

THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 32 No. 3 December 2017

Immigration Sunday MN

Share the Journey #sharejourney

The annual Immigration Sunday will be celebrated on Jan. 7, 2018, the Feast of Our Lord's Epiphany. This year's commemoration coincides with the "Share the Journey" campaign, a two-year migration campaign that launched on Sept. 27, 2017. Learn more at www.mncatholic.org/advocacyarea/immigration-sunday-mn/.

More than 100 youth from diocese attend national youth conference

by Natalie Hoefler,
The Criterion

INDIANAPOLIS – The sound of more than 20,000 teens screaming and singing along with the raucous music of Christian hip-hop band TobyMac was loud.

The sound of the same number of youths in silent prayer was deafening.

These external and internal forms of praise formed bookends to the opening general session of the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) Nov. 16, 2017, at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

After two hours of music, entertainment – including cultural

dancing by the Vietnamese Eucharistic Youth Movement – and an entrance procession of banners from each diocese present, the participants were greeted by Archbishop Charles C. Thompson of Indianapolis.

The biennial conference draws some 20,000 Catholic teenagers from across the country. One hundred ten youth and twenty-seven adults from five area faith communities in the Diocese of New Ulm were among this year's NCYC participants.

Chris Stefanick, an internationally acclaimed author, speaker, and founder of Real Life Catholic, used humor and life experience to speak about the reality of who we are and of God's love for each person.



Youth from the Diocese of New Ulm were a part of the procession into Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis on Nov. 16 for the opening session of the National Catholic Youth Conference. Pictured in their specially designed orange t-shirts are: front (l-r) Shelby Moenkedick, Harley Anez, Rachel Swanson, and Mateo Marin Mera. Back: Emily Malmgren and Theo Kulzer. (Photo by Natalie Hoefler/The Criterion)

He spoke of the "love story" upon which the Catholic faith is founded. "When you remove the love story, what are you left with?" he asked. "Rules that we have to follow. Rituals that we're not sure why we keep them alive but they take a lot of time. Doctrines that have nothing to do with your life. That's how the world has come to see Catholicism. ... The world has forgotten the love story, and so often we've forgotten the love story."

"That story," he said, "begins very simply with the words '(I) believe in one God.'"

So many youths today choose not to believe, he said. "You say there's no God?" Stefanick

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Christians continue to aid hurricane-devastated Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO – In the aftermath of the Category 4 Hurricane Maria that tore through Puerto Rico on Sept. 20, 2017, the rebuilding process is slow. Catholic aid groups continue to work to provide supplies to those who desperately need them.

On Nov. 10, Catholic Charities USA presented \$2 million in additional aid to Caritas de Puerto Rico, the Catholic Charities agency on the island. This money follows the \$1.5 million in funds given by Catholic Charities USA shortly after the hurricane struck the island.

Puerto Rican authorities have estimated the cost of damages at up to \$95 billion.

Many residents are still in need of food and clean drinking water.



A man shovels dirt near a destroyed building Oct. 21, 2017, in Utuato, Puerto Rico. The town was devastated by Hurricane Maria. (photo by Bob Roller/Catholic News Service)

More than half the population of Puerto Rico is Catholic. While some churches were destroyed by the hurricane, many of those that survived have become safe

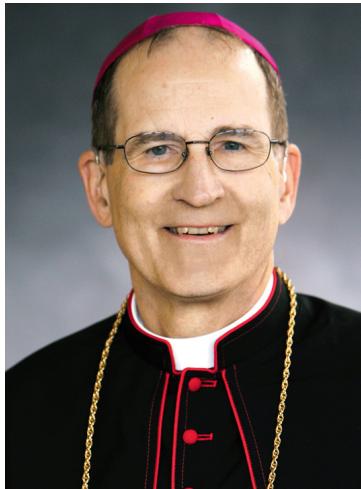
havens for the Puerto Rican people. Caritas de Puerto Rico has set up locations in Catholic churches across the country to hand out food, water, and hygiene

supplies.

In a November 2 statement, Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Fla., Chair of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, and Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Anchorage, Alaska, chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions, called on Catholics and people of good will across the United States to remember those who continue to suffer in Puerto Rico and surrounding islands.

To learn more about relief for the people of Puerto Rico, please visit: www.usccb.org/catholic-giving/opportunities-for-giving/emergency-collections-and-disaster-relief.cfm.

Cur Deus homo (Why God became man)



by Bishop John M. LeVoir

The Church is now in the season of Advent. The word “advent” means “coming.” In the Church, Advent is the liturgical season during which we wait for the coming of Jesus’ birthday and prepare ourselves to celebrate it with joy. The people of the Old Testament waited thousands of years for the coming of the Savior. Finally, our Savior, Jesus Christ (the second person of the Blessed Trinity, who became man), was born. We celebrate the birthday of Jesus, our Savior, on Christmas Day.

One of the questions that has fascinated Christians through the centuries since the birth of Jesus is: Why did God become man? I remember reading a treatise by St. Anselm of Canterbury

(1033–1109) entitled *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God Became Man). Anselm wrote compellingly about the topic.

Why did God the Son become one of us? The Nicene Creed tells us: “For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.” So, it was for us and for our salvation that God became human without ceasing to be God.

It can be said that there are three things that Jesus does for us and for our salvation by becoming human. First of all, he reveals to us our identity, that is, who we are. Second, he reveals to us our proper activity, that is, to love. Third, he helps us to love as he loved. Let’s take each one of these, one at a time.

First, Jesus reveals to us our identity. Sin has obscured significantly the knowledge that we have of ourselves and our dignity. We need to have our identity revealed to us in a clear and powerful manner, so that we know how precious we are. Jesus does that for us.

How is he able to reveal to us our identity? It is because Jesus is God the Son. Being God the Son, Jesus Christ is the perfect image of God the Father (uncreated,

consubstantial with the Father as the Creed professes). On the other hand, we are created by God in his image. All of us, as men and women created in the image of God, have the divine image in us. It is Jesus, as true God and true man, and the perfect image of God, who reveals us to ourselves and makes us fully manifest to ourselves. “Christ, ... in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, makes man fully manifest to himself and brings to light his exalted vocation” (CCC, no. 1701).

The more we pay attention to Jesus, the perfect image of God, the more we get to know ourselves as persons created in the image of God. Jesus is the perfect image of God and we are persons created in his image. It is in Jesus that we see ourselves brought to perfection.

Second, it is Jesus who manifests to us how we should act. Jesus is our example and our model. “In all of his life Jesus presents himself as our model. He is ‘the perfect man,’ who invites us to become his disciples and follow him” (CCC, no. 520). “In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear” (CCC, no. 359).

Being the perfect image of God,

that is, God himself, Jesus is love. So, the activity proper to us as persons created in the image of God is to love. Love is the giving of ourselves to others for the true good of the others. This is the way that Jesus loved and the way that we should love. “Jesus is the model for the Beatitudes and the norm of the new law: ‘Love one another as I have loved you.’ This love implies an effective offering of oneself, after his example” (CCC, no. 459).

Third, Jesus helps us to love as he loves us. We need Jesus’ help because we have been weakened by sin, both Original Sin and our own sins. It is sanctifying grace (God’s life in us), received in the sacraments, that helps us to love as Jesus loves. Due to the Paschal Mystery, that is, the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ, Jesus saves us and grace is made available to us. In the sacraments, Jesus meets us and gives us grace.

Sanctifying grace helps us to prevail in our spiritual battles, to overcome the consequences of Original Sin, and to be victorious over our own personal sins. Our likeness to God is restored by grace (CCC, no. 705). By the power of sanctifying grace, we are enabled and strengthened to reflect God in what we think, and say, and do. Grace enables us to imitate the perfect image of

God, Jesus Christ. Imitating Jesus constitutes the moral life, and through the power of sanctifying grace, we grow more loving in our relationship with God and our neighbor by imitating Jesus.

It is important to note, however, that: “It is impossible to keep the Lord’s commandment [that you love one another, even as I have loved you] by imitating the divine model from outside; there has to be a vital participation, coming from the depths of the heart, in the holiness and the mercy and the love of our God. Only the Spirit by whom we live can make ‘ours’ the same mind that was in Christ Jesus” (CCC, no. 2842).

So, it was for us and for our salvation that God became human without ceasing to be God. First of all, he reveals to us our identity. Second, he reveals to us our proper activity, that is, to love. Third, he helps us to love as he loved. In many ways, this is the meaning of Christmas. This is what we are waiting for in joyful expectation.

