THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 32 No. 2 October/November 2017

(Photo by Clay Schuldt, New Ulm Journal)

Ready to play music!

NEW ULM – The Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm has completed a two-year project to install a new pipe organ. Director of Sacred Music Nathan Knutson stands next to the organ's keyboard. *(For more on the organ project, see page 8.)*

Fifth Encuentro calls Hispanics to deeper discipleship, greater leadership

by Christine Clancy
The Prairie Catholic

GLENCOE – There was a time when Hispanic pastoral ministry in the Diocese of New Ulm and beyond meant offering Catholic resources in Spanish. While there is still a need to do so, there is also an increasing need to provide support in additional ways within our Church to this growing population within the diocese.

The need to serve this emerging demographic has led the United States Conference of Catholic bishops to call for a multi-year process known as the V Encuentro (Spanish for "Fifth Encounter"), a process of consultation, discernment, discussion, and collaboration. With the theme "Missionary Disciples: Witnesses of God's Love," the initiative is a priority in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Strategic Plan for 2017-2020. The first Encuentro was held in 1972. Since then, there have been three other Encuentro processes held: 1977, 1985, and 2000.

In the spirit of the New Evangelization, the V Encuentro commands profound attention to the needs, challenges, and aspirations that the growing Hispanic population face in daily life.

On Sept. 23, 2017, approximately 60 people from parishes in the Diocese of New Ulm convened at the Church of St. Pius X in Glencoe for the diocesan V Encuentro. Attendees previously participated in small-faith communities and discussions at the parish level. The parish discussion outcomes were compiled into a document for consideration at the diocesan event.

Around 60 people from parishes throughout the Diocese of New Ulm convened on Sept. 23 at the Church of St. Pius X in Glencoe to discuss and offer input about the needs, challenges, and opportunities facing both Hispanic Catholics and the wider U.S. Church.

(Photo by Patricia Jimenez)

The goal of this unique gathering was two-fold: to discern ways to better respond to the growing Hispanic presence in the diocese and to support and assist Hispanic Catholics in strengthening their Christian identity as well as their response as missionary disciples for the entire Church.

Fr. Tony Stubeda, pastor of St. Pius X and co-chair of the diocesan V Encuentro team started the morning off with a presentation that reflected on the joys of missionary life in the Diocese of New Ulm. Small and

(Continued on page 5)

INSIDE

Page 2
Rev. James Devorak to return to active priestly ministry

Page 6-7
DMA special report

Page 9
Children's Holy Field Trip at Cathedral

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This Catholic college was first to sue over the HHS mandate

by Michelle Bauman
Catholic News Agency

CHARLOTTE, N.C., (CNA/EWTN News) – It has been six years since Belmont Abbey College, a Catholic liberal arts school near Charlotte, filed the first lawsuit challenging the federal contraception mandate.

"It's hard to believe it's gone on for this long," college president William Thierfelder told CNA Oct. 9, 2017.

On Oct. 6, the Trump administration announced revisions to the Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate, a regulation introduced by the Obama administration that required employers to fund employee health care plans covering contraception, sterilization, and some drugs that can cause early abortions. The revisions considerably expand exemptions for religious groups and others with moral or ethical objections to the demands of the mandate.

Campus of Belmont Abbey College, Charlotte, N.C.
(Photo courtesy of Belmont Abbey College)

Thierfelder said he is grateful that the current administration has acknowledged the original mandate as violating the right to religious freedom and is taking action to correct it.

Founded by Benedictine monks, Belmont Abbey College adheres to Catholic teaching on the sanctity of human life and sexuality.

