

THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

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Schoenstatt Shrine Jubilee (Photo by Chris Clancy)

SLEEPY EYE – Over 100 people from seven states gathered on Sunday, Oct. 16 for activities, speakers, Mass, Benediction, and meals in celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Schoenstatt Shrine, which stands on the shore of Sleepy Eye Lake. Sr. M. Jean Frisk (left) and Sr. M. Elizabeth Dingbaum, both witnesses to the building of the shrine were present to share their personal recollections of Schoenstatt's founder, the late Fr. Joseph Kentenich.

San Lucas Toliman mission thriving with new leadership

by Kevin Johnson
Prairie Catholic Correspondent

“God, I don’t want this job. Please don’t let me get this job. But if Arch offers me the job, I will take it as a sign that you, God, want me to run the mission.”

That was the gist of the prayer of Leonel Tun, then-assistant principal of the school at the mission in San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala. He had stopped by the church on his way from the school to the office to pray before the Blessed Sacrament, after getting a call from Arch Mrkvicka that he wanted to meet.

As it turned out, Mrkvicka did want him to take the job. The executive director of the Friends of San Lucas (FOSL) had consulted “lots and lots of people” in the summer of 2014 about who should be the mission’s next director, which led him to Tun.

Reluctantly, Tun accepted, relating his prayer to Mrkvicka.

It was the right call. In the last two years, Mrkvicka said, Tun has “just done phenomenal work. It’s his leadership that has transformed the place in terms of its reputation, how it’s run.” Tun has got a great sense of ethics and accountability, he said.

Signs of progress are evident. Thanks to a new construction program, permanent, earthquake-resistant, concrete-block homes have been constructed for 23 families, each costing \$12,000. Another 45 needy families have received new wooden “charity homes” with concrete floors. A new Women’s Center brings poor women in from the area surrounding San Lucas to provide education and an opportunity to socialize.

The mission’s recent successes come on top of the help and support it has been providing to



Arch Mrkvicka (right), executive director of the Friends of San Lucas, poses for a photo with Alvaro Archila Subac and three of his four children in front of their new concrete home, which is still being constructed, in San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala. Archila Subac, his wife Rosario Xep Misa, and their family received their new home thanks to generous donations to FOSL. (Contributed photo)

the indigenous Mayan people of the area for many years. According to FOSL’s February annual report, 570 students were receiving a high-quality education from the mission’s school. More than 16,000 patients were treated at the clinic/hospital. Over 30,000 pounds of coffee, grown by hundreds of area families, earned almost a quarter million dollars at above-market prices. More than 200 new stoves have replaced open-fire cooking in people’s homes.

These programs, along with the Women’s Center, were the initiatives of the Diocese of New Ulm’s Msgr. Greg Schaffer, who began working at the mission in 1964 and headed it up for almost five decades. A non-profit organization, FOSL was put in place in October 2012 following his death in May 2012 to manage U.S.-based support for the

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Anyone could be forced to migrate, pope says in prayer video

by Hannah Brockhaus
Catholic News Agency

VATICAN CITY – In his most recent prayer video, Pope Francis focuses on migrants, refugees, and countries who assist them, stressing that it’s possible for anyone to be placed in a situation forcing them to leave home.

The video, released Nov. 4, shows men and women refugees, law enforcement, media, and a doctor walking through a revolving door as the pope asks the question, “Can one country alone manage the problems of forced migration?”



Pope Francis greets migrants and refugees at the Reception Center for Asylum Seekers, or CARA, in Castelnuovo di Porto, during Holy Thursday Mass on March 24, 2016.

(Photo by L’Osservatore Romano)

“We must move away from indifference and the fear of accepting others,” he says in the video. “Because that other could be you. Or me”

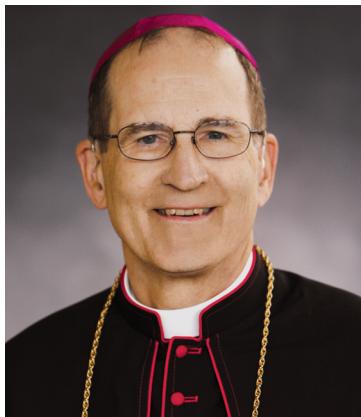
“Join me in this prayer request,” Pope Francis says, “that the countries which take in a great number of displaced persons and refugees may find support for their efforts which show solidarity.”

An initiative of the Jesuit-run global prayer network Apostleship of Prayer, the Pope’s prayer videos are filmed in

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Be Not Afraid

Advent



by Bishop John M. LeVoir

The season of Advent begins this year on Sunday, Nov. 27. For the Church, it is the beginning of a new liturgical year. With Advent, we begin anew to contemplate throughout the year the words and deeds of Christ through the liturgy.

Advent helps us to prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, over 2,000 years ago, in a stable in Bethlehem. The word “advent” itself means “coming.” During the time of Advent, marked by the four consecutive Sundays before Christmas, we wait for the “coming” of the celebration of the birth of Jesus on Christmas Day.

There is an Advent practice that we can employ to remind us of this special time of waiting for the coming of the celebration of Jesus’ birthday. It is the lighting of the Advent wreath, along with the recitation of Advent prayers.

The Advent wreath can come in various sizes, but it is usually in the shape of a circle. A circle has no beginning and no end. The circle of the Advent wreath helps us to remember that God has no beginning and no end. God always was, is now, and always will be.

Usually the wreath is made from evergreen branches. In nature, evergreen branches stay green throughout the whole year; they never change color. The evergreen branches remind us that God never changes and his love for us does not change. God’s love for us is infinite and everlasting.

Green is also a color that reminds us of spring, and so just as spring symbolizes the hope of a fertile summer, so does the Advent wreath symbolize the hope of new life in Christ.

Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, is the hope of the world because in Jesus we discover our life and our salvation. We hope, with the help of grace won for us by Christ by his Cross and Resurrection, to live as his disciples while on earth and then to be with God some day in heaven.

The wreath has four candles, which remind us of the four Sundays in Advent. The candles also remind us of the thousands of years people waited before God the Son became man. Jesus is the light of the world. When we see each candle lit, we remember this.

On the first Sunday of Advent, we light one candle and recite a prayer. On each of the remaining

Sundays of Advent, we light one more candle and recite a prayer. Finally, on the final Sunday of Advent, all four candles are lit.

The Advent wreath is our reminder that we should be waiting for Jesus’ birthday to come and that we should be preparing to celebrate it with joy.

Closing of the Holy Doors

Last year, Pope Francis decreed a Holy Year. He called it an Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. It began on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Dec. 8, 2015. During the Holy Year, Doors of Mercy were to be opened at cathedrals and shrines throughout the world.

In the Diocese of New Ulm, there are two Holy Doors of Mercy, one at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm and the other at the Schoenstatt Jubilee Family Shrine in Sleepy Eye.

The opening of the Holy Doors at the beginning of the Year of Mercy illustrated symbolically that, during the Jubilee, the faithful were offered an ‘extraordinary pathway’ towards salvation.

The Holy Doors marked a place of pilgrimage. The pilgrim, by passing through a Holy Door and reciting certain prayers with devotion, may be granted a plenary indulgence.

We are now at the conclusion of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy. Pope Francis decreed that the Holy Year would conclude on

Nov. 20, 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, with the closing of the Holy Door in the Basilica of St. Peter at the Vatican.