May you and yours have a most blessed Christmas and a happy new year.

Bishop LeVoir’s December calendar can be found at www.dnu.org/calendar/.

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Faith in the Public Area

Saint Francis: Tough words for lawmakers and citizens alike

by Rachel Herbeck

St. Francis of Assisi is a beloved saint to many, but often a mischaracterized one. Usually shown with animals, the mainstream vision of Francis is tame and gentle. However, St. Francis was an intense and radical preacher, consumed with zeal for the Kingdom of God and intent on relaying the truth to others, including Muslim sultans.

Toward the end of his life, St. Francis wrote a letter to all the rulers and leaders of the people that was not only powerful at the time, but provides us with lessons on how to be better citizens and lawmakers. In the letter, he urges leaders to not forget the Lord and his commandments or they will be cursed, put aside all cares of the world and receive the body and blood of Jesus, and to give

God praise and thanksgiving or render an account to God on the day of judgement.

St. Francis’ words remind us that, like him, we must enter into the public arena to be of service to our public servants. We must remind them of their obligations and the lofty calling of politics – what Pope Francis called one of the highest forms of charity.

Civic leaders need friends

For citizens, St. Francis sets an example of a way we can relate to our legislators. He wrote these words because he had genuine care for the people to whom he was writing. He did not see them as far away or above him, but as people with whom he had a responsibility to befriend and call to holiness.

His letter is not a laundry list of

policy recommendations. Instead, it reminds leaders of the need to keep the commandments and of the judgment to which they are ultimately subject due to their grave responsibilities.

While it may not be prudent to rush out to remind our legislators about the reality of Hell, as St. Francis did, his letter does encourage us to also consider more fully our relationships with legislators. We want to follow the lead of St. Francis and have relationships with our legislators that aren’t utilitarian. As we participate in advocacy, we must not see those in office merely as people who can get us what we want, viewing our interactions with them as solely “transactional.”

Instead, we need to strengthen and encourage those representing

us in office. We can be a resource for them in the community, and we can pray for them. We need to remind them why they are doing their jobs, who they represent, and the good that they can do. And then thank them when they do it.

Our support, not just our demands, as constituents can help our legislators make good and right decisions. And though we don’t ask rulers to remind the people to pray, as Francis did, we can ask them to enact policies that uphold human dignity and foster the common good, which creates the conditions for people and communities to flourish.

Servants, not masters

For lawmakers, the words of St. Francis are a reminder that they are servants. Servants of the

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Youth urged to remember they're 'beloved children of God, called by name'

(Continued from page 1)

asked. "That's like a flea not believing in the dog. That's like a kid coming down on Christmas morning and seeing presents under the tree and saying, 'Oh look! Presents! They must have exploded themselves here!' ... Just so, the universe did not put itself here, and the more we learn about the universe, the more it shouts to us about the existence of God."

And because God's love created us, he said, no other form of love will satisfy.

"We feel so small in this world," he told the crowd that came from as far away as Hawaii and Alaska. "We feel so insignificant in this universe."

"I think God looks down from heaven and says, 'You are huge next to all this.' As big as a mountain is, can it know someone? As big as an ocean is, can it make a choice? As big as a galaxy is, can it choose to love? No, but you can. ... You're a huge deal!"

But because of human rejection of God, Stefanick continued, sin and brokenness entered the world. To applause and shouts of "Amen!" he modified the words of John 3:16 to note that therefore, "God so loved you that he gave his only Son." Whoa. ..."

"This love story [which continues in the sacraments, Stefanick noted] doesn't just show you who God is. It shows you who you are."

Fr. Joseph Espailat, a priest of the Archdiocese of New York who was one of the evening's



Among the broad array of opportunities offered at the National Catholic Youth Conference, many youth made it a priority to experience God's mercy in the sacrament of penance. Pictured, Bishop William F. Medley of Owensboro, Ky., speaks on Nov. 17 with a NCYC participant during the sacrament of penance celebrated in a large conference room in the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. Dozens of priests and bishops heard confession for hours during the conference.

(Photo by Sean Gallaghers/The Criterion)

emcees, led the more than 20,000 present through a period of silent prayer to close.

He suggested using the word "pray" as an acronym to guide their prayer – "P" for praising God, "R" for repenting of sins, "A" for asking God for needs rather than wants, and "Y" for yielding to his will.

It was this prayer time, more than any of the evening's other events, that most affected Abby White of the Diocese of Covington, Kentucky. "I thought it was really powerful," she said of the quiet time. "I like saying that you're sorry to God. It's been awhile since I've been to confession, and I really want to go to confession this weekend. I felt like that

[prayer time] empowered me to want to go."

While Abby has attended NCYC before, Garrett Randel of Seneca, Kansas, was exuberant with the joy of one experiencing the event for the first time. "I thought it was really cool," he said of the opening session. "The speaker was really inspiring. I thought it was one of the best experiences I've had in my Catholic faith."

Caitlin Dusenbury of the Diocese of Lansing, Mich., couldn't agree more. The NCYC first-timer's eyes lit up and a smile brightened her face when she spoke of her experience that evening. "I really like it so far," she told *The Criterion*, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. "It's impacted me a lot. I've never seen so many Catholics together."

"The highlight for me was Chris speaking. 'It's not who you are, but whose you are' – that quote stuck with me."

Editor's Note: Natalie Hoefler is a reporter at The Criterion, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. For complete coverage of the 2017 NCYC visit www.archindy.org/criterion/local/2017/11-24/issue.html.

Sr. Marian Kemper, OSB dies at age 87



Sr. Marian Kemper, OSB

Sr. Marian Kemper, OSB, age 87, died on Nov. 17, 2017, at Saint Scholastica Convent, St. Cloud.

From 1978 to 1984, Sr. Marian served in the Diocese of New Ulm as the principal of St. Anastasia School in Hutchinson. In the late 1980's through August 1990, she served as a parish administrator and later as a pastoral minister at the Church of St. Catherine in Redwood Falls before she was assigned as a parish worker and later a pastoral administrator at the Church of

St. John-Assumption in Faxon Township. From 1999 until 2006, she served as a pastoral administrator at the Church of St. Joseph in Lamberton.

A native of Sauk Centre, Minn., Sister Marian entered the Saint Benedict Monastery, St. Joseph, Minn., on Sept. 12, 1956 and made her first profession on July 11, 1958, and perpetual monastic profession on July 11, 1961.

A graduate of the College of Saint Benedict in St. Joseph, she received a bachelor of arts in social science with a minor in elementary education. She also earned a master of school administration from the University of Notre Dame in Indiana. Sister Marian also attended St. Cloud State University and Alverno College in Milwaukee, Wis.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 22 at Saint Benedict's Monastery, with burial in the monastery cemetery.

Seminarians instituted in the Ministry of Acolyte



St. Paul – Three Diocese of New Ulm seminarians were installed as acolytes on October 30, 2017, at St. Mary's Chapel at the Saint Paul Seminary in St. Paul by Bishop John T. Folda of Fargo. In the second of four formal rites leading up to and culminating in ordination to the priesthood, Theology II seminarians are installed as acolytes by a presiding bishop. The acolyte assists the priests and deacons at the altar and distributes Holy Communion to the faithful at Mass and to the sick. The seminarians have now received both the ministry of lector and acolyte in anticipation of their diaconal, and then priestly, ordination. The seminarians are currently studying at The Saint Paul Seminary. Pictured (l-r) are: seminarians Evan Huebl from St. John the Evangelist, Union Hill, John Hayes from St. Gregory the Great, Lafayette, and Shawn Polman from St. Mary, Cottonwood.

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No Tengas Miedo

Cur Deus Homo (¿Porqué Dios se Hizo Hombre?)

por Obispo John M. LeVoir

Ahora la Iglesia se encuentra en la temporada de Adviento. La palabra “adviento” significa “venida.” En la Iglesia, el Adviento es el tiempo litúrgico en el que esperamos la venida de Jesús y nos preparó para celebrarlo con alegría. El pueblo del antiguo testamento esperó miles de años para la venida del Salvador. Finalmente, nuestro Salvador, Jesucristo (la segunda persona de la Santísima Trinidad, que se hizo hombre), nació. El día de Navidad, celebramos el cumpleaños de Jesús, nuestro Salvador.

