

Gatherings

DIOCESE
of NEW ULM

Office of Religious Education
Office of Youth Ministry

Reflections

October 11, 2007

Dear DREs and Youth Ministers:

From the Religious Education Office:

Bryan Reising

Director of Religious Education & Adult Faith Formation
breising@dnu.org



Catechist Formation Ideas By Bryan Reising

As we enter into the season of fall, we can be overwhelmed by the many responsibilities of religious education: ACRE assessments, Virtus trainings for both the catechists and the children, and making sure the children are getting ample time for their curriculum. So where can we squeeze in time for catechist formation? All of these can be very demanding on our time. Therefore, as we schedule our year, we need to take into account all of the necessary things we need to do.

Look at your entire year, and determine how many classes are needed in order to have as complete a curriculum as possible. Then look at the other necessary gatherings with both your catechists and your students: ACRE and IFG, assessments for the students and for the adults; Virtus trainings for catechists and the touching safety program for students; special events; catechists meetings and formation gatherings. After looking at all these factors, then schedule the time you need.

One idea for catechist formation is *Into the Fields* published by Twenty-Third Publications. *Into the Fields* has three components: a spirituality component, a content component (using *The Growing Faith Project*), and a methodology component. *Into the Fields* has three books that can span over 3-4 years. I would suggest that the content component, *The Growing Faith Project*, which uses themes from the Catechism, be done as the adult faith formation for the

parish in general. It can be done in small Christian communities or even parish-wide opportunities. Keep in mind that once a parish purchases *Growing Faith*, it can make unlimited copies for its adult participants. Then the other two components can be done with just the catechists. This can be done with your regular meetings with your catechists in addition to looking at the actual curriculum. Perhaps it can be done at another time, like a retreat/workshop. This resource is in Spanish as well. For further information, the following is their website:

<http://www.intothefields.org/>.

Another idea is the use of *Echoes of Faith* co-produced by RCL/Benziger and NCCL. We currently have the video version in our Media Center. They are a video-assisted process of learning about the faith. It is ideal to have a facilitator, perhaps a catechetical leader or other pastoral leader, to lead and guide catechists through the booklet and video. They cover topics such as the sacraments, the creed, the Scriptures, and morality. Like *The Growing Faith Project*, these can be done in conjunction with adult faith formation in general. In addition, they have specific curriculum for catechists and methods curriculum for catechists of specific grades. This resource is in Spanish as well. For further information, the following is their website: <http://www.rclweb.com/html/productSamples/eofPage/eof.html>.

There are magazines that are for catechists that help with their formation. Peter Li Education Group publishes *Catechist* magazine. In its latest issue, their articles include "Advice for DREs: A Parent Contract," "A Classroom Prayer Service for All Souls," and "Bringing the Saints Alive through Arts and Crafts." Their website is: <http://www.peterli.com/cat/index.shtm>.

Religion Teacher's Journal (RTJ) is published by Twenty-Third Publications. Within its current issues, you can find among its articles: "Catholic Community is Possible (Catholic Identity)" in the October issue. Among the November/December issue, there are: "Help Families Pray during Advent," "Get to Know

Our Lady of Guadalupe,” and “A New Way of Teaching Christmas.” Their website is: <http://www.religionteachersjournal.com/CurrentIssue.php>.

The ACRE and IFG can be tools to help you determine what you need to focus on regarding catechist formation. Whatever area that you need improvement upon, that is the area of focus for the coming year with both your catechists and students.

Finally, there are resources that are specifically written for catechists.

- Barb Garding and Diane Pyka used a wonderful resource with their catechists in Spicer called *How Each Child Learns: Using Multiple Intelligence in Faith Formation* by Bernadette P. Stankard and published by Twenty-Third Publications.
- You may want to consider purchasing *The Catechist's Toolbox* by Joe Paprocki. It is published by Loyola Press: www.loyolabooks.org.
- Paulist Press has the *Catechist's Guide* series, which has a variety of helpful books: www.paulistpress.com.
- Twenty-Third also has the *Jump Starts for Catechists* series: www.twentythirdpublications.com. These are very helpful as well.