Mass and the closing of the Holy Door at the Schoenstatt Jubilee Family Shrine, will be celebrated by Msgr. Eugene Lozinski and is scheduled for Saturday, Nov. 12, 2016.

I will celebrate the Closing Mass of the Jubilee Year of Mercy and the ceremonial closing of the Door of Mercy at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity on Sunday, Nov. 20, 2016. Everyone is invited and encouraged to come to these celebrations.

The hearts of so many are filled with thanksgiving as we close this Holy Year. Only God, who is rich in mercy, knows how much mercy he poured forth upon us through the celebrations of this special year. The closing rite of the Mass for the closing of the Jubilee Year states this so beautifully:

“Brothers and sisters, let us joyfully thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Throughout this year of grace, he has bestowed on us every heavenly blessing in Christ. He has given us this precious time of mercy and conversion. Let us express our thanks and joy in the words of the Virgin Mary, our Mother [the Magnificat]. As we sing of the Lord’s mercy extending to every generation, let us ask him to pour out, like the morning dewfall, that same mercy unceasingly upon the

entire world.”

Thanksgiving

Thursday, Nov. 24, is the national holiday of Thanksgiving. Whenever I drive through our diocese, I thank God for the acres and acres of corn, soybeans, sugar beets, and other crops that I see, as well as the cows, sheep, hogs, alpacas, horses, mules, turkeys, chickens, and other animals.

Thanksgiving is a special day to give thanks to God for all that he has blessed us with. Let us make Thanksgiving a day to thank God, especially through the celebration of Mass.

The Immaculate Conception

The Catholic Church teaches that from the very moment of her conception in the womb of her mother, St. Anne, the Blessed Virgin Mary was free from all stain of original sin.

In other words, from the very first moment of her life, she was in a state of grace, sharing in God’s own life, and that she was free from the sinful inclinations which have beset human nature after the fall and against which we struggle.

Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, is the patroness of the United States of America. Come to Mass on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8 and ask Mary to watch over our country, which needs her protection so very much.

Bishop LeVoir’s November 2016 calendar can be found at www.dnu.org/calendar/.

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Praying for peace

NEW ULM – On Sunday, Oct. 16, the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm was host to a historic tour marking the 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima. The Fatima Centennial U.S. Tour for Peace featured the world-famous International Pilgrim Virgin Statue, which has been traveling worldwide for nearly 70 years. The tour began in March on the 100-year anniversary of an angel’s first apparition to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal, in 1916, and will visit 100 dioceses in the U.S. The celebration in New Ulm included a crowning of the Virgin Statue, a presentation by the statue’s curator, and an outdoor Rosary procession (pictured) around the Cathedral. Bishop John M. LeVoir celebrated a concluding Mass. A day later, the Tour of Peace stopped at St. Aloysius in Olivia. (Photo by Chris Clancy)

High rates of breast cancer linked to abortion, hormonal contraception

Poorly understood topic discussed in-depth at diocesan Ethics Conference

by Debra Skelley Blaschko
Prairie Catholic Correspondent

SLEEPY EYE – If women are given the science showing breast cancer is linked to abortion and hormonal contraception, they can make informed choices regarding their reproductive lives.

That was the message of Sr. Marie Paul Lockerd, RSM, a family practice physician in Jackson, Minn. for 20 years. She spoke at the Diocese of New Ulm’s 2016 Ethics Conference Oct. 8 at Schoenstatt on the Lake in Sleepy Eye.

Other topics addressed by conference speakers included Catholic perspectives on surrogacy and organ donation. There was also a panel discussion on healthcare decision-making from a Catholic point of view.

Sr. Marie Paul said she looks forward to the day that hormonal contraception will have to carry a warning label, just like cigarettes, stating the product may cause cancer.

“There was 10 years from the time the government knew cigarettes caused lung cancer before (manufacturers) had to label the package,” she said.

The World Health Organization’s International Agency for Research and Cancer (IARC), in June 2005, classified hormonal contraception and post-menopausal hormone replacement therapy (HRT) as carcinogenic in humans.

“The more estrogen a woman is exposed to in her lifetime, the higher her risk for breast cancer,” Sr. Marie Paul said, citing the research of Dr. Angela Lanfranchi, a breast cancer surgeon and co-founder of the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute in New Jersey.

Sr. Marie Paul is a physician at the Sacred Heart Mercy Health Care Center in Jackson as well as a member of the Religious Sisters of Mercy, in Alma, Mich. She is also certified as a Fertility Care practitioner and medical consultant through the Pope Paul VI Institute in Omaha, Neb., and works with couples to treat infertility.

At the beginning of her talk,

she admitted that “there are many out there who say there is no link between abortion and breast cancer.” Nevertheless, she believes the science is convincing.

She explained that increased estrogen multiplies the amount of breast tissue during pregnancy. But that breast tissue only becomes fully mature with the added hormone exposure at the end of a full-term pregnancy, and fully developed breast tissue protects women from breast cancer, according to Lanfranchi’s research (bcpinstitute.org/reproductive.htm).

Premature delivery before 32 weeks is known to more than double breast cancer risk because the immature breast tissue has more places for cancers to start when exposed to estrogen, Sr. Marie Paul said.

There is a big difference between first trimester miscarriages and induced abortion, she said. When there is something wrong with the pregnancy in the first trimester, the hormones usually don’t increase normally, she said. That takes away the added cancer risk in miscarriages.

True informed consent

Due to the role of estrogen in the development of breast tissue, a woman who never has a child has an increased breast cancer risk. The longer a woman waits to have her first child, the higher her breast cancer risk. A woman who uses hormonal contraception before she has a full-term pregnancy increases her risk of breast cancer, Sr. Marie Paul explained.

On the flip side, each additional birth results in further risk reduction. Breastfeeding also reduces the risk of breast cancer. “We need to help women make good decisions,” said Sr. Marie Paul. “It is possible men would make different decisions as well” if presented with the science on the true risks of cancer caused by the effects of abortion or contraception use, she said.

She said although the evidence is clear that these things lead to a higher risk of breast cancer, “there is an effort to hide, suppress, and ignore these facts.”

“There is a need to make these



Deacon Tim Dolan, director of the Office of Social Concerns for the Diocese of New Ulm, speaks at a panel discussion on healthcare decision-making from a Catholic point of view at the diocese’s 2016 Ethics Conference Oct. 8 at Schoenstatt on the Lake in Sleepy Eye. Other speakers on the panel were Raymond Weiss, vice president of mission services for Avera Marshall Regional Medical Center; and Sr. Candace Fier, director of the Office of Family Life for the diocese. Avera Marshall cosponsored the conference.

(Photo by Dan Rossini)

facts known to women who should have true informed consent when making choices in their reproductive lives,” she concluded.

Focus on surrogacy

The conference’s other morning speaker was Sr. Candace Fier, a member of the Secular Institute of the Schoenstatt Sisters of Mary and director of the Office of Family Life for the Diocese of New Ulm. She spoke on surrogacy.

A surrogate mother is a woman who carries an embryo obtained through the union of sperm and egg from two separate donors, or a woman who carries an embryo obtained by the insemination of her own ovum by the sperm of a man other than her husband, Sr. Candace explained.