Una de las preguntas que ha cautivado a los cristianos a través de los siglos desde el nacimiento de Jesús es: ¿Porqué Dios se hizo hombre? Recuerdo haber leído el tratado de San Anselmo de Canterbury (1033-1109) titulado *Cur Deus Homo* (¿Porqué Dios se hizo hombre?).

¿Porqué Dios, el hijo se hizo hombre? El Credo Niceno nos dice: Por lo tanto, “que por nosotros, los hombres, y por nuestra salvación bajó del cielo, y por obra del Espíritu Santo se encarnó de María, la Virgen, y se hizo hombre.” Entonces, fue por nosotros y para nuestra salvación que Dios llegó a ser hombre sin dejar de ser Dios.

Al hacerse humano, se puede decir que hay tres puntos que Jesús

hace por nosotros y por nuestra salvación. En primer lugar, él revela nuestra identidad, es decir, quiénes somos. En segundo lugar, él revela el amor. Tercero, él nos ayuda a amar, así como él nos ama.

Primero, Jesús revela nuestra identidad. El pecado ha oscurecido considerablemente el conocimiento que tenemos de nosotros mismos y de nuestra dignidad. Necesitamos que nuestra identidad se manifieste de manera clara y contundente, para saber que somos amados en los ojos de Dios.

¿Cómo Él nos puede revelar nuestra identidad? Porque Jesús es Dios, el Hijo, Jesucristo es la imagen perfecta de Dios Padre. Todos nosotros somos creados a imagen de Dios, tiene la imagen divina en nosotros. Es Jesús, como verdadero Dios y verdadero hombre y la imagen perfecta de Dios, tiene la imagen divina en nosotros. “Cristo, ... el nuevo Adán, en la misma revelación del misterio del Padre y de su amor, manifiesta plenamente el hombre al propio hombre y le descubre la grandeza de su vocación” (CCC, no. 1701).

En Segundo lugar, es Jesús quien nos manifiesta cómo debemos actuar. Jesús es nuestro ejemplo y nuestro modelo. “Toda su vida, Jesús se muestra como nuestro modelo. El es el ‘hombre perfecto,’ que nos invita a ser sus discípulos y a seguirle” (CCC,

no. 520). “Realmente, el misterio del hombre solo se esclarece en el misterio del Verbo encarnado” (CCC, no. 359).

Al ser la imagen perfecta de Dios, es decir, el mismo Dios, Jesús es amor. Por lo tanto, la acción adecuada para nosotros como personas creadas a imagen de Dios es amor. El amor es la entrega de nosotros hacia los demás por el bien de nuestro prójimo. Esta es la forma en que Jesús amó y la forma como debemos amar.

En tercer lugar, Jesús nos ayuda a amar como él nos ama. Necesitamos la ayuda de Jesús porque hemos sido debilitados por el pecado, tanto como el pecado original como nuestros propios pecados. Es esta gracia santificante (la vida de Dios en nosotros), recibida en los sacramentos, que nos ayuda a amar como Jesús ama. Debido al Misterio pascual, es decir, la pasión muerte y resurrección de Cristo, Jesús nos salva y la gracia de Dios está disponible. En los sacramentos, Jesús se encuentra con nosotros y nos da la gracia.

La gracia santificante nos ayuda a prevalecer en nuestras batallas espirituales y para superar las consecuencias del pecado original y ser victoriosos sobre nuestros pecados personales. Nuestra semejanza con Dios es restaurada por la gracia (CCC, no. 705). Por el poder de la gracia santificante, estamos habilitados y fortalecidos para reflejar a Dios en nosotros, para imitar la imagen perfecta de Dios, Jesucristo. Imitar a Jesús constituye la vida moral, y a través del poder de la gracia santificante, crecer más amorosamente en nuestra relación con Dios y con nuestro prójimo.

Sin embargo, es importante mencionar que: “Observar el mandamiento del Señor es imposible [que se amen los unos con los otros, así como yo los he amado] si se trata de imitar desde fuera el modelo divino. Se trata de una participación, vital y nacida del fondo del corazón, en la santidad, en la misericordia, y en el amor de nuestro Dios. Sólo el Espíritu que es nuestra vida puede hacer nuestros los mismos sentimientos que hubo en Cristo Jesús. (CCC, no. 2842).

Que usted y los suyos, tengan una Navidad llena de bendiciones y un próspero Año Nuevo.

Lawmakers are servants not masters

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people, but ultimately, servants of God. In a world that is so politically divided and divisive, St. Francis urges lawmakers to remember that ultimate power belongs to God and God alone.

Ultimately, lawmakers and citizens alike can take St. Francis’ words as a challenge to regain a healthy fear of the Lord. St. Francis does not want those in power to forget that while God is a God of perfect love, he is also a God of perfect justice.

Pope Francis describes fear of the Lord as “a joyful awareness of God’s grandeur,” an awareness that reminds us that we are “held accountable to the Just Judge.”

Fear of the Lord convicts and pierces our hearts for what is right, because we know of God’s greatness and power as King. As we deal with legislative issues, let us be convicted to think and act with the mind and heart of God. And then, when prudent, offer yourself as a servant to the servants – providing counsel, prayer, and opportunities to deepen their knowledge of and relationship with the broader community so that they may act for the common good.

Rachel Herbeck is Policy and Outreach Coordinator for the Minnesota Catholic Conference, the public policy voice of the Catholic Church in Minnesota.

Fr. Goggin marks 50 years of service in San Lucas



Fr. John Goggin

On Dec. 8, 2017, Fr. John Goggin marked 50 years of service to San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala, the mission parish of the Diocese of New Ulm. A Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated in San Lucas on Dec. 9.

Born in DeGraff, Minn., Fr. Goggin was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of New Ulm on May 30, 1964, by Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm.

Following ordination, he was assigned as associate pastor at

the Church of St. Anastasia, Hutchinson, for three years. In December of 1967 he accepted the assignment as associate pastor of San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala. In June 2012 he was appointed pastor of the parish by Bishop Gonzalo de Villa y Vasquez of the Diocese of Solola-Chimaltenango.

While in San Lucas, Fr. Goggin took charge of all parish programs in the rural communities and at the plantations, coordinated the catechists, and directed the social and religious projects. He has also been very involved with the Christian Foundation for Children and Aging, a U.S.-based nonprofit that provides nutritional, educational, and medical assistance to the poor in more than 20 countries, including Guatemala.

In 2011 he received the Diocesan Distinguished Service Award for his then – 40 years of service to the mission parish of San Lucas Toliman.

Cross to serve four-year term on MN Nonpublic Education Council



Karla Cross

Karla Cross has been appointed to a four-year term on the Minnesota Nonpublic Education Council, effective Nov. 1, 2017, through Nov. 1, 2021.

The 15 member Minnesota Nonpublic Education Council advises the Commissioner of Education on issues affecting nonpublic education and nonpublic schools.

Cross is currently the director of the Office of Catholic Schools

for the Diocese of New Ulm, a position she has held for the past nine years. She also serves as a coordinator and supervising director of other aspects of the diocese’s work.

Cross, a member of the Church of St. Anastasia in Hutchinson, has experience as an elementary school principal and childcare center director for the Church of St. Anastasia, as well as a social studies teacher in a Minnesota public school setting.

She has a bachelor of science degree from Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, majoring in economics and minoring in political science, with the addition of a secondary school social studies teaching license. She also has a master’s of arts in education from Saint Mary’s University in Winona, and completed further work for educational administration and principal licensure at Saint Mary’s.

Farmer-to-Farmer program bridges the gap in Ugandan agriculture

by Deacon Timothy Dolan

UGANDA, EAST AFRICA -

There is a saying, “Give a man a fish and you will feed him for a day. Show him how to fish and you will feed him for a lifetime.”

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) is a charity organization that works to provide developing countries with sustainable solutions to improve their lives. This international institution started in 1943 when the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops met to offer aid for refugees in World War II. Since then, CRS has influenced the lives of many people.

CRS supports hundreds of transformative projects in more than 100 countries around the world. Some of their work overseas includes improving nutrition, sanitation, and education for communities that need it most. One of their most influential programs in the field of agriculture and sustainability is called “Farmer-to-Farmer” or F2F.