Your catechists for your adults will need formation as well. For example, those who are on your RCIA team, those who give special presentations to adults, or even facilitators in small Christian communities can all use opportunities for formation. The above resources can be very helpful. *Echoes of Faith* has a specific DVD and booklet on adult faith formation. In addition, the following are important resources for adults working with adults: the Scriptures (St. Mary's Press has a very good college study edition), United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Depending on the topic, there are many other supplemental resources. Just ask the Office of Adult Faith Formation for ideas.

Show your appreciation for your catechists at various times during the year. Occasionally provide a meal in their honor, and send a special thank you for their services during Thanksgiving and at the end of the year. Perhaps, have students create a gift for their catechists at Christmas or at the end of the year. It is important that you affirm your catechists for the gifts of their time and talents.

You will find that if you give attention to the formation and the appreciation of your catechists, they will give extra to ensure an optimum catechetical experience for

our young people. They will have more confidence and enthusiasm as they share the faith. In addition, they will take the time to build up relationships with the parents and guardians of their students. Then, your religious education, your faith formation will be transformed from being overwhelmed to a balanced schedule that includes all that is necessary for formation.

Safe Environment Training

Virtus Trainings have been scheduled throughout the Diocese of New Ulm this fall. Please see below the list of remaining dates and places. This is for all paid parish and school staff, catechists, youth ministers, and all volunteers who will be unsupervised with children and youth.

In addition, the week of October 21, 2007 is Safe Environment Week. Please do your training with your children and youth that week or near that week. Thank you!

VIRTUS Safe Environment Training Sessions Fall 2007

Date	Time	Location
10/11/2007	3:30 p.m.	Springfield - St. Raphael
10/13/2007	9:30 a.m.	Watkins - St. Anthony
10/23/2007	3:30 p.m.	Bird Island - St. Mary
10/25/2007	6:30 p.m.	Glencoe - St. Pius X
10/27/2007	9:30 a.m.	St. Peter - St. Peter
10/29/2007	7:00 p.m.	Litchfield - St. Philip
11/09/2007	9:00 a.m.	Bird Island - St. Mary TEC 1 closed session
01/18/2008	9:00 a.m.	New Ulm - St. Mary TEC 2 closed session
02/15/2008	9:00 a.m.	Winsted - Holy Trinity TEC 3 closed session
04/11/2008	9:00 a.m.	New Ulm - St. Mary TEC 4 closed session
06/20/2008	9:00 a.m.	Bird Island - St. Mary TEC 5 closed session
08/01/2008	9:00 a.m.	Winsted - Holy Trinity TEC 6 closed session

Revised 8/02/07

Is Catholicism Still Relevant?"

Matthew Kelly

Church of St. Mary, New Ulm

October 24, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

Matthew Kelly, international author and speaker on Catholicism and Discipleship, will give a presentation on “Is Catholicism Still Relevant?” It will be at the Church of St. Mary in New Ulm, Wednesday, October 24, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. For further information call 507-354-9500.

Children's Initiation Institute

October 26-27

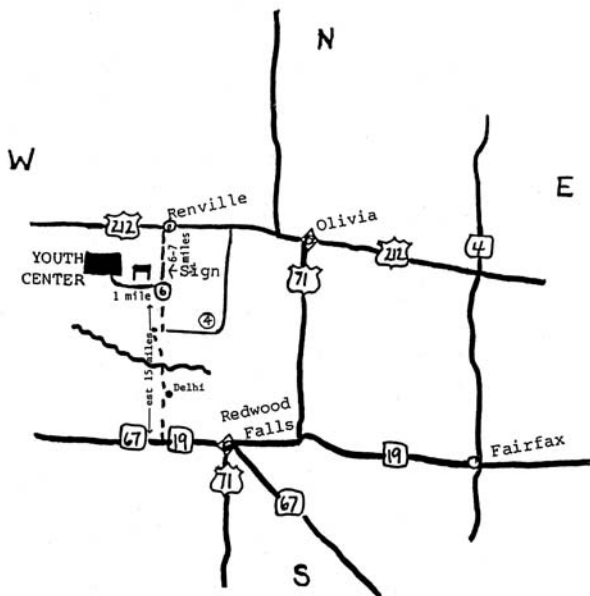
in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul & Minneapolis