Surrogacy severs the bonds between parents and their children and makes life a commodity, something to be purchased, she said. She cited Pope Francis’ teaching in his recent apostolic exhortation “The Joy of Love” (“*Amoris Laetitia*”).

Every child has the right to be conceived, carried in the womb, brought into the world and brought up within marriage; surrogacy arrangements sever these crucial bonds while exploiting women and commodifying human life, she said.

they realize their women were being exploited to carry babies for wealthy foreigners, Sr. Candace said.

Ethics of transplantation

The final speaker of the day was Fr. Tom Knoblach, who serves as a pastor, hospital board member, and ethics consultant for the Diocese of St. Cloud. The holder of a doctorate in healthcare ethics from St. Louis University, he spoke about applying Catholic ethical principles to organ transplantation.

Fr. Knoblach said that ethical issues come up in three areas related to organ transplantation: When transplantation is morally acceptable from cadavers or living donors; how organs should be procured; and how organs should be allocated.

Citing the Catechism of the Catholic Church (no. 2296), he said that donating an organ can be a laudable and virtuous act, provided that certain conditions are met. These include that it must be carried out with the explicit consent of the donor or his or her proxy, and it must not bring about the disabling mutilation or death of the donor.

Many third world countries no longer allow surrogacy because



Anyone who has suffered sexual abuse or exploitation by a cleric of the Diocese of New Ulm should immediately report such misconduct to local law enforcement. They are encouraged to contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator or the Bishop’s Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct, 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073, phone: 507-233-5313, for counseling or assistance, if that is desired.

Toda persona que fue víctima de abuso o explotación sexual por parte de un clérigo de la Diócesis de New Ulm debe reportar dicha mala conducta a las autoridades policiales inmediatamente. Se les exhorta ponerse en contacto con el Coordinador de Asistencia para víctimas o el Delegado del Obispo en cuestiones sobre el mal comportamiento sexual, 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073, teléfono: 507-233-5313, hay consejería o asistencia disponible si así lo desea.



No Tengas Miedo *El Adviento*

por Obispo John M. LeVoir

Este año la temporada de Adviento comenzará el Domingo, 27 de Noviembre. Para la Iglesia, marca el comienzo del año litúrgico. Con el Adviento, comenzamos de nuevo a contemplar por todo el año las palabras y hechos de Cristo a través de la liturgia.

La temporada de Adviento se caracteriza por los cuatro domingos consecutivos antes de Navidad, esperamos por la “venida” de la celebración del nacimiento de Jesús, el día de navidad.

Hay una práctica de Adviento que nos recuerda ese momento especial de espera a la llegada de la celebración del cumpleaños de Jesús, la iluminación de la corona y la recitación de las oraciones de adviento.

La corona de Adviento viene en varios tamaños, pero es generalmente en forma de un círculo. Un círculo no tiene principio ni fin. La corona de Adviento nos ayuda a recordar que Dios no tiene ni principio ni fin. Dios siempre lo fue, lo es ahora y lo será siempre.

Por lo general, la corona se hace de ramas verde coníferas y nos recuerdan que Dios nunca cambia y su amor por nosotros no cambia. El amor de Dios a nosotros es infinito y eterno.

El color verde también simboliza la esperanza de una vida nueva en Cristo. Jesús nació de la Virgen María, es la esperanza del mundo porque en Jesús descubrimos nuestra vida y salvación. Esperamos que con la ayuda de la gracia traída por Cristo en la cruz y resurrección, vivir como sus

discípulos en la tierra y algún día estar con Dios en el cielo.

La corona tiene cuatro velas, que nos recuerdan los cuatro domingos en Adviento y los miles de años que los feligreses esperaron antes que Dios el hijo se hiciera hombre. Jesús es la luz del mundo. Cuando vemos una vela encendida, nos acordamos de eso.

La corona de Adviento es nuestro recordatorio que deberíamos esperar el cumpleaños de Jesús y debemos estar preparados para celebrarlo con alegría.

Clausura de las Puertas Sagradas

El año pasado, el Papa Francisco decretó el Año Santo. Lo llamó el Año Jubilar Extraordinario de la Misericordia. El año comenzó el 8 de Diciembre del 2015 con la Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción. Durante el Año Santo, las puertas de la Misericordia fueron abiertas en las Catedrales y Santuarios en todo el mundo.

El Papa Francisco decretó que el Año Santo concluirá el 20 de Noviembre, 2016, la Solemnidad de Jesucristo Rey del Universo, con el cierre de la puerta Santa en la Basílica de San Pedro en el Vaticano.

La Santa Misa y el cierre de la puerta Santa del Santuario de Schoenstatt, será el Sábado, 12 de Noviembre, 2016 con Msgr. Eugene Lozinski.

Yo voy a celebrar la Misa de Clausura del Año Jubilar de la Misericordia y el cierre ceremonial de la puerta de la Misericordia de la Cathedral of the Holy Trinity el Domingo, 20 de Noviembre, 2016. Todos están cordialmente

invitados a estas celebraciones.

Al cerrar este Año Santo, los corazones de tantos están llenos de agradecimiento. El Rito de Clausura de la Misa para el Año Jubilar declara esto de manera tan Hermosa:

“Hermanos y hermanas, agradezcamos a Dios, el Padre de nuestro Señor Jesucristo. A lo largo de este año de gracia, él nos ha concedido toda bendición celestial en Cristo. Él nos ha dado este tiempo valioso de misericordia y conversión. Expresemos nuestra alegría y agradecimiento en las palabras de la Virgen María, nuestra Madre [el Magnificat]. Mientras cantamos la misericordia del Señor que llega a cada generación, pidamos que derrame, como el rocío de la mañana, esa misma misericordia incesantemente sobre el mundo entero.”

Acción de Gracias
Siempre que voy manejando alrededor de nuestra diócesis, doy gracias a Dios por todo lo que veo, las hectáreas y los acres de maíz, soya, remolacha azucarera entre otros cultivos, así como las vacas, ovejas, cerdos, alpacas, caballos, mulas, pavos, pollos entre otros animales.

El día de Acción de Gracias es un día especial para agradecer a Dios por todo lo que nos ha bendecido durante el año. Que el día de Acción de Gracias sea un día para agradecer a Dios, especialmente a través de la celebración de la Misa.

La Inmaculada Concepción
La Iglesia Católica enseña que, desde el momento de su concepción en el vientre de su madre, Santa Ana, la santísima Virgen María estuvo libre de todo pecado original.

María, bajo la advocación de la Inmaculada Concepción, es la patrona de los Estados Unidos de América. Vengan a la Misa en la Solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción, jueves, 8 de Diciembre y pídanle a María que vele por nuestro país, que tanto necesita de su protección.

Pope’s prayer intentions now on video

(Continued from page 1)

collaboration with the Vatican Television Center and mark the first time the Roman Pontiff’s monthly prayer intentions have been featured on video.

This month’s intention reflects a topic the pope has spoken about frequently. In April he brought several Syrian families to Rome with him after his day-trip to Lesbos, Greece, and has also supported the ecumenical project Humanitarian Corridors to help bring other refugees legally and safely into Italy.

In a news conference aboard the papal plane returning from Sweden Nov. 1, the Pope said that “the prudence of those who administrate must be very open” to receiving refugees, as well as in “making calculations as to how to settle them, because not only must a refugee be received, but he must be integrated.”