The Farmer-to-Farmer Program promotes sustainable economic growth, food security, and agricultural development worldwide. Volunteer technical assistance from US farmers, agribusinesses, cooperatives, and universities helps developing countries to improve productivity, access new markets, and conserve environmental and natural resources. This people-to-people exchange promotes international goodwill, understanding of US foreign assistance programs, and private involvement in development activities. F2F volunteers work with farmers, producer groups, rural businesses, and service providers to develop local capacity necessary to increase food production and rural incomes, expand economic growth, and address environmental and natural resource management challenges. (Resource: <http://farmertofarmer.crs.org/>)

Being involved in the farming industry and extension service for over 40 years, my life experience and skill set made me a good fit for this program. I was asked to travel to Uganda in late October and provide training to extension staff at the Amugo Agro Technical Institute, which is located near the city of Lira. All expenses would be covered by CRS Farmer-to-Farmer grant funds. With Bishop LeVoir’s blessing, I accepted the invitation and traveled to Uganda

for a two-week volunteer training assignment sharing my life experience with extension staff instructors there.

After arriving at Entebbe Airport around midnight on Sunday, Oct. 29, my first task was to travel by escort to Lira, which was about 340 km (or about 210 miles) for my assignment at Amugo Agro Technical Institute. Amugo is a technical school of agricultural education preparing students for several ag-related careers.

As it turned out, the most challenging part of my trip was the daily ride from Lira to Amugo. Much of the road was red clay and was chockfull of challenges that included pot holes, ruts from heavy truck traffic, washouts, and assorted other interesting obstacles: chickens, cows, goats, people on motorcycles (Boda-Bodas) and bridges that required prayer before crossing. The roads were even more challenging on days that it rained. It was nearing the end of their rainy season yet it rained almost every day.

My work at Amugo involved reviewing the extension module used to educate students who will one day be extension workers. The module is an outline of the many core tasks, competencies, learner outcomes, and necessary preparation for all the challenges extension workers might face in their work with farmers and farm families. The training session that I taught was for staff members at Amugo who are engaged in the work of training students who seek to work for the extension service. The module was fairly compact yet quite comprehensive, and will be used by the staff members at Amugo to instruct future extension workers in Uganda.

Overall, there were ten extension staff members that became my students, but several were absent on occasion due to being sickened by malaria. The warm climate and rain bring mosquitos and with them malaria.

The intensity of the group was impressive. However, there seemed to be one word that kept creeping into our classroom discussion that to me was concerning – “survival!” How do Ugandan farmers get through the dry season?

Drip irrigation the answer

We knew that the Amugo Agro Institute had several ten thousand liter plastic containers available



Deacon Tim Dolan’s volunteer work in Uganda this past October involved reviewing and critiquing the method currently used to educate agricultural students at Amugo Agro Technical Institute, near the city of Lira. Pictured above are five of the ten staff of the institute who studied with Deacon Dolan through the Catholic Relief Services Farmer-to-Farmer program. From what they learn, they will in turn teach students who seek to work for the extension service. (photos by Deacon Tim Dolan)

that could be used to catch rainwater. There were public wells. However, there were few if any private wells. So, it was determined that it would be easier to contain water where it falls.

Uganda receives ample rainwater overall. However, the rains shut off for several months making for a dry period.

As the classroom discussion intensified, the group was optimistic and it was clear that the necessary resources were available to attempt a drip irrigation project.

Through this sustainable use and control of water, plant growth could be accelerated and a better quality of crop could be achieved, including during water stress periods. We came to the conclusion that the drip irrigation project would start as a demonstration project with the target date of late April, 2018.

Prayer life flourishing in Uganda

Although I had a specific task to complete in Uganda, there was always time for prayer. Perhaps the most memorable event for me occurred in Lira on the Sunday prior to my departure for home on Nov. 11.

On the first Sunday of each month in the city, Eucharistic Adoration takes place in the afternoon. Earlier that Sunday morning, I met several of the staff from the group I was conducting training for from Amugo. They were Catholics attending Mass at the Cathedral of Ugandan Martyrs in Lira. Following the Mass,



Not far from Amugo Agro Technical Institute near the city of Lira in Uganda was a public well. Above, a young woman visits the well to fill her container with water for her family’s need for the day. Few families, if any have their own well in rural Uganda. Wells like this one are scattered along the rural roads usually between two and four miles apart.

I was invited to Eucharistic Adoration that afternoon. The Cathedral is limited to around one thousand faithful, so Adoration was held at the church park next to the Cathedral. I was amazed! Even the church park would not be enough space for the overwhelming attendance.

Classroom time ends but training is ongoing

Perhaps two weeks of time for my assignment in Uganda was not adequate, but the extension staff there are very much on task. I remain an ongoing resource to the staff members I trained, and they have already e-mailed me with questions about their

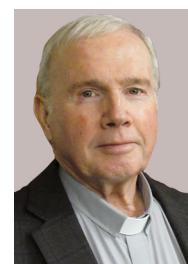
assignment.

At the very core, they are now taking research information they have learned and are putting it in the hands of the people who can benefit from it. Plans are to conduct long distance meetings through April when the irrigation project begins.

Upon returning home from my two-week volunteer experience,

I was grateful for the opportunity to serve our neighbors in Uganda.

Editor’s note: Deacon Timothy Dolan is director of the Office of Social Concerns for the Diocese of New Ulm.



Annual DMA funds ministries of hope, support, and evangelization

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The “kick off” of the 2017 Diocesan Ministries Appeal (DMA) in the parishes in the Diocese of New Ulm was the weekend of Nov. 18-19. The appeal will continue through the end of September 2018, with a goal of \$1,000,000.

“Together We Are One,” the theme of the appeal, is drawn from Sacred Scripture and the words of Jesus. In the 17th chapter of John’s Gospel, Jesus prayed that his disciples would be one, just as he and the Father are one. Applied to the Diocese of New Ulm, Jesus’ words remind us that no parish stands alone and by working together, we can accomplish great things.

I am so grateful for the consistent sacrificial giving of donors to the DMA. If it were not for these gifts, the eight ministries supported by the DMA would either not be possible, or would be greatly diminished. The ongoing success of this annual appeal is so important as it impacts positively the lives of so many people across the 15 counties of the diocese. Gifts to the DMA help to continue the vital spiritual, educational, and service ministries carried out in Our Lord’s name.

The DMA allows your parish to benefit, too. Twenty percent of each dollar you donate will be gifted back to your parish.

Highlighted on page 7 of this issue you will find brief summaries of services provided by each DMA supported ministry. Please note that contributions to the DMA are designated and apportioned to each ministry by a percentage. All donations to the DMA are restricted gifts to be used to support these designated ministries only.

For those who have already given to the DMA, thank you! For those who have yet to give, please prayerfully consider a donation. By working together as one, the possibilities of what we can accomplish are significant. Let us join together in praying with Jesus that all may be one, just as he and the Father are one.

God bless you.

Most Reverend John M. LeVoit
Bishop of New Ulm



Marshall couple sees DMA as an opportunity to serve



Ken and Jan Noyes, members of the Church of St. Mary in Marshall, have been chosen as the 2017-2018 DMA chair couple. Ken is currently in the permanent diaconate formation program in the Diocese of New Ulm. He is looking forward to serving the diocese following his ordination as a deacon in April 2018. Both Ken and Jan have always felt that they need to give back to God what he has given to them. “The DMA is a great opportunity for parishes and the diocese to come together to serve the people in the best way they can for the glory of God,” they said.

It’s not too late to make a pledge

by Christine Clancy
The Prairie Catholic

NEW ULM – The Diocese of New Ulm has set a goal of \$1,000,000 – the same as last year – for its largest annual fundraising effort.

The Diocesan Ministries Appeal (DMA) began in 2006 and since that time DMA contributions have been used to support vital church ministry programs and to aid those in need. The 2017-2018 DMA kicked off in parishes in mid-November.

“With special thanks to all our donors, last year the Diocesan Ministries Appeal brought in \$983,127.65 from approximately 3,173 donors,” said Deacon Mike McKeown, director of the Office of Development.

In the Diocese of New Ulm, there are approximately 25,000 households and 55,000 Catholics within the six regions that make up the diocese. According to Deacon McKeown, the average gift to last year’s DMA was \$310.

Contributions to the DMA are not limited to cash gifts. Gifts such as stocks, bonds, and real estate provide ample giving opportunities, coupled with significant tax savings.

“The annual appeal is a win-win situation for both the diocese and the parish,” said Deacon McKeown. “For every DMA dollar received, 20 percent is gifted back to the donor’s designated parish.”

Last year \$196,625.53 was gifted to parishes. Donors can track online their parish’s weekly progress at www.dnu.org/dma/.