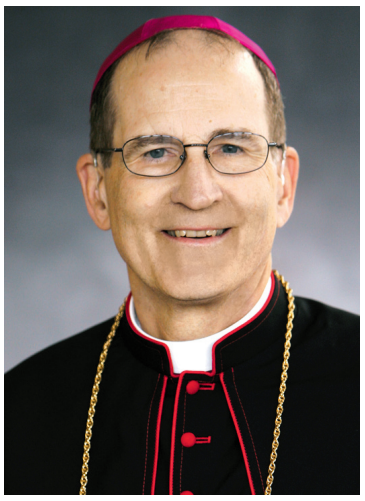
When the HHS mandate was unveiled in 2011, Thierfelder knew the college could not in good conscience comply.

"We actually filed in November 2011, and it's kind of interesting how we became the first ones to sue the federal government, because you would think it's the

(Continued on page 3)

Be Not Afraid

Pilgrimage to Lourdes and Fatima



by Bishop John M. LeVoir

From Sept. 11–Sept. 21, a group of nine pilgrims from the Diocese of New Ulm and I made a pilgrimage to Lourdes and Fatima, and various points in between.

The Blessed Mother appeared at both sites. She appeared to St. Bernadette at Lourdes, France, in 1858, and she appeared to three shepherd children (St. Francisco, St. Jacinta, and Sister Lucy) at Fatima, Portugal, in 1917.

The 100th anniversary of Our Blessed Mother's final apparition at Fatima was marked on Oct. 13. It was on this date in 1917 that the famous miracle of the sun occurred. The miracle was witnessed by 30,000 to 100,000 people.

About the miracle of the sun, one eyewitness writes: "The sun turned everything to different colors – yellow, blue, and white. Then it shook and trembled. It looked like a wheel of fire that was going to fall on the people. They began to cry out, 'We shall all be killed!' Others called to our Lady to save them. They recited acts of contrition. One woman began to confess her sins aloud, advertising that she had done this and that . . . When at last the sun stopped leaping and moving, we all breathed our relief. We were still alive, and the miracle which the children had foretold, had been seen by everyone."

The miracle was a confirmation of Our Blessed Mother's appearance and her message.

The message delivered by Our Lady at both Lourdes and Fatima was to pray (to pray the Rosary especially), and to do penance for the conversion of sinners.

The message of Our Lady is just as relevant today as it was when she appeared at both Lourdes and Fatima. People are in need of conversion, and prayer and penance are the paths to conversion. This message is no different from the preaching of her Son, whose consistent message was prayer and penance (fasting) for the remission of sin and conversion of heart.

Our diocese is facing some major challenges.We have been in Chapter 11 reorganization since March 3, 2017. There are the challenges of pastoral planning due to fewer priests and fewer people. And, finally there are the challenges of family life.

Marriage and family have been in a crisis mode for some time now. We have witnessed the breakup of so many marriages, as well as the declining number of marriages, not to mention the redefinition of marriage by the State of Minnesota.

The Blessed Mother loves us so much and will help us to meet our challenges according to the mind of her Son, Jesus Christ. Knowing this, when at Lourdes and Fatima, I dedicated the Diocese of New Ulm to the maternal care of our Blessed Mother. I asked her to watch over us, to guide us, and to help us to be missionary disciples of her Son. I know that she will do these things for us.

The devotion of the faithful of the Diocese of New Ulm was demonstrated on Oct. 13 when some 200 people, accompanied by the statue of Our Lady carried by a number of people, processed from the Schoenstatt Jubilee Family Shrine in Sleepy Eye to the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye.

As we processed through the park and streets of Sleepy Eye in the evening in a candlelit procession, we prayed the Rosary and sang hymns. I am sure that Our Lady was smiling down upon us that evening.

All Souls Day

The commemoration of all the faithful departed or All Souls Day on Nov. 2 is a special day set aside by the Church to pray for those who have died and who might be in purgatory, waiting for their love of God to be purified so that they can enter the glory of heaven.

The Catechism defines purgatory as: "A state of final purification after death and before entrance into heaven for those who died in God's friendship, but were only imperfectly purified; a final cleansing of human imperfection before one is able to enter the joy of heaven" *(CCC, Glossary)*.