“And, if a country has a ‘living capacity’ – let’s call it that – of integration,” Pope Francis said, “do it up to that limit ... and if there’s anything more? Do more! But always with an open heart, it’s not human to close doors! It’s not human to close the heart!”

The Apostleship of Prayer, which produces the monthly videos on the pope’s intentions, was founded by Jesuit seminarians in France in 1884 to encourage Christians to serve God and others through

prayer, particularly for the needs of the Church.

Since the late 1800s, the organization has received a monthly, “universal” intention from the pope. In 1929, an additional missionary intention was added by the Holy Father, aimed at the faithful in particular.

While there are two intentions, the prayer videos are centered on the first, universal intention.

The pope’s evangelization intention for November, according to the Apostleship of Prayer, is for the “Collaboration of Priests and Laity”:

“That within parishes, priests and lay people may collaborate in service to the community without giving in to the temptation of discouragement.”

His intentions this year have so far focused on themes the pontiff speaks out about frequently, such as interreligious dialogue, care for creation, families in hardship, the elderly, and marginalized, and respect for women.

Francis’ prayer intentions for the rest of the year are listed on the organization’s Web site and center on other themes close to Francis’ heart, such as prayers for an end to child-soldiers.

Editor’s note: Visit thepopevideo.org to watch the pope’s November prayer video.

FREELANCERS WANTED

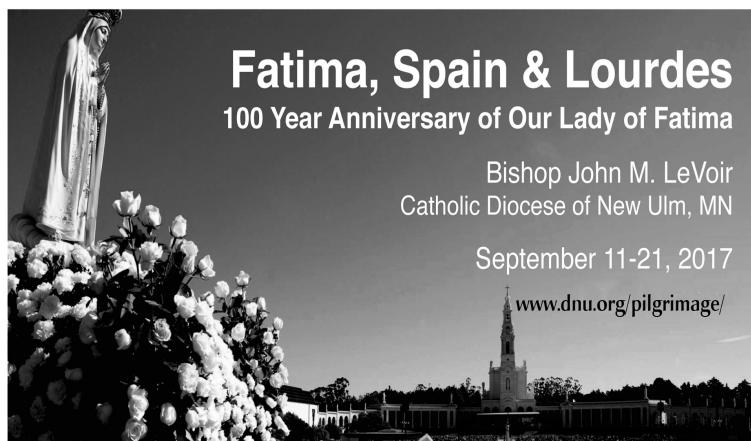
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For more about this exciting opportunity, including how to apply, please see the freelancer page of the Diocese of New Ulm Web site, <https://www.dnu.org/freelancers>.

Use your journalistic skills for the glory and honor of God!



Fatima, Spain & Lourdes

100 Year Anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima

Bishop John M. LeVoir
Catholic Diocese of New Ulm, MN

September 11-21, 2017

www.dnu.org/pilgrimage/

God-centered leaders make mission's future bright

(Continued from page 1)

mission, a role previously filled by the diocese.

Trying times

Tun was promoted to the mission's top administrator during some tumultuous times. In 2014, a labor dispute brought by a number of its almost 300 employees threatened the very existence of the mission.

In the fall of that year, all of the mission's employees were let go. To settle their claims, the mission granted most of them one-fifth acre parcels of land totaling approximately 60 acres and a modest cash payment. A more sustainable staff of just over 100 employees was hired between October and December, including some former mission workers.

As head of FOSL, Mrkvicka was directly responsible for the transition.

"Arch did an amazing job negotiating land claims and distribution. He poured his life's blood into that," said Fr. Phil Schotzko, pastor of the Vine and Branches Area Faith Community, which includes parishes in Springfield and Lambert. Fr. Schotzko served at the mission from 1984 to 1990 as leader of its youth group, and is now a member of FOSL's board of directors.

New mission leaders

Along with Tun, Mrkvicka hired a new slate of program directors by the end of 2014. Identifying these new leaders was a daunting task. "We didn't know who to hire. They are all answers to prayer," he said. A listing of the new leadership is on FOSL's Web site at www.sanlucasmision.org/about-us/san-lucas-mission-leadership.

Mrkvicka has been especially impressed with the leadership team's reliance on God for guidance in running the mission. "They're doing amazing things," he said. "Every meeting begins with prayer."

Commitment to prayer at the mission begins with Tun, who holds a monthly Mass for the success of the mission. All employees are obliged to attend, whether they are Catholic or not. He tells his workers that they better "be here for only three reasons: service to God, service to the mission, and service to others."

Patricia Quiacain, the new director of the school, begins her meetings by reading a psalm, followed by



At \$12,000 each, new concrete homes feature two or three bedrooms, a kitchen area, and a bathroom. While considerably more expensive than the permanent homes that other non-profit organizations build in the area, these FOSL homes are earthquake resistant. FOSL has built about two dozen of these homes since its construction program began two years ago. (Contributed photo)

five minutes of prayer. After hiring her in November 2014, Mrkvicka received confirmation that it had been God's will all along.

June Bower from Atchison, Kan., had been going for years to volunteer at the mission and had helped to start the school's Montessori program. During her stay in early 2015, she asked Mrkvicka why Patricia had been selected.

The reason she asked was that 10 years earlier, she had asked Msgr. Schaffer what the biggest thing was that she could do to foster the success of the school. He replied that she should work with a certain young teacher to prepare her to become an administrator. That teacher was Patricia, she told Mrkvicka.

Recent achievements

With Francisca Cocon (Guicha) as its new director, the mission's Women's Center has become what Msgr. Schaffer hoped and dreamed it could be. Poor Mayan women from the 22 small communities around San Lucas are transported down by pickup truck to spend a day at the center.

"Not only are they learning new ways of weaving and cooking and sewing and growing crops, they're taking personal finance classes, they're taking domestic violence classes," said Mrkvicka.

The concrete homes that the mission is now building are about 500 square feet in size, and feature two or three bedrooms, a kitchen area, and bathroom. Mrkvicka said they are constructed the way Msgr. Schaffer wanted them to be – using lots of rebar and earthquake-proof materials.

"It's a miracle for that family. They can't even dream of owning a home like that," he said. "Most of these people live in the lower barrios of town. All the water in the rainy season comes their way. They're living in mud for six months on their kitchen floor, or when they get up in their bedroom. It's just pathetic, the living conditions these people have to live in. So those homes are wonderful."

The new homes have also had a great impact on construction workers, many of whom are former mission employees. "The dynamic has really shifted in construction projects. More workers are independent contractors now, doing bids and all," said Brian Mathiowetz, a member of FOSL's board of directors. "Volunteer labor goes to profit. This raises self-worth and dignity."

Gift of self-respect

Volunteers are heavily involved in the construction of the wooden "charity homes," which are much less expensive. They spend two-to-three days working with a family to tear down their old shack and put up a new structure with wooden walls, a metal roof, and concrete floor.

Mrkvicka said that the mission's guests really appreciate the work because of the opportunity to develop relationships with the family.

"And that relationship building is what Fr. Greg always said was the most important," he said. "It's fine to come down and work and build a house or build a stove or work in the coffee fields with our people, but the real value is that

relationship you build because the one thing people in the process of poverty always lose is their self-respect."

Mrkvicka explained that people lose their self-respect by not being able to feed their families – something even animals can do. They gain it back when others reach out to them – traveling long distances to be with them, eating strange foods, sleeping in sparse quarters, and listening to them and working with them to respond to their needs.