Donors are reminded that all money donated to the diocese through the annual DMA are restricted funds that will only be used to support the eight designated diocesan ministries.

It is not too late to make a pledge to the DMA. Most parishes have envelopes available or you can call the diocesan office at (507) 233-5308, skalow@dnu.org, and an envelope will be sent to you. Contributions can also be made online at www.dnu.org/dma/.

“Every gift, no matter the size is important to help people throughout the Diocese of New Ulm.” said Deacon McKeown.

Editor’s note: Those wanting to know more about the DMA can watch a special video prepared by the diocese at www.dnu.org/dma/.

Together, We Are One



CATHOLIC CHARITIES 24%

- Individual, marriage and family counseling
- Life transition and grief services
- Chemical dependency interventions, conflict resolution, and mediation
- Emergency behavioral health and “psychiatric first response” following tragedies and natural disasters
- Unplanned pregnancy counseling
- Referrals for those researching adoptive history or seeking adoption placement alternatives
- Project Rachel post-abortion counseling and related respect life and post trauma ministry
- Behavioral health presentations
- Community and parish partnerships supporting immigration legal services



YOUTH MINISTRY 16%

- Oversight of the Diocesan Youth Council
- Planning and coordination of Cor Jesu
- Support and guidance for parish youth ministers
- Coordination of participation in national youth gatherings
- Planning and coordination of diocesan summer camps
- Planning and coordination of Totus Tuus
- Coordination of annual visit of the National Evangelization Team
- Assistance and guidance for young adult programs
- Planning and coordination of the Broom Tree Retreat
- Planning and coordination of the Rome Youth Pilgrimage



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS 10.4%

- Support for Catholic schools, ensuring educational quality and Catholic identity
- Assistance for Catholic school administrators
- Annual faith formation day for Catholic school educators
- Development and implementation of the diocesan Plan for Schools
- School strategic planning through a state association for accrediting nonpublic schools
- Standardized student evaluations to monitor and enhance academic performance
- Development of model school policies and promotion of school best practices



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION/ ADULT FAITH FORMATION 9.6%

- Support for parishes and AFCs on evangelization and catechesis
- Formation and network opportunities for DREs and catechists
- Coordination of annual Discipleship Day
- Promotion of online learning opportunities
- Assistance in coordinating the Bishop Lucker Lecture



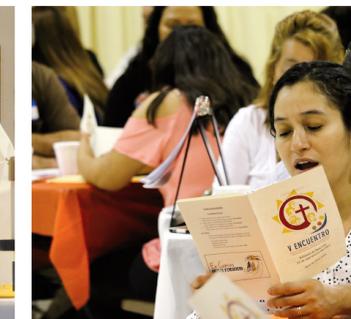
FAMILY LIFE 8%

- Diocesan marriage and remarriage preparation programs
- Integration of John Paul II’s Theology of the Body into religious formation and education
- Coordination of NFP services, fertility awareness, chastity education
- Religious freedom/respect life education and advocacy
- Family life programming, Encourage, and pornography prevention education
- Strengthening of relationships between the bishop and Catholic health care facilities; bioethics consultant



PERMANENT DIACONATE 5.6%

- Recruiting and evaluation of those interested in the permanent diaconate
- Recommendation of aspirants
- Academic and spiritual formation program for diaconal candidates (One year of aspirancy followed by four formation years with academic, spiritual, pastoral, and human development)
- Coordination of the work of the Admissions and Scrutinies Committee
- Ongoing formation of permanent deacons
- Assistance to the bishop in making permanent deacon assignments



HISPANIC MINISTRY 4%

- Support and guidance for diocesan and parish Hispanic ministerial activity
- Implementation of V Encuentro
- Promotion of Church teaching and USCCB positions on issues affecting Hispanics and immigrants



SOCIAL CONCERNS 2.4%

- Promotion of Catholic social teaching, respect for human life, faithful citizenship, works of mercy and justice, sustainable agriculture, and environmental stewardship
- Coordination of the diocesan Social Concerns Committee and development of AFC social concerns committees
- Administration of the diocesan Emergency Assistance Fund to assist people affected by natural disasters
- Support and monitoring of local participation in the USCCB’s Catholic Campaign for Human Development

Twenty percent of each dollar you give to the DMA is a gift from you to your parish.

Winthrop parish celebrates sharing God's love for over 75 years

by Katie Ballalatak
Prairie Catholic Correspondent

WINTHROP – Past and present members of the Church of St. Francis de Sales in Winthrop came together on Sunday, Nov. 19, 2017, to celebrate its 75th anniversary with worship, music, and plenty of fellowship.

The day consisted of morning Mass, a social hour, a luncheon and an afternoon music program, where parishioners shared memories and musical talents and even performed fun renditions of two “Sister Act” musical numbers.

Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm celebrated Mass along with present pastor Fr. Jeff Horesji and Deacon Roger Osborne and past pastor Fr. Germain Rademacher.

In his homily, Bishop LeVoir spoke about the necessity of investing ourselves in giving love to others sharing the gospel with those around us.

This was a fitting message for the congregation of St. Francis de Sales, who has blessed their parish and the Winthrop community with generous ministry and love for many years.

History

Although St. Francis de Sales parish is celebrating their 75th anniversary, historical evidence for a Catholic community in Winthrop dates back to 1905. The very first Mass held in Winthrop was in the Winthrop Bank Building, offered by Fr. Francis Rant; the Articles of Incorporation for the parish were signed by Archbishop John Ireland on Sept. 11, 1905. A short nine years later, however, this Catholic community dispersed for reasons unknown.

It was not until Sept. 24, 1942, at the home of Louis and Ora Neesen, that a Catholic community was once again organized in Winthrop.

After this reorganization, St. Francis de Sales Masses were celebrated in Zettel's upstairs hall in Winthrop. In 1943, the parish purchased and constructed a modest basement church (which was all they could afford because of World War II) and on Christmas Eve 1943, the first Mass was held in the new

basement church.

Quite a few members of the St. Francis de Sales congregation remember growing up in the basement church and recall the musty smell, damp atmosphere, and the incredibly uncomfortable wooden kneelers. Although, as one past parishioner, John Schuette, said in a testimony emailed to parishioner Diane Lang, “I must say, I have seen many grand churches in my life costing many millions of dollars but I’ve always thought the simple functionality of the old St. Francis basement church was all that was ever needed.”

As the parish grew from its original 33 charter members, the parish decided to once again purchase land (this time on North Brown Street) and in 1961, another new church was built. In 1978, a social hall was added to the church to address space needs. Just five year later, groundbreaking ceremonies were held for the present church building on North Brown Street - the church was dedicated on Nov. 17, 1984.

The St. Francis de Sales parish agrees that perhaps the biggest accomplishment for their little parish is that they built and completely paid for three different church buildings in 75 years.

Out of the 33 original charter members, St. Francis de Sales parish is blessed to have one surviving charter member today. Thelma Nierengarten, at 99 years of age, currently lives in the Gaylord nursing home and will celebrate her 100th birthday in May 2018.

Nierengarten loved music and played organ for the St. Francis de Sales parish for over 50 years. She often attended national liturgical conventions and always came back with new songs and ideas for the parish's music ministry.

“She instilled the importance of music in our liturgy and our worship,” said Pam Osborne in a phone interview. Osborne has been a parishioner since 1979 and is very involved with music ministry at St. Francis de Sales.

Although Nierengarten could not attend the parish's anniversary celebration, the parish



People with close ties to St. Francis de Sales in Winthrop gathered for Mass, social hour, lunch and an afternoon music program to celebrate the anniversary of a parish that holds 75 years of history. Pictured, left: Carol Haas and Delores Klement both of Gibbon; Andrew and Connie Portner of Winthrop, and Jenna Portner Robertson of Upsala, Minn. (Photos submitted)

commemorated her with several photos and a thank you sign. Osborne and Diane Lang visited Nierengarten on Wednesday, Nov. 15 and brought her a bouquet of flowers to thank her for all her wonderful ministry over the years.

Community

Fr. Horesji, who has been the priest at St. Francis de Sales for seven years, said the parish is exceptionally good at coming together, whether it be for a charitable cause, a community meal, coffee and donuts after Mass or a church project.

One project example, according to Fr. Horesji, was the church's landscaping. This past summer many members of the parish donated time, materials, and labor to update and add to the church's outside landscaping. “We can safely say their generosity saved our parish hundreds of dollars,” said Fr. Horesji.