For further information, contact the North American Forum for the Catechumenate at 1- 202-884-9758.

Upcoming Gatherers

October 29 – 10:00-3:00 p.m. at the Center for Youth Ministry - Harcourt will sponsor our Gather. Our guest speaker will be Sr. Joyce Miller, OP, a catechetical expert from the Twin Cities. Her theme will be “The Pursuit of Happiness/Happiness.” Please **RSVP to Cindy Blickem** if you plan to attend 507-233-5325 or cblickem@dnu.org

On December 3, we will feature Sr. Anna Marie Reha, SSND. She will speak to us about Religious Education/Youth Ministry and Hispanic Ministry.



Parish Catechesis Questions

- Share your Advent and Christmas ideas that you will do in your Religious Education/Youth Ministry programs. What family traditions are celebrated? For example, do you have Mexican, German, Czech, Belgian families?
- How do you incorporate music in your Religious Education and Youth Ministry?

Adult Faith Formation Gathering

We will gather for a potluck lunch and meeting on Tuesday, October 30, 2007, for a gathering of those who work with Adult Faith Formation. It will be held at Sacred Heart Church in Franklin on East Main Street. We can eat at 12 noon and begin our meeting afterwards. Please RSVP, bring food to share, and resources to share. Call Bryan or Cindy at 1-507-359-2966 or e-mail Cindy at cblickem@dnu.org to RSVP by October 26.

From the Youth Ministry Office:

Sr. Margaret McHugh, DSMP

Director of Youth Ministry & Vocation Awareness
mmchugh@dnu.org



Powerless or Powerful?



If you could be a superhero, who would you choose to be and what powers would you have?

Caution: Your answer to this question might reveal your own sense of power and powerlessness or maybe your deepest fears and desires.

According to Wikipedia, a “**superhero** (also known as a **super-hero**) is fictional character "of unprecedented, physical prowess dedicated to acts of derring-do in the public interest.” The characteristics of a superhero are extraordinary power or abilities, relevant skills and or advanced equipment, a strong moral code, a motivation (or personal calling), a secret identity, a distinctive costume, an underlying motif, a supporting cast, a number of enemies and a headquarters.

Have you *even* counted the number of recent superhero movies? *Batman Begins*, *Batman Returns*, *Spiderman I, II and III*, *Transformers*, *The Incredibles*, *X-Men* and *Unbreakable*, just to name a few... We’re living in an incredible era of superheroes!

Just lately, I’ve been wondering what fuels this interest in superheroes. I’ve questioned whether the events of 911 have awakened a need for a Savior, Defender, and Protector in all of us. Or do we just long to make a difference and be a hero for someone else? Or does the lack of *real* role models and heroes feed our thirst for a “virtual” hero?

This month’s reflection on superheroes, power, and powerlessness comes from my own personal experience. During the past few weeks, I’ve been struggling with my own sense of powerlessness. My mother, a very ambitious and energetic LPN in her late sixties, just received a terminal diagnosis. It’s been an emotional rollercoaster for our whole family. I’ve felt exceptionally powerless to make any difference at all in this situation.

As I prayed and reflected on my own sense of powerlessness, a phrase from Scripture began to come to mind. I remembered how Jesus sent His Apostles

out on mission, but not without giving them power and authority to do the job (Mark 6:7 and Mt. 28:18-19). Typing the word “power” in the Bible Gateway site to look up the verse, I discovered *pages* of citations in both New and Old Testament referring to God’s power. There literally seemed no end or limit to God’s power!

