholic elementary and secondary schools. A diocesan scholarship has been established to benefit schools and students, as well as a Diocesan School Committee, which coordinates collaboration among schools and promotes religious and academic excellence. There are three high schools (collaboration with a fourth) and sixteen elementary schools serving the diocese.

The *Plan for Hispanic Ministry* calls for the addition of two Spanish language worship sites at Hutchinson and Montevideo. These sites join the other six at Glencoe, Litchfield, Marshall, Renville, Sleepy Eye, and Willmar. All AFCs and individual parishes are also urged to develop local pastoral ministries which welcome and include our Spanish speaking brothers and sisters.

The five priorities from 2003-2008 were:

- Vocation recruitment to the priesthood, religious life, and permanent diaconate;
- Implementation of the *Plan for Parishes*;
- Initiation of an annual Diocesan Ministries Appeal (DMA);
- Establishment of programs of formation for lay ministers; and
- Introduction of an evangelization process.

All five priorities were addressed with various degrees of success. These priorities will continue to impact the diocese for many years to come.

As the *Plan for Parishes, 2009-2014* is developed, there is some important information which the people of the diocese need to know regarding population estimates and profiles, as well as the projected number of priests.

The State Office on Demographics tells us that the population in the northeast corner of the diocese will continue to increase. The population in the central and southeast corner of the diocese will be stable or show a small increase. Population in the western part of the diocese will continue to decline. In general, the average age of residents in the diocese will continue to rise. The Hispanic population will continue to grow and make up a larger percentage of the overall population. The number of priests available for ministry is likely to change

(continued on page 4)

## Bishop's February Calendar

**2-3 Willmar:** Church of St. Mary. Pastoral Leader Days.

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

**6 St. Paul:** St. John Vianney Seminary. Vocations Day for Diocesan Catholic High Schools.

**8 Graceville:** 10:00 a.m. Church of the Holy Rosary. Confirmation.

**Madison:** 3:00 p.m. Church of St. Michael. Confirmation.

**9 New Ulm:** 12:00 p.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Catholic Charities Meeting.

**10 Olivia:** 1:00 p.m. Church of St. Aloysius. Priests' Council Meeting.

**21 Willmar:** 5:30 p.m. Church of St. Mary. Confirmation.

**22 Willmar:** 8:00 a.m. Church of St. Mary, Mass.

**Spicer:** 10:00 a.m. Church of Our Lady of the Lakes. Confirmation.

**New Ulm:** 6:00 p.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. *Lectio Divina* Prayer Group Gathering.

**23 St. Paul:** 1:00 p.m. St. Paul Seminary. Marriage Preparation Presentation.

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

**New Ulm:** 1:30 p.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Hispanic Ministry Group Meeting.

**25 New Ulm:** 8:20 a.m. Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. School Mass for Cathedral High School and Holy Trinity Middle School.

**27 New Ulm:** 1:00 p.m. Catholic Pastoral Center. Vocations Team Meeting.

## Diocesan Ministries Appeal update *news both positive and encouraging!*



by Wayne Pelzel, director  
Office of Development

Economic news coming from the Diocesan Ministries Appeal (DMA) has not been following the trend of most of our nation's economic news. Actually, the news coming from the DMA has been both positive and encouraging. Pledges have already exceeded last year's DMA total reaching \$1,157,000 to date. Money and pledges continue to come in at a steady pace.

On the parish level, 31 parishes have doubled their established goal or have done even better. Only 10 parishes have not reached their goal yet, and several of those are only a

**“Over \$490,000 has been pledged beyond the established diocesan goal of \$660,000.”**

few dollars away. Largest gift to the Appeal was a \$44,000 anonymous gift that was shared between several parishes.

Over \$490,000 has been pledged beyond the established diocesan goal of \$660,000. The excess money will be returned to parishes who have met their DMA goal where it will be used for a variety of projects and expenses. For example, St. Pius

X Parish in Glencoe will be using their \$17,000 to support the mission of passing on the faith to a new generation through tuition support for the school; St. Anastasia Parish

in Hutchinson with a \$35,000 overage is setting the money aside for a new boiler; St. Michael Parish in Milroy is using their

\$13,000 to help the parish meet budget; and St. Peter Parish in St. Peter will be using their \$23,000 to pay down a short term loan.

These excess proceeds from the DMA are meeting a variety of needs by helping parishes serve God by serving others.

*To view the 2008 DMA Fund Summary of all parishes in the diocese visit [www.dnu.org](http://www.dnu.org).*

## Longtime supporter of Catholic Schools dies at 91



Monsignor Ward

Msgr. John C. Ward, 91, died Saturday, January 17, 2009, at the age of 91. The Mass of Christian Burial was January 24, 2009, at the Church of St. Stephen, Anoka, MN, with burial at Calvary Cemetery, Anoka, MN.

Monsignor Ward was born January 17, 1918, in Anoka, MN. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis on August 18, 1945, at the St. Paul Cathedral in St. Paul, MN, by Archbishop John G. Murray.

Following ordination he served at St. Wenceslaus in New Prague and St. Luke in St. Paul. Assumption in Hancock Township and Our Lady in Manannah with the Mission of St. Columban in Greenleaf. He also served as assistant superintendent of schools for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and as an instructor at the Diocesan Teachers College located in the James J. Hill house.

Father Ward continued his priestly ministry in the Diocese of New Ulm when it was established on November 18, 1957. Parishes he

served include: St. Anastasia in Hutchinson, St. Gregory in Lafayette, Holy Rosary in North Mankato, and St. Philip in Litchfield. In 1958 he was appointed the first diocesan superintendent of schools for the newly formed diocese by Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler.

In 1963 he was named Monsignor by Pope Paul VI. In 1968 he was appointed diocesan director of education and chaplain at Loretto Hospital in New Ulm, while remaining superintendent of schools.

He retired from active ministry on July 2, 1990, and resided at the Leo C. Byrne Residence in St. Paul, until moving to Brooklyn Park. In 2002 Msgr. Ward was appointed to assist in giving attention to and maintaining contact with retired priests of the Diocese of New Ulm.

During his priestly ministry, he served on numerous diocesan boards and councils/committees and also the Minnesota Catholic Education Association and the Minnesota Catholic Conference Department of Education.

In 1986, he received the Diocesan Distinguished Service Award by Bishop Raymond A. Lucker for *“His love of the priesthood and the Church...his pastoral presence to the people...and his advice on diocesan matters... He is a person of vision and conviction, gifting the Church in such a way that she lives on with pride and confidence.”*

## Catholic Charities first year of service complete *ministry now seeks strategic planning feedback from YOU!*

by Thomas Keaveny, MSW-LICSW  
Consultant - Catholic Charities

As we begin the New Year, it is appropriate for each of us to reflect on the past year and all of its accomplishments and set backs; to set goals for the New Year and to identify issues we need to address.

Organizations and businesses do the same in the process of audits, inspections, annual reviews and the like. In line with these practices, Catholic Charities in the Diocese of New Ulm is reviewing its work as we develop our first two-year operating plan. We are calling it: *“To 2010 and Beyond.”*

Made possible due to the generous contributions to the DMA (Diocesan Ministries Appeal), Catholic Charities is at an interesting point in its “evolving” service and program journey as a ministry to the diocese. We have finished our first year of service and our efforts have included these highlights:

► Over 130 households have received individual, marriage, and family counseling in addition to a variety of crisis referrals, intervention assistances, and the

related one-to-one feedback we share with school and pastoral staff.