The parish's commitment to community stretches beyond the walls of the church. In a town that is predominately Protestant, the St. Francis de Sales parish has made sure to connect with other churches in Winthrop over the years.

“Winthrop as a community has been very ecumenical for a very long time,” said Osborne. “Ever since I have been here we have done a unity week together with all the churches in town who want to participate. We do five days and we go to a different church everyday with different pastors everyday and I don't



St. Francis parishioner Pam Osborne embraces Thelma Nierengarten, age 99, during a visit on Nov. 15. Unable to attend the parish celebration, Osborne and fellow parishioner Diane Lang (not pictured), presented Nierengarten with a bouquet of flowers in recognition of all her years of parish ministry. Nierengarten is one of the surviving charter members of St. Francis parish where she played the organ for over 50 years.

know that I've ever met another community that does quite that much.”

As a community, Osborne said that she is especially grateful for the compassion, care, and love

of the parishioners and how they strive to share God's love. “They all share love in different ways... and no matter what is happening, they always come.”

ON AIR!

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**Bishop John M. LeVoir to talk about
Saint Stephen - the first Christian Martyr**

Broadcast **LIVE** on **Real Presence Radio**,
the new Catholic radio station in the diocese.

Podcast

will be available online after the program airs - <https://yourcatholicradiostation.com/>



RPR NETWORK
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U.S. bishops approve canonical step in sainthood cause for Lakota catechist

BALTIMORE (CNA/EWTN News) – The sainthood cause for Lakota medicine man and Catholic catechist Nicholas Black Elk took another step forward today, as the U.S. bishops unanimously approved his canonical consultation.

The Nov. 14 voice vote of the bishops took place at their annual fall assembly held Nov. 13-14, 2017, in Baltimore, and is the latest in a series of steps on the path to sainthood.

The motion to vote on the cause was brought forward by Bishop Robert D. Gruss of Rapid City, S.D., the home diocese of Black Elk where his cause was officially opened earlier this year.

Even before his conversion to Catholicism, Black Elk was a prominent medicine man “widely known as a holy man and a mystic,” Bishop Gruss told the assembly of bishops.

After his conversion, Black Elk “fully embraced a Catholic life” and became an “ardent Catechist” who would go on to convert more than 400 Native Americans to the faith, Gruss noted.

Black Elk became “an icon who reveals what God calls all of us to be - people of faith and hope, and

a source of hope for others,” he added.

Black Elk was born sometime between 1858 and 1866 and, like many of his ancestors, served as a medicine man, which combined the roles of medical doctor, spiritual adviser and counselor.

He was present for the Battle of Little Bighorn in 1876, and the following year, he joined Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, which toured Europe, including a performance before Queen Victoria.

In 1892, after touring with the show for several years, he married Katie War Bonnet. They had three children. After she converted to Catholicism, all three children were baptized.

The year after she died, Black Elk converted to Catholicism and was baptized on Dec. 6, 1904, the Feast of St. Nicholas. He took Nicholas as his baptismal name because he admired the saint's generosity.

In 1905, he married again to Anna Brings White, a widow with two children. They had three children together and she passed away in 1941.

During Black Elk's lifetime, the

practice in the Diocese of Rapid City was for Jesuit priests to select Lakota Catholic men to teach the faith to other members of their tribe as catechists. They evangelized, prayed and prepared converts in the Lakota language, traveling by foot or by horseback until automobiles became available.

Black Elk became a catechist in 1907, chosen for his enthusiasm and his excellent memory for learning Scripture and Church teaching. He was also one of the signatories of the cause of canonization for St. Kateri Tekakwitha, another Native American saint. He passed away Aug. 19, 1950 at Pine Ridge.

Last year, a petition with over 1,600 signatures to open his cause for canonization was presented to Bishop Gruss by the Nicholas Black Elk family. An October Mass officially opened his cause in the diocese this year.

Gruss said that Black Elk's witness is an inspiration for both Native and non-native Americans, because he “lived the Gospel in everyday life.”

The next step in Black Elk's cause will be for a tribunal to investigate and document examples of heroic virtue in his life.

Entering into the liturgy through silence

by Fr. Aaron Johanneck

Editor's note: Each month through this column, Fr. Johanneck continues to focus on some aspect of the Church's liturgy to aid readers to deepen their understanding and appreciation of the liturgy, as well as their full, conscious, and active participation. For previous columns, visit the Diocese of New Ulm website, www.dnu.org (Worship office).

As the Second Vatican Council explains, at the heart of the Sacred

Liturgy is the

Paschal Mystery – that is, the Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy, not only are these saving events of the life of Christ remembered and celebrated; they are sacramentally – and really – made present. Through his Paschal Mystery, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, offered himself totally to the Father out of love for us to save us from sin and to restore us to relationship with God, the Most Holy Trinity.

In last month's article, we discussed how the Sacred Liturgy, especially through the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, is the sacrifice of Christ and also the sacrifice of the whole Church. Through baptism we are united to Christ, grafted onto his Mystical Body, and so are able to be united to his sacrifice and to offer our own sacrifices in union with him. This is the core of full, conscious, and active participation.

Now, we might ask, how do we dispose ourselves to enter deeply into the liturgy in this way? Essential to this is silence.

The Church speaks of the necessity of silence when it comes to the liturgy. She teaches that at certain points silence is the appropriate way to participate (cf. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 30). As Pope St. John Paul II put it in an *Ad limina* address to some of the bishops of United States in 1998, “Active participation certainly means that, in gesture, word, song and service, all the members of the community take part in an act of worship, which is anything but inert and passive. Yet active participation does not preclude the active passivity of silence,

stillness, and listening: indeed, it demands it.”

Silence is also necessary as we prepare to participate in the liturgy. Pope Francis spoke of this in a recent Wednesday audience address. He is currently in the midst of a catechesis on the Mass. In his catechesis of November 15, he spoke about the Mass as prayer: the loftiest and most sublime prayer. As with all prayer, silence is essential. As the Holy Father explained:



“Praying, as every true dialogue, is also

knowing how to be in silence – in dialogues there are moments of silence – in silence together with Jesus. When we go to Mass, perhaps we arrive five minutes early and begin to chat with the person next to us. But this is not the moment for small talk; it is the moment of silence to prepare ourselves for the dialogue. It is the moment for recollection within the heart, to prepare ourselves for the encounter with Jesus. Silence is so important! Remember what I said last week: we are not going to a spectacle, we are going to the encounter with the Lord, and silence prepares us and accompanies us. Pausing in silence with Jesus.”

If we want our participation in the liturgy to be more than “going through the motions,” then we need to take time for silence. Silence allows us to become aware of God's presence and allows the reality of what the Mass is and what happens at Mass to sink in more deeply. Silence disposes us to receive all of the graces available to us in the liturgy and allows us to have a more profound encounter with Christ. Silence allows us to enter into the sacrifice of the Mass more deeply and allows it to have real, transforming power in our lives.

The liturgy takes on more meaning for us and touches us more powerfully and profoundly, ultimately deepening our relationship with Jesus Christ, as we learn the art of silence.

Editor's note: Fr. Aaron Johanneck is director of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of New Ulm.

Want to grow in your faith?

NUDCCW scholarship program can assist you financially

by Doreen Peterson
NUDCCW Scholarship
Coordinator

It is Advent – a time of waiting. God gives us 24 hours every day, all year long. How much time do we give back to him?

The time is now to return the gift and give more of your time to Jesus. The New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (NUDCCW) wants to help you with your efforts by making scholarships available.

The NUDCCW scholarship program is a unique program that is available to all registered Catholics in the Diocese of New Ulm who are involved in serving their parish or the diocese. The scholarship fund is intended to be used to help financially support workshops, conferences, seminars, courses or convention registration that aid individuals in

their growth in the Catholic faith.

Too often as adults, we neglect our own faith development. Are you being called to evangelize in your own parish? Have you considered starting a Bible study group? Consider bringing in a speaker for one of your CCW meetings or purchasing a bible study series that could help your members grow in their faith.

DCCW wants the scholarship program to be a benefit to as many people as the program can possibly reach. We need strong, faithful Catholics!

Every parish in the diocese received a scholarship information booklet at the DCCW regional fall gatherings, which included general information about the program, guidelines, eligibility requirements for candidates, and the 2017-2018 scholarship application form.

The option to apply online is also available at www.nudccw.org.

In order for an individual to apply and qualify for scholarship consideration, the parish Council of Catholic Women from which the applicant is a member must financially donate to the scholarship program.