"That's the greatest gift our guests give to the people of San Lucas, returning some of that dignity," Mrkvicka said.

Blessing of volunteering

Ruthann Illikman is a graduate of New Ulm's Cathedral High School. She is now in her third year as a teacher in south Minneapolis. Spanish is the first language for 30 percent of her students. In high school, she frequently heard about the San Lucas mission.

In each of the last two years during summer break, she has been a volunteer for a month in San Lucas, building homes and stoves. "I spent much of the time mixing sand and cement with water to make concrete. And I cut cinder blocks with a machete for building stoves," she said.

She observed classes at the mission school. But after spending nine months in her own classroom, she was ready to be outside. She enjoyed working with the Guatemalan crews doing construction projects. "Many of the workers were married and had families. Some asked why I wasn't married yet," she said. "I'm 24 and tried to explain that I have a career and like being able to come to San Lucas to help."

Challenges ahead

Mrkvicka said that the biggest challenge at FOSL remains how to continue to meet the mission's operating expenses: the electric bill, the plumbing bill, and the salaries of the hundred employees who make minimum wage plus benefits.

"The money comes in little by little," he said. "We don't have any large corporate help, we have very little foundation help. We have nothing as far as legacy money. So it's all small donations from thousands of people that have allowed us, miraculously, with maybe Fr. Greg up in heaven ... to not miss a payment."

Friends of San Lucas to get new leadership

Arch Mrkvicka will step down as executive director of the Friends of San Lucas in May 2017. Bill Peterson, a member of FOSL's advisory committee, will succeed him. They began to work together on the transition as Peterson joined the FOSL staff on Nov. 1.

Mrkvicka will continue as a member of FOSL's board of directors. "I plan to continue working with and supporting the mission as long as God allows me to do so," he wrote in a September 2016 letter to supporters announcing the decision.

Mrkvicka travelled extensively with Fr. Greg Schaffer to the mission during the year preceding his death in May 2012. "It was one of the great blessings of my life," he said. He was named executive director when FOSL was formed in October 2012.

Peterson has been involved with the mission since 2008, and was also able to get to know Msgr. Schaffer. As the youth pastor at St. John's Episcopal Church in Minneapolis, he has taken volunteer groups down to San Lucas for several years. He also has experience as an engineer and carpenter.

Mathiowetz said the operating budget for the mission is about \$1.5 million annually. Coffee sales contribute about \$250,000. It would help if parishes could sell more, but fundraising will continue to make up the difference.

Education and health care remain top priorities. Another doctor is needed to share the burden with Dr. Rafael Tun, who is in charge of the hospital and clinic. "It's a huge need that would benefit from permanent funding of \$10,000 a year," Mathiowetz said.

Nonetheless, he is grateful for the continued support that FOSL receives from donors in the Diocese of New Ulm. "You would be proud to know your money is going to the poorest of the poor," he said.

Editor's note: For information on how to donate to or volunteer with the Friends of San Lucas, see their Web site, www.sanlucasmision.org. Dan Rossini contributed to this report.



2016 Diocesan Ministries Appeal to begin this month A Legacy of Faith, A Future of Hope

by Deacon Mike McKeown

For I know well the plans I have in mind for you, plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope. — Jeremiah 29:11

As the liturgical year draws to a close, it's always a good time to reflect with gratitude on the many ways that God has blessed us and to consider how we can pass those blessings on to others.

Our diocese is filled with families who have benefited from their predecessors, who sacrificed to pass on the Catholic faith. The theme for this year's Diocesan Ministries Appeal – "A Legacy of Faith, A Future of Hope" – reminds us that we're all called to contribute to this legacy as we pass on our faith to the next generation.

Each era in the Church has had its own particular set of challenges. Throughout history people have given their lives for their faith in

Christ. Some have left everything to follow him. Our ancestors built beautiful churches in our diocese at a time when money was scarce, they kept the faith alive through times of wars and economic depression, they sacrificed so that their children could receive a Catholic education, and their contributions of time and resources kept parish life alive.

Our generation is no different, as we have our own set of challenges. We live in an era of growing secularism and materialism and many of our rural communities are declining in population, all of which affects parish life across the diocese. In spite of these challenges, God continues to bless his people as he calls us to a future of hope.

In this year's DMA video, Bishop LeVoir shared these insights on our legacy and our future: "We look at our legacy – the things that have happened in the past and all the good things that have happened in the Diocese of New Ulm to build

up people's faith and spread the Gospel, to catechize and evangelize.

"We're living off that great legacy and making our contribution to that legacy by the good works we do and how we build up the diocese, how we build up people's faith and how we practice our faith."

As we can see in our parish life and in our families, every material or spiritual blessing that has been passed on to us has required sacrifice and cultivation in order to keep it alive. We are a link in that spiritual chain to ensure that the faith is kept intact for the next generation. Our gift to the DMA helps to pass on this legacy and to provide hope for the future of the people and parishes of our diocese.

Each dollar contributed to this year's DMA goes to serve the needs of those experiencing hardships, to catechize, to strengthen marriage and family life, and to provide for the spiritual needs of our parishes.



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A portion of our gift to the DMA is also a gift from us to our parish.

The close of this Year of Mercy is a good time for us to reflect on our blessings and thank God for the sacrifices that have been made to ensure the legacy of faith we have received.

Our role in sharing these blessings with others has never been more important. At a time when the Church faces many internal and external challenges, God continues to bless and protect us and offer us a future of hope.

Editor's note: Deacon Mike McKeown is director of Development and Healing Ministry for the Diocese of New Ulm.

The Bishop's Guild plays important role in growth of diocese

The Bishop's Guild is a recognition society of individuals who give to the Diocesan Annual Appeal at a level of \$1,000 or greater per year. Membership is broken down into three Circle of Faith levels: Gold represents a gift of \$5,000 or more; Silver, \$2,500 or more, and Bronze, \$1,000 or more. In 2015 there were 390 members of the Bishop's Guild. Though this group represents only 11 percent of givers, nearly 49 percent of all donations to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal came from the Guild.

GOLD

John Altenburg – Cathedral, New Ulm; Ruth Gartner – St. Mary, Bird Island; John and Sharon Illikman – St. Mary; New Ulm; Douglas and Leanna Olsem – Holy Redeemer, Marshall

SILVER

Theresa Bly – St. Michael, Madison; Rick and Ruth Bot – St. Edward, Minnetonka; Bob and Kathy Condon – St. Clara, Clara City; Daniel and Grace Coudron – Holy Redeemer, Marshall; Thomas and Marlene Henrich – St. John, Ortonville; Charles and Chris Honzay – St. Mary, Bird Island; John and Barbara Popelka – St. Pius, Glencoe; Deacon Robert and Debra Reitsma – St. Clara, Clara City; St. Andrew, Granite Falls, and St. Joseph, Montevideo; Steve and Juli Sanders – Holy Redeemer, Marshall; Nancy St. Sauver – St. Andrew, Granite Falls

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Lanette Dammann, Ronald and Debra Donnay, Shawn and Anna Enright, Denise Johnson, Leon and Patricia Johnson, Jeff and Denise Lueders, Barry and Susan Mielke, Gregory and Marilyn Troska

(Continued on page 8)

We are indebted to our ancestors for the sacrifices they made to pass on a legacy of faith to us, and we in turn are called to do the same for the next generation.