► We have hosted training related to tragedy, disaster response, and suicide prevention.

► We have provided counseling assistance in parish communities following fatal accidents, suicides, and related issues of grief and loss. Training and consultation have also been provided on these topics to students, parish staff, school personnel, and pastoral leaders.

► Working with some 400 students in various schools in the diocese, Catholic Charities has given presentations in regard to children's mental health issues; self-esteem, bullying, as well as other related topics.

As we share these highlights, we recognize that our work should be appropriately planned. We need to insure that all we do is in context of our mission to serve the diocese.

### LOOKING FOR INPUT

So...we are asking for your thoughts as we develop our plan. Specifically, we invite you to share your thoughts on what we have done, what we might do (or do differently) and any

perspectives you might have about how Catholic Charities of the Diocese of New Ulm should evolve during the next two years.

In early January, Bishop LeVoir reviewed Catholic Charities' first year highlights and shared his thoughts. He has asked that we keep the spiritual dimension of our work at the forefront of all we do with clients. He has also asked that we especially serve those addressing an unplanned pregnancy or dealing with the trauma or aftermath of an abortion.

If you have a perspective or input that you would like considered during our planning process, I encourage you to contact Catholic Charities of the Diocese of New Ulm at 1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN, 56073; email [tkeaveny@dnu.org](mailto:tkeaveny@dnu.org), or call Paulette Kral, Catholic Charities secretary at 1-866-670-5163.

As we finalize this plan in March, all of us at Catholic Charities are grateful for your thoughts, your prayers, and your support.

## Employment Opportunities

**Spanish Speaking Counselor needed** to serve growing Hispanic caseload in the Diocese of New Ulm. Counseling experience and licensure preferred. Limited English speaking ability also necessary. Ten hours per week and/or combined with Hispanic Ministry to full-time. Hours and location flexible. Call Thomas P. Keaveny, MSW-LICSW, at 1-866-670-5163.

**Holy Family Area Catholic Community seeks pastoral associate**

to collaborate with pastor in providing leadership and care for an area parish. Primary ministry is administration, stewardship, and coordination of day-to-day parish operations, developing lay ministries, and providing some pastoral care. Master's in theology or pastoral ministry is desirable, plus previous ministry experience. Some Spanish helpful, but not necessary. Send resume or contact Fr. Jim

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## No Tengas Miedo Cuarto Plan para Parroquias 2009-2014

por Obispo John M. LeVoir

La Diócesis de New Ulm ahora esta embarcándose en el desarrollo del cuarto Plan para las Parroquias. Hace cinco años, el tercer Plan para las Parroquias introdujo el modelo de Comunidad del Área de Fe (AFC, siglas en Inglés) en la Diócesis de New Ulm. El modelo reunió de dos a cinco parroquias que compartían relaciones históricas de agrupamiento, proximidad geográfica, distritos escolares, y patronos de compras.

La AFC solicita una mayor colaboración entre las parroquias en relación con el personal, los ministerios, programas y recursos. Se le pidió a la AFC desarrollar un plan de ministerio común para el área, establecer un Consejo Pastoral del Área (APC, siglas en Inglés), crear comités de ministerio de área y seleccionar un nombre para la AFC. El Plan para Parroquias, 2003-2008 pidió el establecimiento de veintitrés AFC's y la designación de diez parroquias como futuros oratorios propuestos.

Las evaluaciones de líderes pastorales y del liderazgo de la AFC han indicado que el modelo de AFC ha sido aceptado, que cada AFC puede señalar algunos avances, que el grado de progreso varía de AFC a AFC, y que muchas personas ven la AFC como la forma en que "la parroquia" será en el futuro. Las evaluaciones también indican que las AFC han iniciado todo tipo de nuevas actividades de colaboración, desde el intercambio de personal, los ministerios y programas, hasta el inicio de nuevos ministerios, así como la ampliación de otros. También ha habido innovaciones, como compartir un solo grupo de personal para la AFC y la rotación de los sacerdotes en toda la AFC en las misas de fin de semana.

Con el fin de edificar el Plan para Parroquias, 2003-2008 y para desarrollar el Plan para Parroquias, 2009-2014, cada AFC y las cuatro parroquias con relaciones de colaboración con otras parroquias de la diócesis, serán invitadas a reunirse. Ellos verán una presentación de PowerPoint sobre la situación actual de la diócesis y proporcionarán aportes para el cuarto plan. El Plan para

Parroquias, 2003-2008 hizo algo más que introducir una nueva organización en la diócesis. El plan aportó una nueva visión para las escuelas católicas, el Ministerio Hispano, y para las cinco áreas prioritarias.

El Plan para el Ministerio Hispano solicitó la adición de dos lugares de culto en español en Hutchinson y Montevideo. Esos sitios se unieron a los otros seis en Glencoe, Litchfield, Marshall, Renville, Sleepy Eye, y Willmar. Todas las AFC y las parroquias individualmente también fueron instadas a desarrollar ministerios pastorales locales que acojan e incluyan a nuestros hermanos y hermanas de habla hispana.

Conforme el Plan para Parroquias, 2009-2014 sea desarrollado, hay información importante que el pueblo de la diócesis necesita saber acerca de las estimaciones y perfiles de población, así como el número proyectado de sacerdotes.

La buena noticia es que la planificación que la diócesis ha emprendido permitirá ministerios sacerdotales en todas las AFC durante décadas en el futuro. La no tan buena noticia es que habrá un menor número de sacerdotes para servir a los fieles de la diócesis en muchas de las AFC. Con el fin de que me ayuden en el desarrollo de una nueva visión y las prioridades para los próximos cinco años, cada AFC y las cuatro parroquias se reunirán para aportar información y asesoramiento.

Como puede verse en esta presentación, la Diócesis de New Ulm enfrenta algunos retos importantes, especialmente en los próximos cinco años. En consecuencia, el presente proceso de planificación es fundamental a medida que avanzamos hacia el futuro. La parte más importante del proceso de planificación es la oración. La más importante oración es decir a Dios, "Hágase tu voluntad." Cuando recemos esta oración, Dios responderá con la sabiduría y la gracia que necesitamos para cumplir su voluntad. Es con confianza y fe en Dios que nos embarcamos en el desarrollo del Plan para Parroquias, 2009-2014.

## World Day for Consecrated Life to be observed February 8

by Sr. Margaret McHugh, DSMP

On February 8, all the dioceses in the United States will celebrate World Day for the Consecrated Life. This day is an invitation to reflect on the role of men and women religious (religious priests, sisters, and brothers as well as consecrated virgins and members of secular institutes) in the Church and in the world. This is a day to pray for those who are consecrated to God as religious.

This year's theme, *For the Sake of the Gospel*, reminds us of this sense of purpose with which religious are called to live their vocation.