Both parish CCW donations and completed applications must be submitted by March 1, 2018, to be considered.

Our thanks to all of the parishes who are so generous in their giving. These donations allow this program to continue to be a vital part of our organization.

Contact Doreen Peterson, NUDCCW scholarship coordinator at (507) 532-3316, or email deananddoreen@live.com for further information.

Getting to know the Good Shepherd *Ghent parish to host national Catholic faith formation training course for adults/teams in 2018*

by Claudia Broman
Prairie Catholic Correspondent

For about six years, catechists at St. Eloi in Ghent have been encouraging young children to get to know God.

“A child as young as three years old can have a personal relationship with God,” said Joy Wambeke. Wambeke, Teresa Myhre, and Jennifer Rabaey, all from the St. Eloi parish, have been instrumental in making a catechetical program available to young children in the Good Teacher Area Faith Community, including St. Eloi, St. Edward in Minneota, St. Peter in Canby, and St. Leo in St. Leo.

The program, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, is based on the general educational philosophy of Maria Montessori and was created in Italy by Sofia Cavalletti and Gianna Gobbi.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a Catholic faith formation program that encourages children to grow with God through engagement in Scripture and liturgy.

“We are not teachers, the Holy Spirit is their teacher,” Wambeke said of the adults who lead the classrooms at St. Eloi. The catechists present material to the children, read Scriptures, “and then we allow them to come to understand it themselves—and it means more when you understand it yourself,” she said.

First time opportunity

A national formation course for adults and teams who would like to make Catechesis of the Good Shepherd available in their own parishes will be held at St. Eloi over six weekends in the spring of 2018 and the spring of 2019. The training will focus on the principles, technique and approach of the catechetical program’s level one. It will be the first time such an opportunity will be available in the New Ulm Diocese, Wambeke said. Up to 20 participants will be accepted.

“It’s just a natural time to do this,” Wambeke said. “Our hope is that it might inspire more people to be catechists.”

Level one geared toward three to six-year-olds

Level one in the Catechesis of the



Catechist Teresa Myhre presents the City of Jerusalem to young students taking part in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, a Catholic faith formation program that encourages children to grow in their faith through engagement in Scripture and liturgy. Students pictured (l-r) are: Toby Wambeke, Claire Wambeke, Charlie Myhre, and Gregory Rabaey. *(Photo submitted)*

Good Shepherd targets three- to six-year-olds. The kids participate in the same learning space, which features tables, shelves, and materials at the kids’ visual eye level.

Level two focuses on relationship with God

Six- to nine-year-olds are in level two where they consider their relationship with God and how their own behavior affects that relationship.

New this year to the program

Level three, new at St. Eloi this year, is for nine- to 12-year olds, where they learn about the history of the kingdom of God and the coming end of the world; each child considers his or her place in that timeline.

Catechists help keep a meditative environment in each classroom so the children can stay quiet enough to hear the Good Shepherd, according to Wambeke.

Nathan Jones is the Director of Religious Education for the Good Teacher Area Faith Community. His kids have taken part in the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at St. Eloi.

“They fell in love with it,” Jones said. “It’s a highlight of their year.”

Jones would like to see the traditional faith formation program he runs for ages 13 and up somehow blend with the

Montessori approach.

“I feel it would be a wise choice for us,” he said, adding that he is glad there will be a local training to increase the number of catechists in the region. Heidi Felton lives in Madison, Minn. and spent two years assisting in Catechesis of the Good Shepherd level two at St. Eloi. Felton says her four boys have loved their time in the program.

“It makes a sacred place for kids,” Felton said. For example, one of her boys set up the altar every week in the classroom. “I watched him do that every week and he would just sit there, thinking,” she said, describing how he returned to contemplate something bigger than himself.

“The Montessori approach is such a beautiful, gentle program,” Felton said. “The potential for it to awaken a very loving relationship between a child and God is immense.”

Editor’s Note: The National Formation Training for Level One, Catechesis of the Good Shepherd will be held January, February, and March weekends in 2018 and 2019 at the Church of St. Eloi in Ghent. For details contact Joy Wambeke (651) 324-5996, joyofmysalvation@gmail.com.

Silent night: *Listening in Advent*

by Elizabeth Kelly

Several years back, I took my 82-year-old mom on a silent retreat. The priest who led the weekend told the following story.

He had been teaching second-graders when the subject of prayer arose and he simply asked, “How do you talk to Jesus?” Hands shot up. The first child called upon said, “First, you have to shut up.”

The priest smiled and was heartened. More hands waved in the air and he called on a second student. The child said, “Then, you have to crawl into his lap.”

Moved, the priest was ready to end the conversation there. But with hands still waving he called on a third student. She added with an expression that said, “You almost missed the most important thing”: “Then you have to put your ear really close to his mouth.”

Truly, how often God comes to the listening heart, the heart poised for hearing, moving in close, waiting in quiet. An angel came to deliver the message “blessed are you among women” to the heart most ready to listen and receive. Advent always invites us to a fresh interior listening, a perpetual silent night of waiting for the Lord.

When was the last time you had a “silent night?” How do you prepare for that most sacred of silent nights?

If you follow the wisdom of those children, the first thing you have to do is get still, take yourself to a quiet place to pray – and to listen. Holy hours constantly filled with petitions, lamentations, even thanksgiving and praise do not leave time for listening.

Don’t misunderstand, the Lord is a great lover of lamentation and thanksgiving. Some of his favorites, like King David, were skilled lamenters. But today I am asking you, in this quiet season of waiting, of holy, hidden anticipation — “O come, O come Emmanuel” — does your prayer include silence, the prayer of quiet?

Silence before the Lord is a great act of love and trust. It disciplines the heart. Silence assumes that what I have to say is never going to be more important than what God has to say. As Robert Foster has written, “Silence is one of the deepest disciplines of the Spirit simply because it puts the stopper on all self-justification.”

You cannot encounter the life of the Church without this radical invitation to silence before the Lord. John of the Cross writes, “The Father spoke one word from all eternity and he spoke it in silence, and it is in silence that we hear it.”

Silence speaks to the essence of God in a way that words do not. It creates room for authentic awe.

Give your Advent this gift: Get quiet, crawl into the lap of the Lord, draw very close and then, listen.

Editor’s note: This column originally appeared in the The Catholic Spirit in 2015. The author, Elizabeth Kelly, is an award-winning speaker and the author of five books, including “Reasons I Love Being Catholic.” A parishioner of St. Michael in Stillwater, Minn., she is trained as a spiritual director in the Ignatian exercises and leads retreats with a particular focus on helping women to flourish in their faith.

2018 Diocesan Distinguished Service Award nominations now being sought

This award is presented to members of the Diocese of New Ulm in recognition of outstanding service in some leadership capacity to the diocese. Up to five awards will be presented by Bishop John M. LeVoir at the annual Bishop Lucker Lecture on March 20, 2018, in Redwood Falls. Forms for nominations, as well as a list of past recipients, are posted on the diocesan Web site, www.dnu.org, or contact Penny Forst at the diocesan Pastoral Center, 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; 507-359-2966; pforst@dnu.org.

DEADLINE FOR NOMINATIONS IS JAN. 5, 2018

Upcoming events

Riverbend TEC (Together Encountering Christ) retreat will be held Jan. 13-15. For further information contact Riverbend TEC, 507-828-4256 riverbendtec@gmail.com.

Pipe Organ Dedicatory Series - Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm, Sunday, Jan. 14, 2018, 3-5:00 p.m. featuring Fr. Garrett Ahlers of New Ulm. This concert is part of a dedication series, inaugurating the large new Nordlie Pipe Organ. The Nordlie replaces the 1981 Jaeckel organ. To learn more about the organ or upcoming concerts visit www.ceciliaverein.org/organ/.

Broom Tree Retreat for youth in grades 9-12 will be held Jan. 19-21, 2018, at Broom Tree Youth & Family Camp, Irene, S.D. This is a retreat designed for youth who want to go deeper in their faith and relationship with Christ. Visit www.dnu.org/broom-tree-retreat or call the diocesan Office of Youth Ministry, (507) 233-5327.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter weekend will be held Feb. 9-11, 2018 at Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo or April 13-15 in Hutchinson. Worldwide Marriage Encounter is a weekend for married Christian couples who value their relationship and desire a richer, fuller life together. Attend a Marriage Encounter weekend and learn the tools needed to keep your marriage strong. For detailed information about either weekend visit <https://southmnwwme.org/schedule.php>.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jordan led by Bishop John M. LeVoir, Sept. 9-20, 2018. For detailed information, visit Magi Travel, www.magitravelinc.com/ or call 952-949-0065.