“Are we really so powerless after all? Am I a helpless child in the face of all this? What “powers” do I have?” As I reflected, it became clearer that we actually do have a lot going for us... For example, as baptized Christians, we have the power to call God “Our Father” and live as His child, a child of the King. I have the power of faith to know that God is in charge and He will take care of me.

We have the power to make the Sign of the Cross. The Sign of the Cross, *alone*, serves an opening to God, a renewal of Baptismal faith, a mark of discipleship, an aid to an acceptance of suffering, a defense against the devil, and a victory over self-indulgence ([The Sign of the Cross](#) by Bert Ghezzi).

I have the power to trust in His promise. I have the power to pray and read God’s Word, to attend Mass, and pray in community. I have the power to ask others to join me in prayer. I have the power to love and show kindness to those around me, treating them with the respect and dignity they deserve. I have the power to work and serve so as to build up my family, community, and Church.

As I read the list of Scripture quotations, a few of them jumped out at me as very personal messages. In Ephesians 6:10, Paul exhorts us (and me), “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.” Then, in 2 Timothy 1:7, “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power, of love, and self discipline.” Lastly, in 2 Peter 1:3, “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness.”

Closing God’s Word, I no longer had the feeling of being alone and powerless but a sense of being empowered and accompanied. I’m realizing now that I am neither a superhero nor a helpless child. But I know my Superhero’s *name and His power at work in me*. I know the One whom I’ve trusted and I know His power to be trustworthy.



Senior High Rally October 21, 2007 Cathedral H.S. in New Ulm from 1-7

Box Lunch

If you would like to order some lunch now – so that you can have lunch when you arrive in New Ulm for the Senior High Youth Rally on Sunday, October 21, please e-mail Bryan Reising at breising@dnu.org or call at 507-233-5324.

This is for a fundraiser for those in the New Ulm area who are attending the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC).

The choices are as follows:

1. Pepperoni Roll with Mozzarella
2. Ham and Swiss Roll
3. Turkey and Co-Jack Roll

They will also come with a drink, chips, and a cookie, or other dessert. The cost is \$5 each.

Please place your order by Mon, October 15, 2007. These will be available for pick up at the Holy Trinity Middle School Cafeteria at 12:00 noon (across the street from the High School on Center Street between State and Washington)

Opportunity for Reconciliation

Two priests will be available.

Cathedral: Noon to 1:00 p.m.

High School: 3:00-3:25 & 5:45-6:45

Opportunity for Adoration

Adult “Prayer Warriors” are needed between the hours of 12 noon to 2:30 p.m. in the Cathedral.

Snack will be served in the Gym.

Supper will be served in both Leifeld Hall and the Middle School Cafeteria because two areas are needed to accommodate the lunch crowd. Groups will be dismissed by section locations in the Gym. Additional bathrooms are available in both locations.

NET Team

We’re very pleased to have NET Team # 6 with us to help animate the crowd and assist in smooth traffic flow.

Break-out Session with Amanda Vernon

Amanda will be sharing her music and testimony in the Middle School Gym (across the street from the High School) from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. You can expect a fun high-energy performance from this talented young woman.

A Message from Bob Halligan and Ceili Rain

Well fall has officially arrived, which means that strange holiday called HALLOWEEN is just around the corner. We’ve noticed in our travels that folks have already decorated their houses, stores are advertising their costumes...and everywhere you look there is CANDY...It’s everywhere...chocolate, chocolate,

chocolate! It's in the grocery store, it's in the drugstore, it's at the farmers market too...what an obsession we have with chocolate! It only seems fitting that we promote a song from our current CD-
Whatever Makes You Dance...



IF GOD WAS CHOCOLATE!

Sure gives you something to think about while you are chomping down that Nestle's bar...