Our prayers and sacrifices for those in purgatory assist their purification and hasten their entrance into heaven. The power of our prayers and sacrifices to help the souls in purgatory comes from Our Lord as mediated through the communion of saints. There is the bond of Christian charity that exists among the members of the communion of saints that links the faithful together. This charity or love is exchanged among the members of the communion of saints, purifying those in purgatory as well as spiritually assisting those on earth.

Going to the Catechism, we find: "In the communion of saints,'a perennial link of charity exists between the faithful who have already reached their heavenly home, those who are expiating their sins in purgatory and those who are still pilgrims on earth. Between them there is, too, an abundant exchange of all good things.' In this wonderful exchange, the holiness of one profits others, well beyond the harm that the sin of one could cause others" *(CCC, 1475)*.

On Nov. 2, please remember those who have gone before us in your prayers, sacrifices, and especially in the Mass.

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

THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

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Rev. James Devorak to return to active priestly ministry

NEW ULM – Fr. James Devorak has returned to public ministry at two parishes in Roseville, Minn., after being cleared of a claim of sexual misconduct. Fr. Devorak is a retired priest of the Diocese of New Ulm who has served at parishes in the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis since 2015.

The Glencoe Police Department completed its investigation into the allegation against Fr. Devorak on Aug. 31, 2017. The police investigators found the allegation against Fr. Devorak "unfounded" and "without merit."

After police concluded their investigation, the Diocese of New Ulm Review Board carried out a careful examination of the case. The diocesan review board recommended that Fr. Devorak be returned to active priestly ministry and Bishop John M. LeVoir approved their recommendation on Oct. 6.

Following diocesan review, the Archdiocesan Ministerial Review Board and its director of the Office of Ministerial Standards and Safe Environment thoroughly reviewed the case. That board also recommended that Fr. Devorak be returned to active priestly ministry, and on Oct. 20 Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda announced that Fr. Devorak could return to public ministry in the archdiocese.

"I am happy that Fr. Devorak can again minister to the people in the parishes he serves," said Bishop LeVoir. "Please pray for healing and peace for both Fr. Devorak and the individual who made the unsubstantiated claim against him."

Attorney Jeff Anderson informed the Diocese of New Ulm that his office will not pursue further representation of the individual who made the claim against Fr. Devorak. Mr. Anderson stated he did not want a cloud over Fr. Devorak because of this claim.

It is standard procedure for the Diocese of New Ulm to remove a member of the clergy from ministry if an allegation has been made against him. The Diocese of New Ulm takes any allegation against clergy very seriously and continues to ask that anyone with information about sexual misconduct by clergy report it immediately to law enforcement. In addition, anyone who has suffered sexual abuse by clergy is encouraged to contact the diocesan Victim Assistance Coordinator at (507) 233-5313 for counseling or other assistance in healing.

Change in The Prairie Catholic Publication Schedule

As part of the diocesan financial reorganization, The Prairie Catholic readers will notice a change as the diocese works to reduce costs. Rather than monthly, The Prairie Catholic will be published every six weeks. Following is the new schedule:

Issue	**Arrive in homes** ***(on or near)***
September (2017)	Sept. 15
October/November *(combined issue)*	Oct. 30
December	Dec. 15
January/February (2018) *(combined issue)*	Jan. 30
March	March 15
April/May *(combined issue)*	April 30
June	June 15

Celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week Nov. 6–12

community encouragement plays important role in discernment process

WASHINGTON – The Catholic Church in the United States will celebrate National Vocation Awareness Week, Nov. 6-12, 2017. This national annual event earmarks a time for parishes to consider their role in promoting the role of priests, deacons, and consecrated life to Catholics who are deciding on their future.

In his homily at the final Mass of the 2016 World Youth Day in Krakow, Pope Francis encouraged the youth to open their hearts to Jesus. "Don't be afraid to say 'yes' to him with all your heart, to respond generously and to follow him!" said Pope Francis.