New principal hired at St. Mary's in Tracy



Lisa Dieter

TRACY – The search is over for a new principal in Tracy. Lisa Dieter has been hired to serve St. Mary's Elementary School as principal, effective immediately. Dieter's duties will also include physical education/music teacher.

Dieter is a native of Milan, Minn. She received her bachelor of arts degree from the University of Minnesota, Morris. She double majored with degrees in physical education, K-12 and health education, K-12. Currently,

Dieter is pursuing a master's degree in education for administration.

Prior to moving to Tracy, Dieter and her husband David and their family lived in Omaha for ten years. During that tenure, she served for three years as director for the school-aged summer program of the Maple Street YMCA before being hired as director of the YMCA Youth Sports.

In 2000 Dieter and her family moved to Tracy where she was employed for the Tracy Area Public Schools from 2000-2010, first as a substitute teacher and then as secretary for various departments.

Some of Dieter's hopes for St. Mary students are to "understand that God works through all of us." She reminds the students to remember that the Lord has given all of us special gifts and talents and that we are not the same and that our individuality makes us real, important, and perfectly imperfect.

'Box' program aims to give poor children in four countries Christmas joy



Student representatives pictured left to right are: Tommy Schwartz, first grade; Conner Kyllonen, third grade; Kessler Severson, fifth grade; Alexa Pelzel, sixth grade; Rachel Portner, fifth grade; Logan Ludwig, fourth grade; Travis Mages, second grade; Ethan Helget, kindergarten; and Kirsty Suess, St. Mary's CCW president. *(Photo submitted)*

SLEEPY EYE - In October, students from St. Mary's Elementary School in Sleepy Eye participated in the Cross Catholic Outreach's "Box of Joy" program which provides needy children in impoverished countries a Christmas gift box.

Initiated by the Church of St. Mary's Council of Catholic Women (CCW), students

collected and filled 65 boxes with both practical items and toys to be delivered to children in Haiti and Guatemala. The \$9 shipping cost per box was covered by the parish Council of Catholic Women and a number of St. Mary parishioners.

According to the Cross Catholic website, more than 300 Catholic groups, parishes, and schools

have signed up to participate in the 2017 Box of Joy program to date.

The program aims to provide the boxes for 60,000 impoverished children in four poverty-stricken countries: Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Nicaragua.

Sewing for Sight quilt show to be held Jan. 13 at St. George parish center

NEW ULM – The seventh annual Sewing for Sight quilt show will be held Saturday, Jan. 13, 2018, from 1-5:00 p.m. at the Church of St. George parish center in West Newton Township, 63128 388th Lane, New Ulm.

The show will feature hundreds of quilts by area artists and quilted items will be available for purchase. A Quilter's Second-Hand Boutique featuring fabric, books, patterns, and more will be part of the day as well as independent vendors, The Homespun Café, and a silent auction. Admission is \$5.

All proceeds from the event will go to the Foundation for Saving Sight which was co-founded in 1992 by Dr. Christopher Wallyn and Dr. Michael Merck, members of the Church of St. Anastasia in Hutchinson. Annually the doctors travel

to the Diocese of New Ulm mission parish of San Lucas Toliman in Guatemala, giving of their medical knowledge, talents, and time to help deliver sight-saving eye care to the poor.

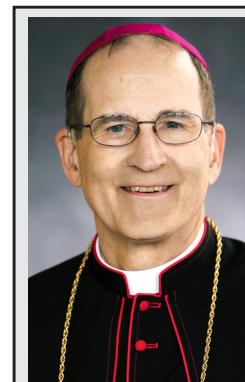
Many lives have been significantly impacted by what is considered routine eye care in the United States.

According to event organizers, to date over \$69,000 has been

donated to the Foundation for Saving Sight.

The Sewing for Sight quilting event is co-sponsored by St. George Catholic United Financial and Sewing Seeds Quilt Company in New Ulm.

For more information about the foundation and how to donate visit www.foundation.regeyecenter.com or follow on Facebook (Sewing for Sight).



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THE DRA RIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 32 No. 3 December 2017



Love not in word but in deed

NEW ULM – “Blessed . . . are the open hands that embrace the poor and help them: They are hands that bring hope,” said Pope Francis in his message marking the first World Day of the Poor on Sunday, Nov. 19, 2017. Hoping to raise the visibility of the most vulnerable, the Holy Father challenges each of us to engage in the work of ending poverty, homelessness, and hunger. In response, parishes in the Diocese of New Ulm were to consider collecting items for their local food shelf and continue to do so throughout the Advent season. Students in the Holy Cross Area Faith Community faith formation program, (Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm; St. Mary, New Ulm; St. John the Baptist, Seartles; St. George, West Newton Township; and St. Gregory the Great, Lafayette) stepped up to the task. Standing next to collected food shelf items are students of one of St. Mary’s third grade faith formation classes. Pictured left to right, Crosby Batt, Rowan Schlager, Joey Wise, Shelby Serbus, Christian Arndt, Skylar Lyimo, and Elaina Brown. *(Photo submitted)*

catholic trends

JERUSALEM (EWTN News/CNA) – Following the recent restoration of the Holy Sepulchre, archaeologists have confirmed the construction dates of the structure surrounding what is believed to be the tomb of Jesus.

Having undergone renovations in 2016, the tomb was opened for first time in centuries last October. Archeologists were able to test samples of the mortar near the cave’s southern wall and the entrance, according to National Geographic. The sediment in the samples was measured for its most recent exposure to light using a process called optically stimulated luminescence.

They found that the mortar and

marble slab covering the original burial bed dated back to about 345 AD. This coincides with the time period that Constantine was believed to have built the shrine around the tomb, and refutes claims by many researchers that the shrine was built only 1,000 years ago, during the Crusades.

Veneration of Christ’s burial place dates back to St. Helena in the fourth century, who is believed to have discovered and identified the tomb. St. Helena’s son, Emperor Constantine, is believed to have built the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 326 and enshrined the tomb.

A year-long restoration of the site was recently completed,

and scientists are looking into additional restoration work on the foundation.

BALTIMORE - At the U.S. Catholic bishops fall general assembly in Baltimore Nov. 13-14, 2017, the bishops acknowledged that Catholic families and married couples need more support from the Church at large and hope to offer it by giving parishes plenty of resources through a pastoral plan for marriage and family. A proposal was introduced to the bishops and was approved by paper ballot with 232 votes in favor.

The pastoral plan was described by Bishop Richard J. Malone of Buffalo, N.Y., a member of the bishops’ Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life, and Youth, as a response to Pope Francis’ 2016 apostolic exhortation “Amoris Laetitia” (The Joy of Love).

The bishop said he hoped the pastoral plan would encourage long-term implementation of the pope’s exhortation and also encourage a broader reading of it. A new pastoral plan for marriage and families would not be “the pastoral plan,” as in the be all end all addressing every detail, but it should provide a framework to help parishes work in this area,

Bishop Malone said.

Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of San Francisco said the Church should offer more than just marriage preparation programs and provide something for couples after they are married.

They should know about marriage before they come to church to set up their wedding, he said, emphasizing that catechism needs to start much earlier.

For complete coverage of the general assembly 2017 visit www.usccb.org/about/leadership/usccb-general-assembly/.

MAPLEWOOD – The Benedictine Center, a ministry of the Benedictine Sisters of St. Paul’s Monastery in Maplewood, is issuing a call to Minnesota artists to participate in its seventh annual juried art show Jan. 31 – March 2, 2018. Called *Seeing God*, the juried art show provides a venue for artists whose creativity helps viewers experience the divine. First, second, and third place awards will be given.

For more information visit <http://tinyurl.com/2018juriedexhibit> or call (651) 777-7251.

With Christmas on a Monday (Dec. 25), morning Masses on Sunday, Dec. 24 are celebrations of the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Masses celebrated the evening of Sunday, Dec. 24, are celebrations of Christmas (the Vigil Mass or Mass during the Night), not of the Fourth Sunday of Advent. The Nativity of the Lord on Dec. 25, is a holy day of obligation and the Church’s expectation is that the Christian faithful attend Mass for both the Fourth Sunday of Advent as well as Christmas.



Listen weekly to Bishop John LeVoir’s Advent and Christmas reflections online at www.dnu.org.