How do we best explain the difference between the diocesan priesthood and consecrated life? The consecrated life is lived out in

similar ways but with clear differences. A religious vocation is different from the vocation to the diocesan priesthood in five ways:

1. A religious publicly professes three vows: chastity, poverty, and obedience. A diocesan priest promises obedience to his bishop and to live simply and celibately.
2. Religious live in common in community with a commitment to that group. A parish priest doesn't live in community even if he shares a rectory with another priest.
3. Members of a religious order live the Gospel with a characteristic spirituality or charism from their founder or foundress. This is a particular slant or emphasis in following Jesus that affects who they are and how they offer service.

4. A diocesan priest will normally always serve within the geographical outlines of his particular diocese. A religious can serve anywhere in the world where his or her community is present.

5. Aside from priests in religious communities, consecrated religious offer themselves in non-ordained service to the Church. They are lay persons who remain deeply rooted in the universal call to holiness of all the baptized.

On Sunday, February 8, let's pray for all the religious women and men who contribute so much to our families and Church.

*Sr. Margaret McHugh, DSMP is a member of the diocesan Vocations Team. For more information about consecrated life, visit the New Ulm diocesan Web site at [www.dnu.org](http://www.dnu.org) or call the Vocations office at (507) 359-2966.*

## Be not afraid

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significantly over the next five years. Currently, there are forty-seven priests in active ministry, including four priests from other countries. Seven priests are already over the age of 70 and, in the next five years, five more priests will become eligible to retire at the age of 70. That number of twelve possible retirees represents nearly 30% of all diocesan priests.

With an average number of ordinations and without factoring in any international priests, by 2014, there will be about thirty-five diocesan priests to serve the present twenty-three AFCs and four individual parishes. Between 2014 and 2019, another nine priests will become eligible for retirement. From that point on, the number of priests is projected to level off at about thirty and remain stable throughout the ensuing years. This means that most AFCs will have one pastor and some will have a parochial vicar as well.

The good news is the planning that the diocese has undertaken will allow for priestly ministry at all AFCs for decades well into the future. The not so good news is

that there will be fewer priests to serve the faithful of the diocese in many AFCs. In order to assist me in developing a new vision and priorities for the next five years, each AFC and the four individual parishes will meet to provide input and advice.

Twelve possible priorities have emerged during the evaluation phase of the planning process from people like you. These are not presented in any predetermined order.

- Reduce administrative demands on priests;
  - Enhance Catholic Schools and religious education programs;
  - Increase vocation recruitment efforts; and
  - Expand ministry to the Hispanic community.
- Steward the resources of AFCs better;
  - Develop more ministry programs to and for the elderly;
  - Involve the laity more in AFCs; and
  - Increase collaboration among ministers and ministries.

- Make Mass and Sacraments as accessible as possible;
- Increase emphasis on adult faith formation;
- Emphasize evangelization to the young, unchurched, and non-attending; and
- Enhance marriage preparation.

At the conclusion of the meetings of the AFCs and four other parishes, you will be asked to review this list of possible priorities and rank your top three.

As can be seen from this presentation, the Diocese of New Ulm is facing some significant challenges, especially within the next five years. Consequently, the present planning process is critical as we move into the future. The most important part of the planning process is prayer. The most important prayer is to say to God, "Thy will be done." When we pray this prayer, God will respond with the wisdom and grace we need to accomplish His will. It is with confidence and trust in God that we embark upon the development of the *Plan for Parishes, 2009-2014*.



## Several priests of diocese to mark significant anniversaries



**Rev. James E. Moran  
50 years!**

Rev. James E. Moran will celebrate his 50th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood with a Golden Jubilee Mass of Thanksgiving on Sunday, April 26, 2009, at 12:00 p.m. at the Church of St. George, West Newton Twp., MN. An open house reception will follow in St. George Parish Center.

The third child of James and Mabel (Carroll) Moran, he was born and raised in Tracy, MN. Following graduation from high school in 1950, he completed a BA in sociology in 1954 from St. Thomas College (now University), before entering St. Paul Major Seminary.

He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of New Ulm on February 22, 1959, at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm by Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler.

Following ordination he served in the parish communities of Litchfield, Willmar, Swan Lake, Middle Lake, Wabasso, Nassau, Clara City, Raymond, Granite Falls, Lafayette, and West Newton Twp. Since retiring in 2003, Fr. Moran has continued to assist parishes for weekend and holy day liturgies.

Fr. Moran has served on many diocesan committees and boards, including Council of Catholic Women, Priest Personnel Board, Priest Council, Marriage Tribunal, and Diocesan Consultors Board. He served as part-time chaplain at Willmar State Hospital and also completed life-time certification for teaching high school in Catholic schools and the public high school in Clara City. In 1982, he completed a Sabbatical study program in Rome and the Holy Land.

##



**Msgr. Francis J. Garvey  
50 years!**

Msgr. Francis J. Garvey will celebrate his 50th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood on Sunday, February 22, 2009, at the Church of Our Lady, Manannah, MN, with a Mass at 1:00 p.m. followed by a program, dinner, and reception from 2 -5 p.m. in the Parish Center.

The youngest of seven children, he was born March 2, 1933, to Dennis and Susan (Schmit) Garvey in Eden Valley, MN, with his parish being the Church of Our Lady, Manannah, MN. After graduating from high school he entered Nazareth Hall Minor Seminary, St. Paul, MN, in 1950. In 1953 he entered St. Paul Seminary, St. Paul. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of New Ulm on February 22, 1959, at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm by Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler.

Following ordination he served in the parish communities of Hutchinson, Silver Lake, New Ulm (Cathedral of the Holy Trinity), Lake Lillian, Kandiyohi, Litchfield, and Watkins. During the time he was pastor in Kandiyohi from 1962-1996, he also served as a full-time chaplain at the Willmar Regional Treatment Center (formally Willmar State Hospital) from 1962-2001. While serving as a chaplain he completed his schooling as a clinical pastoral education supervisor and supervised a Certified Clinical Pastoral Education Program for 32 years. In 1964 he founded the St. Francis Half-Way House in Atwater, MN.

From 1975-1978 he served on the United States Catholic Conference accrediting and certifying Board of



**TAKE NOTE:**

Fr. James E. Moran and Msgr. Francis J. Garvey were the second class of seminarians ordained to the priesthood 50 years ago (1959) for the Diocese of New Ulm by Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler.

Examiners for Clinical Pastoral Education and was president of the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) from 1979-1981.

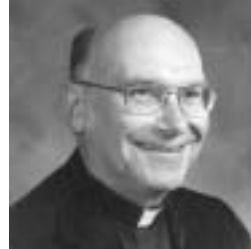
From 1996 to the present he has been pastor of the Church of Our Lady, Manannah.

In addition to parish ministries, he has served as the Director of Priest Personnel, Bishop's Appointee for Sexual Misconduct for the diocese, served on the diocesan Vocations Team, as well as numerous diocesan councils and committees. From 2003-2004 he served as chaplain of the Willmar Knights of Columbus.

He was given the title Monsignor by Pope Benedict XVI on September 14, 2005.

Monsignor Garvey has been a recipient of special awards given by the United States Catholic Conference, State of Minnesota, Knights of Columbus and various community organizations. In 1989, he was awarded the Diocesan Distinguished Service Award by Bishop Raymond A. Lucker for his "Commitment to the ministry of healing at Willmar Regional Treatment Center ... his contributions to Clinical Pastoral Education nationally and locally, his many years of service in support of diocesan priests through involvement with the Priest Personnel Board and individual counseling, and his selfless giving as a pastor."