"Don't let your soul grow numb, but aim for the goal of a beautiful love which also demands sacrifice," he said.

National Vocations Awareness Week, sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, is designed to help promote vocation awareness and to encourage young people to ask the question: "To what vocation in life is God calling me?" Parish and school communities across the nation are encouraged to include, during the first week in November, prayer and special activities that focus on vocation awareness.

"Prayer for vocations is the responsibility of the entire Church. Often times we think that vocations will come from somewhere else, and yet God invites us to consider that he is raising up vocations to priesthood, consecrated life, and the permanent diaconate from within our own communities, even our own families" said Bishop Michael F. Burbidge, bishop designate of Arlington, Virginia, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

"Our willingness to invite those within our own communities and families to consider that God may be calling them to priesthood or consecrated life will bear abundant fruit in the Church and bring great joy and happiness to those called. We want what is best for our children; even more so does God desire their happiness," said Bishop Burbidge.

Research suggests that community encouragement plays an important role in the discernment process.

"Following God's will is the greatest adventure any person can experience," said Fr. Luke Ballman, USCCB's associate director of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

"Fear of losing something holds many people back from responding generously to God, and yet it is when we embrace the adventure wholeheartedly for ourselves or those whom we love that we experience joy unlike anything we have known thus far in our lives," Fr. Ballman said.

For information and resources for National Vocations Awareness Week, including a prayer card, visit: www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/national-vocation-awareness-week.cfm.

Seminary visit for young men

The Diocese of New Ulm sponsored fall Vianney visit to St. John Vianney College Seminary in St. Paul will take place the evening of Thursday, Nov. 16 to the morning of Saturday, Nov.18, 2017. The visit is a great opportunity for young men (ages 16–22) to experience life as a college seminarian and visit the campus of the University of St. Thomas. If interested, or for more information, contact the diocesan Office of Vocations, Fr. Matthew Wiering, director, fatherwiering@gmail.com.

Postcards about the visit will be sent out to young men upon request.

Contraceptive mandate restores religious free-exercise/freedom of conscience

(Continued from page 1)

most unlikely of all places – this little Benedictine monastery and college in the south," he said.

"We had some issues with other governmental agencies prior to the mandate coming out," he explained. "And so when this mandate did come out, we were particularly sensitive to what it was saying … I think we knew where this was going to go, and we just said, 'We've got to do something about this now, before it's imposed on us'."

Thierfelder knew several people at the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, and they discussed the possibility of filing a lawsuit. He had expected to be joined in his initial filing by numerous other plaintiffs, particularly Catholic employers. But for various reasons, other organizations were not ready to take legal action yet, so Belmont Abbey decided to move forward as the lone plaintiff. Over the next year, however, additional lawsuits would start to pour in.

"When people saw this little Catholic college in the south with no resources suing the federal government, I think it sort of woke people up to say, 'I guess we should do something too.' And from that point, a couple of Protestant colleges were next … and then little by little it started, and then there was kind of an avalanche."

Ultimately, more than 300 plaintiffs from across the country would file lawsuits challenging the mandate. These included dozens of religious charities, universities, and Catholic dioceses, as well as individuals, U.S. states, and for-profit companies whose owners opposed the mandate on religious grounds.

Thierfelder described the months that followed as a "legal chess game" with various lawsuits receiving different initial rulings based on whether they were in favorable or unfavorable court districts, and the varying strength of individual cases.

With re-filings due to legal technicalities, and several cases combining as they worked their way through the courts, the years that followed were filled with waiting and uncertainty.

"It's been a wild ride," Thierfelder said, "and I'm very, very happy about what just came out, although it's not over yet."

Belmont Abbey's case, like many others, will now need to be considered by a court with the newly announced possibility for an exemption taken into account.

While the mandate revisions offer strong reason to believe that Belmont Abbey will receive a favorable resolution, Thierfelder said that in his mind, the big-picture battle is not over.