Now if you happen to be chomping down that candy bar in a ballpark somewhere during the Major League Baseball Playoffs, we sure hope you'll be thinking about the CEILI RAIN tune titled THIS IS OCTOBER from the CD titled CHANGE IN YOUR POCKET. Of course you can get this CD here--but if you just want that song...whoohoo go to ITUNES! It's quick, simple and sits nicely on the IPOD playlist! Pull out that ITUNES gift card you got last year in your trick or treat bag or Christmas stocking and download the tune today! This song is a great tribute to many famous ballplayers throughout history. At ITUNES just type in THIS IS OCTOBER or CEILIRAIN or CHANGE IN YOUR POCKET...so many options!

One other little ditty about October...it's the 8th Annual UNITY AWARDS presented by the UCMVA. Of course CEILI RAIN has been tremendously blessed in the past and we don't know what will happen this year but it's sure nice to report that Bob and the boys are nominated in 9 categories this year! "They like us. They really like us!" We'll keep you posted on the results!

Lots of cool stuff coming up soon including NCYC! WOW! Check back often to stay connected!

Hugs all around!
BHJR and The Ceili Kids

NCYC 2007: Columbus, OH November 6-11, 2007

Tuesday, November 6, is less than one month away! Before you know it, we'll all be on our way to NCYC... Just a few updates before we hit the road:

Chaperones

I will be carrying copies of Form F and G that each of you filled out and sent to us for NCYC. However, **I would really appreciate if each chaperone would bring two copies of Form F and G for each of the youth for which they are responsible.** One copy would be for each of their charges to carry on their person and the second copy would be carried by their respective chaperones. In case of emergency, the information would be readily available

Cell Phones

A number of people have asked what our protocol is with youth and cell phones. Our first priority is safety and that our kids make the most of the NCYC opportunity. It would be a good idea to talk to your youth about limiting cell phone usage to home calls. For example, all cell phones should be OFF during Mass and conferences. This includes text messaging. It might even be a good idea to have one cell phone per group each day for emergency use only. Remind your kids that if they are on the phone the whole time, they won't have the opportunity to meet new friends and enjoy NCYC.

Other Electronic Devices

NCYC is not the place to bring expensive electronic devices. If young people want to bring their Ipods, headsets, or personal CD players to listen to on the bus or in the hotel room, that's fine, but bringing these items to the Convention Center is not appropriate.

NCYC T-shirts

Our Kelly green NCYC shirts have been delivered and we have them ready for you! Please contact Cindy Blickem to finalize delivery arrangements for your group. Remember, **Friday, November 9, is the Region 8 Mass and the day to wear our diocesan shirts.** Region 8 needs to see that the Diocese of New Ulm still sends the largest group!

NCYC "Trading Items"?!

Besides Oriental Trading, Catholic Direct and Autom, U.S. Toy might be a good website to visit for inexpensive trading items. I noticed fishing lure and mini-knitted glove keychains at a reasonable price on their site.

NCYC Bus Departure

Just a quick FYI - We just talked to the bus company and will be sending out the updated departure times to each group. We had thought departure at 9:00 p.m., but in order to get through Chicago at a **good** time we will have to depart at least 2 hours earlier.

NCYC 2007 Program

The program for NCYC 2007 is already posted on the Federation's website. For more information, visit:

www.nfcym.org/ncyc/2007/program/index.htm

You'll also notice that the concurrent sessions and workshop begin in the afternoon. The General Sessions are all in the morning from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, November 7: Opening Mass

I'll be asking if Fr. Timmerman, Fr. Hesse, and Fr. Huberty can say Mass for us after everyone is showered and dressed from the waterpark, possibly around 10:00 p.m. right in our hotel.

Thursday, November 8:

- We planned a later wake-up call, a little more time to sleep, and a later start for most of us in the hotel. The NCYC Theme Park opens at noon and we were planning to have everyone bussed downtown at about eleven so you can do your own lunch.