##



**Rev. Edward J. Ardolf  
45 years!**

Rev. Edward J. Ardolf, pastor at St. Paul, Nicollet, will observe his 45th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood on February 23, 2009.

Edward J. Ardolf was born in Silver Lake, MN, to Albert P. and Cecilia (Paulish) Ardolf on July 20, 1937. He attended Silver Lake High School, Nazareth Hall, and St. Paul

Seminary, St. Paul, MN. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of New Ulm on February 23, 1964, by Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm. Following his ordination, he served in the parish communities of Winsted, New Ulm (Cathedral of the Holy Trinity), North Mankato, Springfield, Canby, St. Leo, and Sleepy Eye. He currently serves the Church of St. Paul in Nicollet with some duties at the Church of St. Mary in New Ulm.

He has served on numerous diocesan boards/committees and was State Chaplain of the Minnesota Knights of Columbus from 1983-1985.

##



**Msgr. John A. Richter  
45 years!**

Msgr. John A. Richter will celebrate his 45th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood on February 22, 2009, at the 11:00 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm, MN, followed by an open house reception in Leifeld Hall from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m.

The eighth of 10 children of William and Clara (Macejeski) Richter, he was born in Bird Island, MN, where he attended St. Mary's grade school. After eighth grade he attended Nazareth Hall Preparatory Seminary, St. Paul, MN, and two years of college at the St. Paul Seminary. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of New Ulm on February 22, 1964, at the Church of St. Mary in Bird Island, by Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler.

Following ordination, he served the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in

New Ulm, also teaching at Cathedral High School. He has served in the parish communities of Hutchinson, Madison, St. Peter, Canby, Sleepy Eye, Wabasso, Seaforth, Lucan, and Searles. He currently serves as pastor of St. John the Baptist in Searles, while remaining Rector of the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm.

He has also served as diocesan director of vocations, superintendent of St. Mary's School, Sleepy Eye, and chaplain at Divine Providence Home, Sleepy Eye, as well as serving on various committees throughout the years.

He was given the title Monsignor by Pope Benedict XVI on September 14, 2005.

In 1998, he was awarded the Diocesan Distinguished Service Award by Bishop Raymond A. Lucker for "serving the people of the diocese faithfully during the past thirty-four years as a priest. ... He has faithfully ministered to the people while providing untiring spiritual leadership and guidance. In addition to his priestly ministry, he has also provided effective educational leadership ... His vision, determination, and quest for excellence has inspired growth and progress in the parishes and schools he has served."



# THE MINNESOTA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

## special report

Our faith and religious values shape our approach to complex moral and political issues. As a state, we share many blessings and strengths. Together, we also face serious moral and political challenges. Our immediate challenge is determining how to resolve Minnesota's \$4.85 billion budget shortfall. How we respond to this current challenge will directly affect our lives and the lives of our sisters and brothers. As Archbishop John C. Nienstedt shared: "most important[ly], ...it is essential during this difficult time not to forget the poor...." Our approach is a reflection of our faith and values.



MINNESOTA LEGISLATURE

The Minnesota Legislature convened on Tuesday, January 6, 2009. Minnesota's "major financial planning" will occur during this legislative session - the first year of the biennium (a two-year budget cycle).

Each odd numbered year the governor proposes, and the legislature approves, Minnesota's operating budget. This two-year budget includes expenditures for agriculture, economic development, education, health care, higher education, housing, infrastructure (roads and bridges), natural resources, public safety, and technology. It also addresses funding to state agencies and local units of government.

Minnesota projects to spend \$37 billion in the next budget cycle (Fiscal Year 2010-11), which begins on July 1, 2009; but it anticipates only \$32 billion in revenue from income, sales and capital gains taxes. This \$4.85 billion shortfall represents 13

percent of the budget. In addition to such a large budget deficit in the next budget cycle, the state's November Forecast revealed a smaller deficit of \$426 million in the current budget cycle (FY 2009-10), which ends on June 30, 2009.

Last December, Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty announced that he solved the current budget cycle deficit by depleting Minnesota's \$155 million budget reserve (rainy-day fund) and unallotting \$271 million in spending promised to Minnesota cities and counties, health and human service programs, and state colleges and universities.

Last month, Governor Pawlenty presented his plan for addressing the projected budget shortfall when he presented his budget proposal to the Legislature. The Minnesota Legislature must pass and the Governor must sign a budget into law by May 18, 2009.

Archbishop Emeritus Harry S. Flynn reminded us that "our state's budget is more than just a document. It is a moral statement." Are we living the Gospel when the daily needs of our poor and vulnerable sisters and brothers are overlooked, ignored or pushed to the bottom of a list of legislative priorities? What values are we reflecting when we decide that funding cuts to essential health and human service programs are acceptable financial "solutions"?

We must be careful not to view our current challenges as purely economic. Every economic decision - as abstract or as simple as it may seem - has a human dimension. For example, cutting funding from health and human service programs means that our neighbors will not receive essential services. When faced with such difficult obstacles we must not succumb to despair. Now is the time for hope. Now is the time to join together and renew, reprioritize

and rebuild. What do we envision for Minnesota? How will we continue to build the common good? How can we infuse the Gospel into our vision? As Pope Benedict XVI shared during his visit to the United States, we must work to "enrich American society and culture with the beauty and truth of the Gospel and never [lose] sight of that great hope which gives meaning and value to all the other hopes which inspire our lives."

### Public policy positions rooted in Catholic social teaching

This session, the Minnesota Catholic Conference will continue to advocate for policies and programs that support the life and dignity of every human person from conception through natural death. We believe that every human being is created in God's image and, without

exception, possesses dignity and value. Our public policy positions are rooted in Catholic social teaching and serve to:

- ▶ uphold the sanctity of life;
- ▶ lift-up the poor and vulnerable; and
- ▶ help build the common good.

### During the 2009 legislative session, the MCC will focus on:

#### ABORTION AND LIFE

Build a culture of life by cultivating support for pro-life positions on abortion, artificial reproduction, cloning, death penalty, euthanasia and embryonic stem-cell research.



Increase access to, and funding for, programs that provide needed support services to pregnant women and their families.

The Minnesota Catholic Conference (MCC) is the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Minnesota. The MCC lobbies state and federal lawmakers on behalf of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis and the dioceses of Crookston, Duluth, New Ulm, St. Cloud and Winona.

## Preserving the common good requires virtue, sacrifice and responsibility for all of our sisters and brothers.

Public policy decisions have the potential to either build or undermine the common good. We encourage you to continue the United States Catholic Bishops' call to faithful citizenship and help build the common good by speaking out on legislative issues:

► Share your ideas for solving Minnesota's projected budget deficit on the Minnesota House of Representative's web site at, [www.house.leg.state.mn.us/budgetsuggestions.asp](http://www.house.leg.state.mn.us/budgetsuggestions.asp);

► Visit, call, write and e-mail your Senator and Representative, and tell him or her why a particular legislative issue is important to you – many pieces of legislation are inspired by personal stories; and

► Sign-up for the Minnesota Catholic Advocacy Network (MNCAN) on the Minnesota Catholic Conference's Web site at [www.mncc.org](http://www.mncc.org).

### CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Protect the rights of private school students, parents and educators to access special education services and benefits.



Provide state funding for children to participate in early childhood learning and school preparedness programs in private schools.

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Limit the impact of a parent's incarceration on children and families by addressing the emotional and economic needs of children and families.



Improve access to credit, employment, higher education and housing for individuals who have completed their sentence, and are transitioning from prison to the community.

### ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Improve options for low-income workers by expanding training and employment opportunities, while addressing child care and transportation needs.



Increase employment and training opportunities for unemployed Minnesota workers.

Raise Minnesota's minimum wage.

### ENDING POVERTY

Ensure that Minnesotans have access to public support programs that help individuals maintain employment and meet their families' basic needs.



Implement the recommendations of the Legislative Commission to End Poverty.

### ENERGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Pursue alternative sources of energy - wind, solar, electric and bio-fuels from non-food sources.



Encourage responsible stewardship of our natural resources by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and waste.

### FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Secure a healthful food supply for all Minnesotans.



Support family farms while preserving Minnesota's soil, water and wildlife.

### HEALTH CARE

Ensure health care access for all Minnesotans, beginning with the most vulnerable: children.



### HOUSING

Create affordable housing options for all Minnesotans. Equip the homes of low income individuals and families with renewable and sustainable energy sources, thereby reducing utility costs.



### IMMIGRATION

Provide newcomers access to education and essential public programs.



### MARRIAGE

Strengthen and stabilize families by ensuring that health insurance covers marriage and family counseling.



Oppose efforts to make same-sex unions the legal equivalent of marriage.

### PARENTAL CHOICE IN EDUCATION

Preserve and expand parental choice in education to include education tax credits for contributions to education foundations.



Sustain full state funding of existing parental choice benefits for students attending private schools, such as student transportation, textbook allocations, health services, and guidance and counseling.

Support abstinence education and oppose family life and sexuality education programs that promote practices contrary to Church teachings.

(courtesy of Minnesota Catholic Conference - *Faith in the Public Arena* column - [www.mncc.org](http://www.mncc.org))

**May God bless us with, as Pope Benedict XVI stated, the "courage to engage in civic life and to bring [our] deepest beliefs and values to reasoned public debate."**

*"In the Catholic Tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation. This obligation is rooted in our baptismal commitment to follow Jesus Christ and to bear Christian witness in all we do" (no. 13).*

## Reflecting God's light through the sacrament of Marriage

by Tony and Julie Williams  
North Mankato, MN

Imagine yourself standing in the middle of the sanctuary of a beautiful cathedral, its walls imbued with exquisitely crafted stained glass windows, each reflecting the bright light of what, outside, is a sun-splashed summer day. They cast a soft, colorful glow on all that is within the majestic church.

Next, consider those windows as a metaphor for bride and bridegroom, Christ and his Church. The windows, in and of themselves, are pleasing to look at, and functional – they protect those inside from the elements. With the light of the sun, however, they take on a character that transcends mere usefulness – they capture our attention, causing us to ponder and appreciate the talent of their craftsman.

Likewise, the sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders have the potential to reflect the Holy Spirit in a way that causes all to take notice and give glory to God.

Thanks to Worldwide Marriage Encounter, we are convinced this is not only reality, it is our calling as a married couple – to reflect God's light through the gift of our sacrament.

We began our journey with Worldwide Marriage Encounter (WWME) last winter, when a couple visited our parish and extended the invitation to take time for our marriage, and attend a "weekend." We agreed that our marriage is worth nurturing, so we signed up for a weekend. That Friday evening we arrived with much hope and anticipation that we would walk away on Sunday much stronger and closer as a couple, and that is exactly what happened.

Through a communication process, we answered challenging questions, each taking time to write our thoughts and feelings, followed by private time to discuss these



(photo courtesy of Worldwide Marriage Encounter, wwme.org)

On January 23, 2008, Pope Benedict XVI held an audience with David and Bronwyn "Bronny" Lea, International Coordinating Team for the Worldwide Marriage Encounter. During their meeting, the Pope was quoted as saying, "Ah, Marriage Encounter, yes, you are doing such important work in our Church especially in this world we live in. I will pray for you and for your movement."

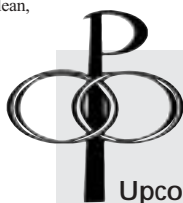
thoughts and feelings in a way that drew us closer to one another and closer to the Lord. He is the craftsman that began forming our stained glass window long before our wedding day. His purpose for our marriage, our sacrament, is that his light might shine through us as we honor and glorify him through our love and our marriage relationship. By continuing our communication process and addressing the questions that continually keep our window clean, we acknowledge God's presence within us, keeping the light of Christ in our sacrament and reflecting that light for others to see.

Taken from the WWME brochure, "Worldwide Marriage Encounter is designed to give married couples the opportunity to examine their lives together... a time to share their feelings, their hopes, disappointments, joys and frustrations... and to do so openly and honestly in a face-to-face, heart-to-heart encounter with the one person they have chosen to live with for the rest of their life. The emphasis of WWME is on communication between the husband and wife who spend precious time together away from the distractions and the tensions of everyday life, to concentrate on each

other. It is for any married couple who desires a richer, fuller life together."

Every Christian marriage is like a stained glass window, made to reflect God's beauty and love.

For more information or to register for a weekend, contact Jeff and Rondi Kodet at 507-644-3523 or [jrek@redred.com](mailto:jrek@redred.com) or visit [www.wwmeSection8.org](http://www.wwmeSection8.org)



**Upcoming  
Marriage Encounter  
Weekends**

**February 13-15, 2009,  
at Shalom Hill Retreat  
Center near Windom**

**March 13-15, 2009  
in Marshall.**

Call (507) 644-3523  
to register.

## Doing the right thing because it is the right thing

by Fr. Ron Rolheiser

"Have you ever done something simply on principle, because it was the right thing to do, knowing that you couldn't explain it to anyone, without there even being a good feeling attached to your act?"

Karl Rahner wrote that and then added: "If you have done this, you have experienced God, perhaps without knowing it."

Jesus would agree, so much so that he makes this both the central tenet of religion and the overriding criterion for salvation.

We see this explicitly in the famous text in the gospels where Jesus tells us that whatsoever you do to the poor here on earth you do to him. For Jesus, to give something to a poor person is to give something to God, and to neglect a poor person is to neglect God.

### Sheep and goats

There's an important background to this teaching. They had been asking Jesus: "What will be the test? What will be the ultimate criterion for judgment as to whether or not someone enters into the kingdom of heaven or not? His answer surprised them. They had expected that the final judgment would revolve around issues of religious belonging, religious practice, correct observance, and moral codes. Instead they got this answer: "When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left."

And what, according to Jesus, will be the basis for the separation? Only this: Did you feed the hungry? Give drink to the thirsty?

Invite in the stranger? Clothe the naked? Visit the sick and imprisoned? Because when you do these things to the hungry, to the thirsty, to strangers, to the sick, and to the imprisoned, you do them to God, and vice versa.