"I still see us at the beginning of this, because this was still a very narrow exemption, the way it was structured. So although this may be good for us, there may be other businesses and individuals who still have issues with this."

He also noted that the Oct. 6 revision is an "interim rule" rather than a final rule. Additionally, several states and organizations have threatened legal action against the modifications to the mandate, and a future administration could always attempt to change the rules back.

"I think we've got to be pretty resolute. I've said this from the beginning … I really do believe you've got to have the complete resolution that you are willing to die for what you believe," he said.

"In our country, I don't think it's going to come to that," he said, "but having dealt with this for so long, and having seen the arguments on the other side … it really almost seems all or none. Either you get what you want or they get what they want, and there's no in-between ground at this point. So it's unfortunate, but that's where we are."

In general, the Belmont Abbey community has been very supportive of the college's decision to take legal action against the mandate over the last six years, Thierfelder said.

"I think it's been an education for everybody, in a lot of ways: how our government works, what religious liberty is. I think at the beginning, people thought, 'Is the HHS mandate an important issue, and what it is really about?' and I think what people started to see is that this is a detail, but it was really infringing on our religious liberty."

Thierfelder also hopes that the general public recognizes religious liberty as a right inherent to every human being.

"Because organizations were continually discussed – be it a religious organization like Belmont Abbey College or Hobby Lobby or something else – it could seem like this was more about organizations somehow fighting for religious liberty, when in fact this is a right that every human being has," he said.

U.S. Catholic bishops release statement saying revised HHS mandate decision represents "return to common sense"

The Trump Administration decision to expand the HHS mandate exemption is a "return to common sense, long-standing federal practice, and peaceful coexistence between church and state," said the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in a statement released Oct. 6.

The statement said that the regulations are good news for all Americans. "A government mandate that coerces people to make an impossible choice between obeying their consciences and obeying the call to serve the poor is harmful not only to Catholics but to the common good. Religious freedom is a fundamental right for all, so when it is threatened for some, it is threatened for all."

To read the full text of the USCCB Oct. 6 statement visit www.usccb.org.

No Tengas Miedo

El Aniversario Centenario de las Apariciones de Nuestra Señora de Fátima

por Obispo John M. LeVoir

Desde el 11 al 21 de Septiembre, un grupo de nueve peregrinos de la Diócesis de New Ulm y yo hicimos una peregrinación a Lourdes en Portugal, Fátima en Francia entre otros lugares.

La Santa Madre se apareció en ambos sitios. En 1958 se apareció a Santa Bernardita en Lourdes, Francia y en 1917 se apareció a tres niños pastores (San Francisco, San Jacinta y la hermana Lucy) en Fátima, Portugal.

El 13 de Octubre marcó el aniversario centenario de las apariciones de Nuestra Señora de Fátima. Fue en esta fecha en 1917, donde tuvo lugar el famoso milagro del sol. El milagro fue atestiguado por un promedio de 30,000 a 100,000 personas.

Acerca del milagro del sol, un testigo declara, "El sol esparcía hacia todas partes luces amarillas, azules y blanco. Luego la tierra empezó a temblar. Era como un disco de fuego que iba caer sobre la multitud. La gente empezó a gritar, '¡Todos moriremos!' otros le rogaban para que la Virgen los salve. Otros rezaban el Acto de Contrición. Una mujer comenzó a confesar sus pecados en voz alta, anunciando todos sus pecados… hasta que al fin el sol dejo de temblar y todos respiraron aliviados. Todavía estábamos vivos y el milagro que los niños habían profetizado, la multitud lo había presenciado."

El milagro y su mensaje fue la confirmación de la aparición de Nuestra Santísima Madre.

El mensaje de Nuestra Señora en Lourdes y en Fátima fue de rezar (especialmente el Rosario) y hacer penitencia por los pecadores.