The Thematic Park is open from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Thursday. I highly recommend a visit of several hours on the first day.

- I've heard from a few groups regarding their Thursday morning plans and we will try to accommodate these on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- **Fr. Craig Timmerman is going to the Josephinum Seminary for lunch on Thursday and has invited any interested young men to join him.** This is one of the most prestigious seminaries in the country and is set in particularly beautiful location. Our newest priest, Fr. Paul Timmerman, attended seminary here. Please mention this to your young men and contact Fr. Craig if anyone is interested. We'll mention this again at the Wednesday evening Mass.
- NCYC daily liturgy is scheduled for 4:30 p.m.

Friday, November 9:

- Please wear your Kelly Green diocesan t-shirt on Friday!
- We'll be leaving the hotel a little earlier on Friday morning so we can arrive in time for the 9:00 a.m. Prayer and General Session.
- Region 8 Mass is planned for 5:00 p.m. More information to follow...
- Friday night is also the night to pack up all your gear since we have to load everything into the buses with us in the morning.

Saturday, November 10:

- We leave the hotel with all of our luggage and baggage since most of you are checking out at that time.
- The Diocese has reservations for everyone at Gordon Biersch restaurant in downtown Columbus

from 10:00-12:00 noon. No alcohol will be served in the restaurant during our visit. Archbishop Nienstedt will be able to join us and this will be a great diocesan gathering.

- Bus departure is immediately after the closing Mass Saturday evening.

Preparing for NCYC & Internalizing the Experience Afterwards

What kind of preparation are you doing for NCYC? Getting together for fundraising is a good beginning, but it's not enough. It is *so important* to talk about what NCYC is, why you're going, what you'll see in Columbus, what your youth can expect. Have you asked your young people what *they* are hoping to give to and get from the experience? Have you considered asking youth who've attended NCYC in past years to talk about their experience and share this with the others? Talking about it, praying about it, and being "sent out" is all part of the immediate preparation.

In the most recent NCYC information packet we mailed out, we included three preparation sessions and two Prayer Services which can be used for this purpose. Consider asking your Pastor to use one of the Blessing of Pilgrims from the *Book of Blessings* as a send-off for your NCYC kids. Or ask if he could say Mass for your group and have an evening meal together as a group before departure.



The next **Riverbend TEC** retreat is November 10-12 in [Bird Island, MN](#). For more information, check the TEC website at www.riverbendtec.org.

Junior High Festival * April 13, 2008

Jesse Manibusan will be the keynote speaker at the 2008 Junior High Festival at the Canby Public High School on April 13, 2008. Please mark your calendars and spread the word!



Mark Your Rel Ed / Youth Ministry Calendars for 2007-08

Sun, Oct 21	Sr High Rally	1:00-7:00	New Ulm, Cathedral High School
Wed, Oct 17-Tues, Nov 6	NET Team in our Diocese		Various Locations
Mon, Oct 29	Gather for DREs & Youth Ministers	10:00-3:00	Center for Youth Ministry
Tues, Nov 6-Sun, Nov 11	NCYC		Columbus, OH
Sat, Nov 17-Sun, Nov 18	50th Year Anniversary of the Establishment of the Diocese of New Ulm		
Mon, Dec 3	Gather for DREs & Youth Ministers	10:00-3:00	Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Jan 7	Gather for DREs & Youth Ministers	10:00-3:00	Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Feb 4	Gather for DREs & Youth Ministers	10:00-3:00	Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Mar 10	Gather for DREs & Youth Ministers	10:00-3:00	Center for Youth Ministry
Mon, Apr 7	Gather for DREs & Youth Ministers	10:00-3:00	Center for Youth Ministry
Sun, Apr 13	Jr High Festival	1:00-7:00	Canby Public High School
Mon, May 19	DRE Spring Fling	Noon-4:00	Victorian Inn, Hutchinson