And immediately there was confusion among those who heard these words. Both those who did what was asked and those who didn't were equally befuddled and lodged the same protest: "When? When did we see you hungry? When did we see you thirsty? When did we see you naked, or a stranger, or sick, or in prison and serve you or not serve you? When did we see you, God, and do this to you?"

Both are caught off guard and both ask seemingly the same question, but their protests are in fact very different: The first group, those who had measured up, are pleasantly surprised. What they say to Jesus is essentially this: "We didn't know it was you! We were just doing what was right!" And Jesus answers: "It doesn't matter! In serving them, you were meeting me!"

The second group, those who hadn't measured up, is rudely shocked. Their protest, in effect, is this: "If we had only known! If we had known that it was you inside the poor we would have responded. We just didn't know!" And Jesus answers: "It doesn't matter! In not serving them, you were avoiding me!"

### Non-negotiable service

What's the lesson? The more obvious one of course is the challenge that is already contained in the famous mantra of the prophets who had stated unequivocally that the quality of our faith will be judged by the quality of justice in the land and that the quality of justice will be judged by how the most

(continued on page 9)

## Bishop Lucker Lecture March 10th

*Hutchinson native, Bishop McRaith to be evening presenter*

The annual Bishop Lucker Lecture, sponsored by the Diocese of New Ulm, is planned for Tuesday, March 10, 2009, at the Hutchinson Event Center, 1005 Highway 15 South, Hutchinson, MN, at 7:00 p.m.

This year's keynote will be Bishop John J. McRaith who has a special connection to the Diocese of New Ulm. He is a Hutchinson native ordained to the priesthood in 1960 for the Diocese of New Ulm where he served as chancellor and vicar general. Bishop McRaith is the first priest from the Diocese of New Ulm to be named a bishop.



Bishop McRaith

Since 1982, he has served as the 3rd Bishop of the Diocese of Owensboro, KY. On January 5, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI accepted Bishop McRaith's resignation due to health

reasons. "I do not have a life-threatening illness, but my doctors have advised me to slow down, and I concluded that my resignation was in the best interest of the diocese," said Bishop McRaith.

Bishop McRaith's evening presentation will be *Planting the Seeds of Stewardship*, which will address the topic of stewardship and the responsibility of every follower of Jesus to use the gifts which God gives wisely.

Following the evening presentation, Bishop John LeVoir will present the 2009 Diocesan Distinguished Service Award (DDSA) to this year's award recipients. (*Names of the 2009 DDSA recipients will be announced in the March Prairie Catholic.*)

For further information on the Bishop Lucker Lecture, please contact the Diocese of New Ulm at (507) 359-2966; email: [pforst@dnu.org](mailto:pforst@dnu.org)

**THE BISHOP LUCKER LECTURE FUND was established in 2000 with an initial gift from Bishop Raymond A. Lucker, second bishop of the diocese. It was bishop's intent that the annual Bishop Lucker Lecture offer the people of the diocese an opportunity to be enlightened and challenged by leaders, teachers, and practitioners of the Catholic faith.**

## DCCW Scholarships available - apply now!

The New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (NUDCCW) Scholarship Program provides educational opportunities in spirituality, leadership, and service.

Scholarship amounts of \$200 are available to adults who provide leadership in the Council of Catholic Women organization, teach in parish Catholic schools or religious education programs. It is also available to those in parish music, administration, youth ministry, and a wide range of social concerns activities. Scholarships are available to women and men throughout the diocese to empower and enrich their faith.

The NUDCCW Scholarship Program is supported solely by parishes in the diocese. During the

past year, 128 scholarships were awarded for a total of \$16,386.

Because of limited funds, scholarships are awarded only to parishioners of parishes that voluntarily contribute monetary donations to the NUDCCW Scholarship Program. Scholarship applications for 2009 may be obtained through parish CCW organizations or parish CCW Scholarship coordinators.

Apply Now! Mail completed applications to Diocesan Scholarship Coordinator – Barb Nowak at 1519 11th Street East, Glencoe, MN 55336. Scholarship applications must be postmarked no later than March 15, 2009 or those applying will not be eligible for scholarship awards.

## Great friendships and CCW go hand in hand!

by Mary Karnitz, DCCW Immediate Past President

Good friends are a blessing from God; there is no doubt about that. To have someone with whom you can share your apprehensions, joys, and difficulties in life is priceless. To have someone listen to you, who is also someone you enjoy listening to, is a gift from God. Friends will receive without taking and will give without demanding. We love our friends, not because we have to but because we want to.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger spoke about our friendship with Jesus, during his homily at the opening Mass of the conclave that eventually elected him our Holy Father, Benedict XVI: "A faith which is deeply rooted in friendship with Jesus is adult and mature. It is this friendship which opens us up to all that is good and gives us the knowledge to judge true from false and deceit from truth...The Lord addresses to us these wonderful words: "I no longer call you slaves...I have called you friends."

Friendship is fundamental to the Council of Catholic Women. Sustained by this friendship in our lives with each other, we have the opportunity to bring to one another the gift of friendship with Jesus.

Through our friendships and tri-fold purpose of prayer, study and service, we seek to advocate for the voiceless, the vulnerable, the poor and the disenfranchised. We share our gifts, we share our time, energy and creativity, we support each other, we empower each other, we educate each other, and we pray for each other. Together we work lovingly and diligently in our parishes, in our regions, and in our diocese to support our bishop, pastors, pastoral administrators, and community. By supporting one another in all of our projects, we enhance our lives - our spirituality, our family, our community, our government, and our world.

Celebrate your good friends!

## doing the right thing

(continued from page 8)

vulnerable groups in society (widows, orphans, and strangers) fare while we are alive. The Jewish prophets had already taught us that serving the poor is a non-negotiable, integral part of religion, that nobody gets to heaven without a letter of reference from the poor. But Jesus adds something: God doesn't just have a preferential option for the poor, God is inside the poor.

But there's another lesson too, subtle but important: In this gospel story, neither those who served God in the poor nor those who didn't serve God in poor knew what they were doing.

The first group, who did respond,

did so simply because it was the right thing to do. They didn't know that God was hidden inside the poor. The second group, who didn't respond, didn't reach out because they didn't realize that God was inside the poor. Neither knew that God was there and that is the lesson:

A mature disciple doesn't calculate or make distinctions as to whether God is inside of a certain situation or not, whether a person seems worth it or not, whether a person is a Christian or not, or whether a person appears to be a good person or not, before reaching out in service. A mature disciple serves whoever is in need, independent of those considerations.

The last temptation that is the greatest treason is to do the right thing for the wrong reason. T.S. Eliot said that. Jesus would add that doing the right thing is reason enough.



Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award winning author. Currently, he is the president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio Texas.

He can be contacted through his web site: [www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com)

## WHAT CATHOLICS BELIEVE

### *the sacrament of the Reconciliation*



**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.*

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

*"I tell you, there will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents." (Luke 15:10)*

Jesus teaches us the importance of repentance in the Parable of the Lost Coin as well as the Parable of the Prodigal Son. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, it shows the importance of conversion toward God and demonstrates God's love, mercy, and forgiveness that he offers to every one of us. These parables lay the foundation for the sacrament of Reconciliation, known by other names as well according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church: *sacrament of conversion, sacrament of Penance, sacrament of confession, and sacrament of forgiveness* (CCC 1424). Many Catholics seem to keep their distance from this sacrament because it is a hard thing to confess your sins. These parables, as well as the concepts of conversion and forgiveness, can help to alleviate people's fears and draw more people to this sacrament.