– Bishop John M. LeVoir

Commitment Weekend is November 19-20.

GOAL IS \$1,000,000.

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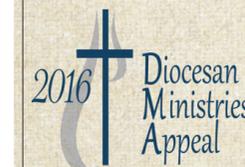
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Visit:
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2015 Bishop's Guild membership

(Continued from page 6)

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St. Andrew, Granite Falls

Fr. Paul Timmerman,* Council of Catholic Women

St. Brendan, Green Isle

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*These donors assigned their single gifts to several parishes with which they have been or are currently affiliated.

Fellowship is what makes CCW region gatherings priceless



by Ronda Mathiowetz
DCCW President

The annual Council of Catholic Women Fall Gatherings were held in September in six regions throughout the Diocese of New Ulm.

Thank you to each region CCW Board for scheduling such interesting speakers and preparing wonderful meals for each gathering. Also, thank you to our region and diocesan spiritual advisors who celebrated Mass with participants of the gatherings.

Each gathering once again served as a time of faith, fellowship, and learning, bringing to our attention important topics related to our Catholic faith.

The topic of medical healthcare directives in accordance with our Catholic faith was the topic at one of the gatherings. Did you know that these forms can be found on the diocesan Web site at www.dnu.org/endoflife?

Another gathering provided the opportunity to learn more about Catholic Charities, a ministry of the Diocese of New Ulm. Catholic Charities is committed to recognizing human need at all stages of life, as well as to respond to all persons regardless of race, creed, or lifestyle. Learn more about Catholic Charities services in the diocese by visiting www.dnu.org/catholiccharities.

Sue Thayer, a former Planned Parenthood facility manager, was a presenter at another gathering. She talked about how God's will opened her heart to the tragedy of abortion and the importance of the 40 Days for Life campaign to end abortion.

A presentation on the DCCW service project, the Heartland Girls' Ranch in Benson, was offered at another gathering. The girls' ranch is a facility that helps many young women overcome the difficulties of sex trafficking

and abuse so they can become well adjusted, active members of their communities.

The Fall Gatherings came to a close with a presentation from a young man in the diocese who was faced with a brain tumor. John Verly explained how his faith, with the support of family and friends, carried him through a time of uncertainty and doubt.

Along with learning about projects and services close to home, and hearing about personal experiences that are easy to relate to, the relationships we build with the women attending these gatherings are what makes these experiences priceless.

We build friendships in many ways, but the friendships that involve sharing the innermost part of ourselves, our faith, for me, seem to be the most rewarding.

As the DCCW president, the more I continue to learn about CCW and meet all the faith-filled women through its many activities, the more I know God is good!

Woman of the Year nominations sought

The Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Woman of the Year is awarded to a woman from the Diocese of New Ulm who has gone the extra mile in living her Catholic faith through her commitments to family, Church, and community. Do you have that someone who shines in your parish?

The Woman of the Year award will be presented at the DCCW Convention on Saturday, April 29, 2017 at the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye.

Nomination rules

- Each nomination must be submitted by a group of three individuals.
- More than one name from each parish may be submitted.
- Nominees should not have previously received this award.
- Current diocesan CCW voting board members are not eligible.
- Judging is based on family commitments, participation in parish activities and committees, involvement in CCW on all levels, and community activities.

- Nominations will be kept confidential until the award is presented at the convention. Information about the nominee must be obtained without talking to the nominee.

Contact your parish CCW president for a nomination form or Sue Imker, DCCW First Vice President, 25224 120th St., Lambertton, 56152, skimker53@gmail.com.

Nominations are due by Jan. 30, 2017.

The prayer, praise, sacrifice, and offering of Christ himself

by Fr. Aaron Johanneck

Last month we introduced these monthly reflections on the Sacred Liturgy. Their purpose is to help us to plumb the depths of this rich source of life and of grace that is at the center of our lives as Catholics, especially through our participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on the Lord's Day.

While there are many topics on the liturgy and the Holy Mass that are interesting and worthy of exploration, the most important thing, first of all, is to deepen our understanding of what the liturgy is.

As we said in last month's article, the liturgy is the public prayer and worship of the Church. Thus, it includes all of the seven sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours, sacramentals, and other blessings of the Church.

All of these have the Mass and the Eucharist at the center. However, this explanation only scratches the surface of this profound reality.

It is not easy to give one simple definition that sums up all that the liturgy is. The Church's liturgy pertains to the mystery of God and so itself has a mysterious character. We recall this when, at the beginning of every Mass, the priest invites us to acknowledge our sins, "and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the *sacred mysteries*."

It is helpful, therefore, to reflect on the liturgy from different perspectives, each of which sheds a unique light on the mystery contained therein.

The Second Vatican Council's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy" ("*Sacrosanctum Concilium*") offers a few of these enlightening perspectives on the liturgy in its first chapter. One example is when the document speaks of the Sacred Liturgy as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ (SC, no. 7).

Christ is the true high priest. He is the one, true mediator between God and man. A priest offers sacrifice and thereby leads the people to God, and brings God to

the people. The Church's liturgy, especially the Mass, accomplishes this priestly action of Christ in the most powerful and effective way possible.

What this means is that, above all, the Sacred Liturgy is not my prayer, or your prayer, but Christ's prayer. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "The liturgy is ... a participation in Christ's own prayer addressed to the Father in the Holy Spirit" (CCC, no. 1073).

For example, in Eucharistic Prayer I the priest prays, "To you, therefore, most merciful Father we make humble prayer and petition through Jesus Christ, your son, our Lord" Our prayer in the Mass is directed to the Father in union with Christ's own prayer. Therefore, the liturgy is ultimately God's action before it is our own.

Finally, the Fathers of Vatican II tell us that "Christ indeed always associates the Church with Himself in this great work The Church is His beloved Bride who calls to her Lord, and through him offers worship to the Eternal Father

"In the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members" (SC, no. 7).

The liturgy, before all else, is Christ's prayer, praise, sacrifice, and offering to the Father. We are united and drawn into that by virtue of our Baptism, which unites us to Christ and makes us members of his Mystical Body.

This is what makes it so powerful, and a "sacred action surpassing all others" (SC, no. 7). Sure, we can pray everywhere and anywhere, but not with the same power and effect as when we unite our prayers and offerings to the perfect and infinitely pleasing and powerful prayer and offering of Jesus Christ.

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



DESIRE TO GROW IN YOUR APPRECIATION OF THE MASS?

ELEMENTS OF THE CATHOLIC MASS



Check out this great video series about the Mass! Produced by the Liturgical Institute in Mundelein, Ill., these beautiful 2 - 5 minute videos are ideal for personal faith formation or group discussion.

[HTTPS://WWW.DNU.ORG/VIDEO-RESOURCES/](https://www.dnu.org/video-resources/)

Tough questions about Catholic marriages and weddings answered

by Fr. Mark Steffl

In preparing couples for weddings, priests often field questions from engaged couples, parents, and even non-Catholics expressing wonderment that the Church “can have so many rules” and get so specific.

Yet, any group of over one billion people with a 2,000-year history, as the Catholic Church is, will have found a good way to accomplish certain things.

The Church also has theological principles and parameters that help to solidly underline the reality that marriage is not a private thing or merely contractual union. Rather, it is a sacrament which exists for the good of the parties involved as well as the whole of society and the Church.