**SACRAMENT OF CONVERSION**  
What is conversion? Put simply, it is a turning away from sin and selfish ways and a turning toward God and his loving ways. Yet, it is a process helped by the Holy Spirit. It includes an examination of conscience and recognition of our sins. It includes repentance of our sinful ways, a hatred of those sins. It also includes confessing those sins and a prayer of contrition. Then God forgives us though absolution by the priest. However, it does not end there. It

calls us to penance: continued prayer, reparations for the damage done, reconciliation with those we hurt, and forgiveness to those who hurt us.

Our conversion begins with baptism, but it does not end there. Conversion is ongoing throughout our lives and this is the very reason why the sacrament of Reconciliation is important for all of us to grow closer to God and live as disciples. We need to experience this sacrament often in order for us to walk in the footsteps of Jesus within our family life, within our work, within our free time, and really, at all times.

**SACRAMENT OF FORGIVENESS**  
Forgiveness is one of the hallmarks of our faith. We are indeed followers of Jesus who teaches forgiveness, especially through his passion and death. We in turn are called to forgive those who hurt us as the Lord's prayer teaches us. We are called to love our enemies and pray for our persecutors. We are called to turn the world upside down so that peace and reconciliation can actually happen.

How many times do we respond to a person who is sorry with the words, "That's okay." When we say these words, it can be as if we are allowing them to hurt us again. Through the sacrament of Reconciliation and Christ's word and example, we can say instead, "I forgive you." It acknowledges that they indeed sinned against us, and it helps them with their own process of conversion.

**AN INVITATION**  
Some of you who read this will try to talk yourselves out of going to the

sacrament of Reconciliation, but if you accept this invitation, you will experience God's love and mercy and an inner peace and joy. I invite you to call your local parish or any parish, for that matter, and make an appointment. Even if it has been years since you received this sacrament, the priest is there to guide you through it. Some of you may be more comfortable with a Communal Reconciliation Service where you will still have the opportunity to go to the sacrament one-on-one with the priest. Many parishes will have these communal services during the upcoming season of Lent. You have the option of going face-to-face or behind the screen, whatever your comfort level is.

God is calling you to conversion, God is calling you to forgive, and this sacrament can help you with your life of conversion and your call to forgive. And remember: "There will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

## What is Lent?

by Father Greg Friedman, O.F. M.

These days, a Catholic may be able to tell your age by the way you explain Lent. Older Catholics, who remember Lent in the 1930s, 40s, or 50s - or perhaps even earlier - may first think of this season as a time of penance. Lent was when you gave up something - like food or going to the movies - in order to do penance for sin. Since the Church has restored the rite of initiating adults into the Christian faith, Lent has taken on a different meaning - one that goes back to the fourth and fifth centuries. At that time, the 40 days before Easter were the final stage of preparation for those about to be baptized. The rest of the Church prayed and fasted in solidarity with them.

Today, with the presence in most Catholic parishes of a group of adults visibly making ready to receive the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil, Lent has regained that "baptismal" emphasis. We still can decide on a Lenten observance - fasting, prayer, almsgiving - but we do it with the purpose of recalling our baptism, of deepening our commitment to Christ. And we do it in solidarity with those preparing to be baptized or received into the Church.

The readings for each Sunday in Lent have been chosen by the Church to relate to the journey of faith each of us undertakes, to our basic baptismal call to be part of Christ. Some of the selections, from the Gospel of John, for example, have been used for centuries to recall the meaning of baptism.

For people about to be baptized, these Scripture passages take on a powerful meaning indeed. The meditations you will find here on our Web site will call attention to the various "baptismal connections" for each Sunday.

Those who are already baptized are still on a journey. Our faith must be renewed, our baptismal promises affirmed, each time we gather with the Church for the Eucharist, where we hear God's Word and come to the table to be transformed into the Body of Christ. We bring to that experience our questions, our sinfulness, our hunger and thirst, our need to grow, our longing for God.

*Franciscan Father Greg Friedman, O.F.M., is creative director for American Catholic Radio and is on the production team for video and audio projects for Franciscan Communications, a ministry of St. Anthony Messenger Press. He is a member of the development team for AmericanCatholic.org, OnceCatholic.org and FranciscanRadio.org.*



*You, God, are dynamic. You are within me. You are here.  
You are now. You are. You are the ground of my being  
I let go. I sink and merge into you. You overwhelm me.  
You flood my being. You take me over completely.*

**This is an adaptable retreat that serves as an additional spiritual opportunity for parishes. It features Rev. Robert Barron on his DVD, Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues, and some pamphlets on virtues from the *Growing Faith Project* by Twenty-Third Publications.**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
contact your parish pastoral leader  
or Diocese of New Ulm,  
(507) 359-2966; email: aprzybilla@dnu.org

The Diocese of New Ulm  
announces its 2009

**"Living Virtue"**  
a Lenten Retreat Experience  
for Parishes

## Glass windows of art!



The Church of St. John in Ortonville, MN, was the recent recipient of 20 new stained glass windows. The new windows were designed and installed by Decker Studio's of Winona, MN. The designs include symbols portraying both the New and Old Testament as displayed in the nave of the Church, while the family room and entrance way reflect family life and impressions of our modern day era. The new windows replace former generic plain glass windows, which were installed at its construction in 1961. Donations by individual members of the parish helped in defraying the cost.

### Mission of Love

The San Lucas Mission Extension Office is once again sponsoring a Valentine Project, "the Mission of Love" with proceeds going to the Diocese of New Ulm Mission in San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala. Here's how it works: The project runs to the end of March. You make a valentine and send it to the San Lucas Mission Extension Office, Martin and Beth Meidl, PO Box 326, Lamberton, MN 56152, along with a \$2 donation. This in turn is sent to San Lucas where staff and volunteers distribute valentines to the children and purchase food and school supplies for the needy. The response has been wonderful in the past!

## online learning

(continued from page 1)

ministry helpers, and school staff.

By no means is this the only avenue to form your faith. The Diocese of New Ulm, as well as parishes, will continue to offer formation, but this online learning will greatly help the formation and training efforts of our people.

What are the benefits in becoming a partner with the University of Dayton's VLCFF? For catechists, there is a new certificate for catechists. For Catholic school teachers and principals, there are CEUs that can be earned. For those

involved with charity and justice, there is a social justice certificate. There are also courses in Spanish. For diocesan committees and councils, the University of Dayton can arrange a closed course for your group. There are also parish leadership opportunities as well as opportunities for continuing education.

*For further information on how you can take part in the online learning, contact the Catholic Pastoral Center, 1400 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; phone: (507) 359-2966; email: breising@dnu.org.*

## Upcoming Events

### GOOD SHEPHERD SERRA

**CLUB** will meet February 5, 2009, at Divine Providence Chapel and Marian Conference Room, Sleepy Eye, beginning with Rosary and Mass at 7:00 p.m., followed by program and lunch. Come early for Eucharistic Adoration. This month Fr. Mark Mallak of Sleepy Eye will be our guest speaker sharing his vocation story.

### UPCOMING VIRTUS (SAFE ENVIRONMENT) SESSIONS -

February 12, 2009, in Arlington at 6:30 p.m. or March 12 in Minnetonka at 6:00 p.m. Contact your local Catholic parish for further information. For additional upcoming VIRTUS sessions or more information visit the New Ulm diocesan Web site at [www.dnu.org](http://www.dnu.org)

### ASH WEDNESDAY (THE SEASON OF LENT BEGINS) -

February 25, 2009.

### OPERATION RICE BOWL BEGINS IN PARTICIPATING PARISHES AND CONTINUES THROUGHOUT THE SEASON OF

**LENT.** This is a national program which raises awareness of global hunger and poverty. For further information, check with your parish or visit [www.orb.crs.org/](http://www.orb.crs.org/).

### AID TO THE CHURCH IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN

**EUROPE** - Collection to be taken up in participating parishes in the diocese on Ash Wednesday or any Sunday during the season of Lent.

### HOLY REDEEMER SCHOOL AND PARISH TO HOST SATISFACTION

**CONCERT** - February 22, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. *Satisfaction* is a highly-acclaimed Rolling Stones tribute band and will perform at the Recreation/Athletic Center on the campus of Southwest Minnesota State University. Tickets are \$15 for the public. All proceeds will benefit Holy Redeemer's education programs. Call (507) 532-5711 for further information.

### ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY MEN'S

**CHORUS, COLLEGEVILLE** will be in concert at the Church of St. Mary in Willmar on Thursday, February 26, at 7:30 p.m. Admission to the concert is free. Free-will donations requested. For information on the upcoming concert tour visit the choir's Web site at [www.cbsju.edu/menschorus/](http://www.cbsju.edu/menschorus/) or call (320) 235-0118. The public is welcome to attend.

### THE RITE OF ELECTION AND CALL TO CONTINUING

**CONVERSION** will be celebrated on Sunday, March 8, 2009, at 3:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. Bishop John Levoir will be the celebrant. This celebration is one of many rituals that take place as part of the R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) as a step toward the initiation rites of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation that will be celebrated at the Easter Vigil in the parishes around the diocese. The Rite of Election is for those seeking Baptism. The Call to Continuing Conversion is for those already baptized in the Christian faith but seek full membership in the Church. All the faithful of the diocese are welcome to attend. A reception will follow the service.

### CHARISMATIC RENEWAL "LIFE IN THE SPIRIT" SEMINAR -

The Diocese of New Ulm Charismatic Renewal will sponsor a Life in the Spirit Seminar to be held

March 27-28, 2009, at the Schoenstatt Retreat Center in Sleepy Eye, MN. The seminar seeks to open participants up to the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit that were given at Baptism and made firm at Confirmation. Topics of the talks that will be given include God's Love, Salvation, New Life, Receiving God's Gift, and Growth and Transformation. Speakers will be Margaret Doom, Paula Baert, Bonnie Rademacher, Randy Krzmarzick, Jan Crowe, and Fr. John Pearson. The event begins at 5:00 p.m. on Friday and ends at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday. Mass and Reconciliation will be celebrated. For registration and more information call Jan Crowe, Diocesan Charismatic Renewal Liaison, (320) 275-2424.

This Lenten Season, be sure to visit the Diocese of New Ulm Media Resource Center's **Web site ([www.dnu.org](http://www.dnu.org))** and check out all the new Lenten resources available for use in your parish, school, or home.



## Employment Opportunities

(continued from page 3)

Devorak, St. Joseph Parish, 512 Black Oak Ave, Montevideo, MN, 56265; phone: (320) 269-8623; [fjijm@saintsjac.org](mailto:fjijm@saintsjac.org).

**The Holy Family Area Catholic Community has a full-time opening for a Director of Faith Formation** working primarily at St. Joseph Parish in Montevideo and St. Andrew Parish in Granite Falls, MN. This also includes sacramental preparation for Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. A willingness to

work as a team with an area staff and others involved in Faith Formation and Youth Ministry is required. A background in education plus previous catechetical ministry experience is required. A degree in theology is desirable. Some Spanish language skills would be helpful but not necessary. Please send resume or for more information contact Fr. Jim Devorak, St. Joseph Parish, 512 Black Oak Ave, Montevideo, MN, 56265. Phone (320) 269-8623; [fjijm@saintsjac.org](mailto:fjijm@saintsjac.org).

# THE DRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 23 No. 6 February 2009



**L**ent begins on February 25th and ends April 11th. It is the primary time for celebrating the sacrament of Reconciliation, because Lent is the season for baptismal preparation and baptismal renewal. Early Christian teachers called this sacrament "second baptism," because it is intended to enable us to start again to live the baptismal life in its fullness. Those who experience the loving mercy of God in the sacrament of Reconciliation should find themselves standing alongside the newly baptized at Easter filled with great joy at the new life God has given all of us.

## catholic trends

**VATICAN CITY - On January 23, 2009, during a press conference that presented Pope Benedict's message for World Communications Day which is dedicated to new media technology, the Vatican launched a video channel on YouTube** that will feature news coverage of Pope Benedict XVI and major Vatican events. The pope has said he hopes the YouTube channel "will enrich a wide range of people - including those who have yet to find a

response to their spiritual yearning - through the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ." The new Vatican initiative will make information and news about the Vatican more readily accessible on the Internet.

The Vatican channel is the result of a new partnership the Vatican Television Center and Vatican Radio forged with the Internet giant Google and its video-sharing Web site, YouTube. This ad-free YouTube channel, ([www.youtube.com/vatican](http://www.youtube.com/vatican)), each day will offer

one to three short video news clips of the pope or major Vatican events with audio commentary in English, Italian, Spanish and German. The footage is produced daily by the Vatican Television Center, which works with Vatican Radio to produce the audio commentary. Viewers will be able to leave comments, distribute the videos by e-mailing or messaging the links, and share the videos with friends on various social networking sites like MySpace and Facebook, as well as submit the Vatican video links to news aggregator sites like Digg. Unlike many videos available on YouTube, which viewers can rate according to YouTube's one- to five-star grading system, the Vatican videos cannot be rated or embedded onto external Web sites or blogs. The Vatican channel's home page, however, can be embedded elsewhere.

**Washington (Jan. 22, 2009) - An executive order banning torture signed by President Obama** was welcomed by Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, Chairman of the Committee on International

Justice and Peace of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). "Based upon the teachings of the Catholic Church, our Conference of Bishops welcomes the executive order," Bishop Hubbard said. "Together with other religious leaders, we had pressed for this step to protect human dignity and help restore the moral and legal standing of the United States in the world. A ban on torture says much about us - who we are, what we believe about human life and dignity, and how we act as a nation."

**Washington (Jan. 23, 2009) - "It is very disappointing that President Obama has reversed the Mexico City Policy,** which

prevents U.S. funding of organizations that perform and promote abortion as a family planning method in developing nations," stated Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities in a January 23 statement. An Administration that wants to reduce abortions should not divert U.S. funds to groups that promote abortions. "Cardinal Francis George, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, wrote to President-elect Obama last month urging him to retain this policy. His letter can be found on the USCCB Web site at [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org).