Providing good, easy-to-understand explanations of its teachings and rules is not always an easy task for an institution with 1.2 billion members spread throughout the world and who speak many different languages.

In the seminary, I remember a priest giving a talk to us, telling us that if there is something you find difficult regarding what the Church teaches or requires, do the following: First, read and study as much as you can about it; second, find someone who might be able to explain it to you if you still cannot understand it; and third, pray about it.

Today so many, when confronted with a “rule,” just get upset and excuse themselves from whatever it might be. In reality, the Church never comes up with rules and regulations just to make us upset or make life difficult.

Everything has a reason to it, and is meant for the greater good of the individual and the whole Church! In this vein, I would like to offer a few insights regarding marriage and weddings in the Catholic Church by answering a few frequently asked questions.

Why is there so much preparation? Why do we have to give up a weekend to go to a workshop before we can get married? Why do we have to take all these classes?

For each of the sacraments, the parish priest has an obligation to

prepare those who wish to receive it. That preparation, for example with first Holy Communion, takes the form of catechesis in a school or parish religious education program. Preparing for first Holy Communion comes with being able, according to the student’s age, to understand and articulate that receiving Holy Communion is receiving Jesus Himself, how to receive Holy Communion, and many other things.

This applies to marriage as well. Many couples have approached me to say, “I didn’t have a clue what marriage all involved.” So the parish priests and diocesan bishop require certain workshops and meetings to help, not only to prepare a nice wedding ceremony, but to prepare the couple for the marriage that will follow the wedding, for many years into the future.

Since marriage is one of the biggest decisions a man and woman make in their lives, it makes sense that they would want to prepare, and prepare well for what it involves and means. Everything the Church asks of a couple before a wedding is to help them to be the best husband and wife, father and mother – exactly what they want as well.

Why do we have to get married in a Church building?

In a time when “destination weddings” (getting married at vacation spots) are becoming more frequent and popular, couples ask, “Why can’t I get married on the family farm? On the beach? Or in a park?”

This question has a theological answer that relates to what a church building symbolizes and represents. The church building represents the community of believers who gather there to worship; it is a symbol of the faith of a parish and its members. Even if none of the parishioners is there, the building is a living sign of Jesus’ presence among his people.

Understanding this, why would a couple *not* want to get married in a church building, to make their commitment with the exchange of their wedding vows in the presence of God and in his house? This is separate from the reception, which can take place on the farm or on the beach or in the park.



Canon 1118 of the Church’s Code of Canon Law states that a marriage between Catholics or between a Catholic party and a non-Catholic baptized party should be celebrated in a church. According to Fr. Steffl, the reasons for this are that a church building represents the faith of a parish and its members and that the couple should make their commitment before God and in his house.

(Photo by Dan Rossini)

Inviting one’s family and friends to a wedding in a church sends a message – a message that the couple wants others to know about their faith and belief about God’s place in their marriage.

Why can’t we make up our own vows or have all the songs that we want or add things to the ceremony?

The Church’s liturgy is set up in a very specific way to apply to everyone; it is the prayer of the whole Church. There are some choices that a couple has: hymns, readings, and other specific options. While some things that one might see in a wedding on TV or in a park might appear nice, chances are they are much better at the reception after the wedding.

Vows, too, have a particular meaning as the Church understands them, and part of marriage preparation includes an awareness of what the couple promises to each other when they make their vows.

So when a priest with whom you prepare your wedding ceremony tells you that some request is not possible, it is not meant to be restrictive or mean. His response reflects an understanding that we, as Catholics, fit into and participate in the Church’s liturgy. Therefore we should not expect all our specific likes and dislikes to be honored.

The gift that we have from the Church in the liturgy is that some things are standardized. This is so everyone knows what to expect and will feel comfortable entering into the prayer of the Church that the liturgy is and is meant to be.

What if I, as a Catholic, have gotten married, but it is not in a Church by a priest or deacon?

Catholics have an obligation to get married before a priest or deacon using the vows that the Church recognizes as contracting marriage.

This has been the practice for many centuries and is known as “Catholic Form,” meaning the standardized practice for getting married.

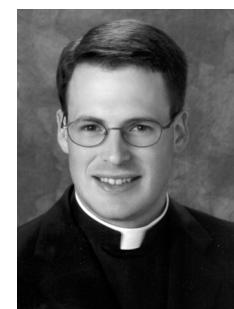
When hearing those vows exchanged in a certain way, the couple and everyone else knows that the couple is married.

It is possible, in certain specific situations, for a Catholic marrying a non-Catholic to get permission from the bishop to be married by a non-Catholic minister, after having completed all the requirements that every couple who marries in the Church must complete.

Unless a Catholic is married in the Catholic Church before a Catholic priest or deacon, or gets official permission from the bishop to be married by a non-Catholic minister under specific conditions when marrying a non-Catholic, the Church views the marriage only as a civil union and not as a sacramental marriage.

Entering into such unions would prevent a Catholic from receiving any sacraments, including Holy Communion, until the marriage can be recognized by the Church. This would involve seeing a priest who can help the couple do what needs to be done to get their marriage recognized by the Church, so that the Catholic can again receive the sacraments.

At the close of this Year of Mercy and beyond, it would be especially good for people to encourage their Catholic children or grandchildren or friends or neighbors who are in unions not recognized by the Catholic Church to do what needs to be done to set things right, and to pray for those who are in such unions. Your parish priests will be very happy to help you!



Editor’s note: Fr. Mark Steffl is judicial vicar for the Diocese of New Ulm.

Upcoming events

Riverbend TEC (Together Encountering Christ) will host a retreat Nov. 19-21 in Bird Island. TEC is a three-day retreat experience that focuses on the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. For more information, call 320-523-1271, or e-mail riverbendtec@gmail.com.

Mass and Closing of the Holy Door at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm will be on Sunday, Nov. 20 from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Join Bishop John M. LeVoir for the Closing Mass of the Jubilee Year of Mercy and the ceremonial closing of the Door of Mercy. This will be the faithful's last opportunity to gain the plenary indulgence of the Jubilee Year.

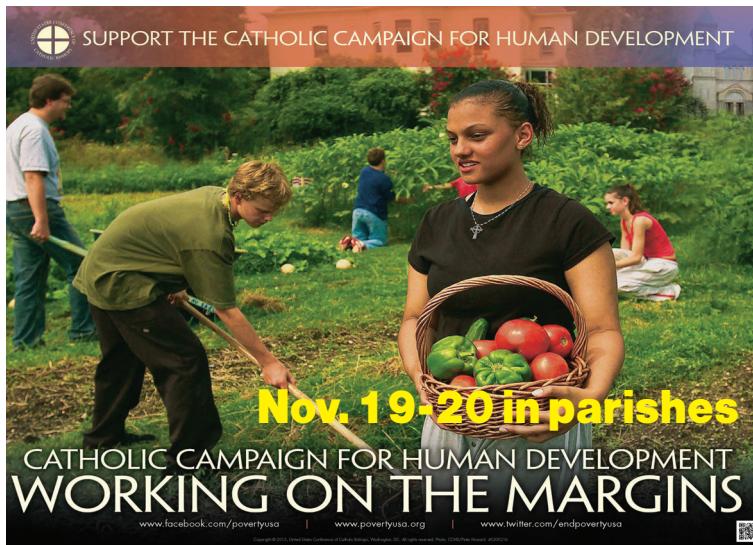
Cor Jesu will be held on Saturday, Dec. 3, from 7:15 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. at the Church of St. Boniface in Stewart. Cor Jesu (pronounced "core yay-zoo"), is an evening of adoration, contemporary praise music, and fellowship. All ages are welcome! Visit www.dnu.org/cor-jesu for more information.

An Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration in Spanish will be held on Sunday, Dec. 11 at the Church of St. Mary in

Willmar at 12:30 p.m. Bishop John M. LeVoir will be the Mass celebrant.

The annual diocesan Advent Prayer Service will be led by Bishop John M. LeVoir on Sunday Dec. 11 at the Church of St. Michael in Morgan, from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Families are encouraged to bring the baby Jesus figure from their home Nativity set, which will be blessed by the bishop. A swaddling clothes collection (blankets, sleepers, layette items) for babies in need will be taken up, with the proceeds going to We Care in Morgan. Cash donations will also be given to We Care in Morgan. Call 507-233-5324; e-mail breising@dnu.org.

A healing weekend is planned for Dec. 2-4 at the Abbey of the Hills in Marvin, S.D. "The Matthew Ministry – A Ministry of Inner Healing" is biblically based and designed to bring healing to emotionally wounded people. The registration fee is \$200 per person and includes lodging, meals, and all materials. Register online at www.abbeyofthehills.com or call Valari at 605-398-9200.



2017 Diocesan Distinguished Service Award recipient nominations now being sought

This award is presented to members of the diocese in recognition of outstanding service in some leadership capacity to the Diocese of New Ulm. Up to five awards will be presented by Bishop John M. LeVoir at the annual Bishop Lucker Lecture on March 23, 2017, 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. 6, 2017

Eight installed as acolytes



SLEEPY EYE – Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm installed the diocese's deacon candidates as acolytes during the 5:30 p.m. Mass at the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye on Oct. 8. Pictured in the front row from the left are Anthony Grack of St. Peter, St. Peter; Bruce Bot of St. Edward, Minneota; Dr. Terence Knowles of St. Mary, New Ulm; Ryan Pope of St. Catherine, Redwood Falls; Kenneth Noyes of Holy Redeemer, Marshall; Travis Welsh of St. Eloi, Ghent; Barry Reindl of St. Raphael, Springfield; and Dr. James Joyce of St. Mary, Sleepy Eye. Second row, from left: Fr. Sam Wagner, associate pastor of St. Mary, Sleepy Eye; Deacon Mark Kober, director of the Permanent Diaconate; Bishop LeVoir; and Msgr. Eugene Lozinski, bishop's delegate for the Permanent Diaconate and pastor of St. Mary, Sleepy Eye.

(Photo by Debra Skelley-Blaschko)

Faith in action at Holy Redeemer, Marshall



MARSHALL – On Oct. 13, the fourth-grade classes at Holy Redeemer School in Marshall organized the weekly school Mass celebrated by pastor Fr. Paul Wolf. Each week, one grade at the school prepares for the Mass according to a specific theme. The theme for the fourth-grade Mass was "Show Faith by Actions," which was reflected in the hymns and readings they chose. Fourth grade teachers are Alycia Roggenbuck (back left) and Lisa Vandendriessche (back right). *(Contributed photo)*

Inspired song

NEW ULM – Students from St. Anthony Elementary School in New Ulm lead the singing at the diocese's 13th annual Children's Holy Field Trip Oct. 5 at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm. Over 200 children from 10 diocesan schools attended the event, which included adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, recitation of the Rosary, a homily by Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm, and Benediction.



(Photo by Dan Rossini)

THE DRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 31 No. 3 November 2016



(Photo by Dan Rossini)

Faith for the future

Jeff and Ann Franta (top and bottom left) are this year's chair couple for the Diocesan Ministries Appeal, which kicks off in parishes Nov. 12 and 13. Parishioners of the Church of St. George in West Newton Township, the couple provides their unique perspective on this year's theme, "A legacy of faith, a future of hope," in the DMA video. They are shown here with their son Ryan and his wife Chelsey teaching their grandchildren Leah and Sean about Jesus and Mary in front of the pieta at the back of their church.

For more on this year's DMA, see pages 6-8.

catholic trends

Washington (CNA/EWTN News) – When Kentucky t-shirt designer Blaine Adamson declined to print promotional shirts for a gay pride festival, he found himself facing a discrimination ruling from the county's human rights commission.

But he also found an abundance of support, including some from an unlikely source – the lesbian owners of a screen print shop heard about his story and came to his defense.

"Because if you lose," Adamson explained the owners' reasoning

to CNA, "then they also lose the right to reject messages from churches or other groups that they may not want to print for."

"So it's not just a Christian issue when it comes to freedom of speech. It's everyone's issue."

Adamson was part of a panel of Christian business owners who are facing or may face legal consequences for operating their businesses according to their religious beliefs.

The panel spoke Oct. 25 in Washington D.C., at an Alliance Defending Freedom event,

"Conscience and Creative Professionals," exploring religious freedom cases that are expected to make their way to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Panel members included Adamson, Washington state florist Barronelle Stutzman, and Breanna Koski and Joanna Duka, owners of a Phoenix-based custom art studio who are challenging a city ordinance they say would force them to cater to same-sex weddings against their consciences.

Kelvin Cochran, the former fire chief of Atlanta who was fired over a book he personally wrote defending Christian views on sex, also spoke.

The panelists are among an increasing number of small business owners who found themselves facing legal threats and discrimination complaints when they decided they could not cater to same-sex weddings.

However, they have argued that they are happy to serve gay and lesbian clients – and many have strong relationships with LGBT clients – but it is specifically same-sex wedding ceremonies or related events that they morally

object to participating in.

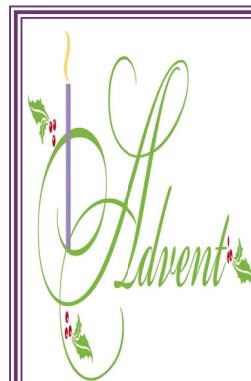
Vatican City (CNA/EWTN News) – The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith released an instruction Oct. 25 regarding burial and cremation, reiterating the Church's teaching that cremation, while strongly discouraged, can be permissible under certain restrictions – and that scattering the ashes is forbidden.

"*Ad resurgendum cum Christo*," or "To rise with Christ," published Oct. 25, states that while cremation "is not prohibited" the Church "continues to prefer the practice of burying the bodies of the deceased, because this shows a greater esteem towards the deceased." The document explains that

after "legitimate motives" for cremation have been ascertained, the "ashes of the faithful must be laid to rest in a sacred place," such as in a cemetery or church.

It goes on to state that is not permitted to keep the ashes in a home or to scatter them "in the air, on land, at sea or in some other way, nor may they be preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry, or other objects."

"The burial, the last liturgy for us, is an expression of our hope for the resurrection," Cardinal Gerhard Müller, prefect of the congregation wrote, "and therefore the Church continues to teach that the normal burial of the body is the normal form."



Bishop John M. LeVair's
Audio Advent Messages

begin on the
First Sunday of Advent, Nov. 27.

Visit weekly: www.dnu.org/bishop/