El mensaje de la Virgen es tan relevante hoy como lo fue cuando se presentó en Lourdes y en Fátima. El pueblo necesita de la conversión, y la oración y la penitencia es el camino a ello. Este mensaje no es diferente de la predicación de su Hijo, su mensaje constante fue la oración y la penitencia (ayuno) para la exoneración del pecado y la conversión del corazón.

Nuestra diócesis está pasando por algunos problemas serios. Hemos estado bajo el Capítulo 11 del Código de Bancarrota desde el 3 de Marzo del 2017. Tenemos los desafíos de la planificación pastoral a consecuencia de un menor número de sacerdotes y como de feligreses. Asimismo, existen los desafíos sobre la vida familiar.

Desde algún tiempo el matrimonio y la familia se encuentra en crisis. Hemos sido testigos de la ruptura de muchos matrimonios, así como la disminución del número de matrimonios, por no mencionar de una definición nueva del matrimonio en Minnesota.

La Santa Madre nos ama tanto y nos ayudará a cumplir con los desafíos de acuerdo con la voluntad de su hijo, Jesucristo. En la peregrinación de Lourdes y Fátima, dediqué a la Diócesis de New Ulm al cuidado maternal de nuestra Santa Madre. Le pedí que velara por nosotros, que nos guie y nos ayude a ser discípulos misioneros de su Hijo. Sé que ella hará todo esto por nosotros.

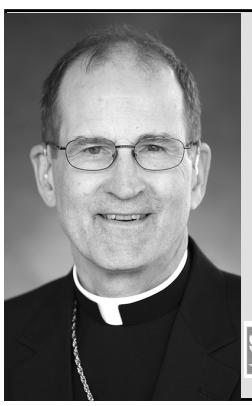
La devoción de los fieles de la Diócesis de New Ulm se demostró el 13 de Octubre, cuando se llevó a cabo la procesión acompañada por la imagen de la Virgen, desde el Santuario de la Capilla de Schoenstatt hasta la Iglesia de Santa María en Sleepy Eye. Alrededor de 200 personas participaron del evento.

Día de los Fieles Difuntos
La conmemoración del día de todos los fieles difuntos es el 2 de Noviembre. Es un día especial reservado por la Iglesia para orar por los que han fallecido y que podrían estar en el purgatorio, a la espera del amor de Dios que ha de ser purificados de manera que puedan entrar en la Gloria del cielo.

Nuestra oraciones y sacrificios por aquellos en el purgatorio, asistir a su purificación y acelerar su entrada en el cielo. El poder de nuestras oraciones y sacrificios para ayudar a las almas en el purgatorio viene de Nuestro Señor a través de la mediación de la comunión de los Santos. Hay un vínculo de la caridad cristiana que existe entre los miembros de la comunión de los santos que une a los fieles. Esta caridad o el amor se intercambia entre los miembros de la comunión de los santos, la purificación de aquellos en el purgatorio, así como de ayudar espiritualmente a los de la tierra.

En el Catecismo encontramos: "En la comunión de los Santos, por consiguiente, 'existe un vínculo permanente de la Caridad entre los fieles que ya han llegado a su hogar celestial, como entre los que espían en el purgatorio o los que peregrinan todavía en la tierra. Un constante vínculo de amor y un abundante intercambio de todos los bienes.' En este intercambio admirable, la santidad de uno aprovecha a los otros, más allá del daño que el pecado de uno pudo causar a los demás" *(CCC, 1475)*.

Este 2 de Noviembre, recuerden a sus seres queridos difuntos en sus oraciones, sacrificios y especialmente en la Misa.



Follow the Bishop on Twitter

Follow @ourladyofnewulm

Parishes respond generously

Over $69,000 collected to aid those impacted by recent hurricanes and earthquake

NEW ULM - As Catholics we are part of a universal Church that extends well beyond our own parish boundaries. Jesus calls us to "make disciples of all nations*" (Mt. 28:19).*

Discipleship means that we care about one another and that the needs of the Church touch our hearts and inspire us to tend to the needs of others.

In the wake of the devastation left behind by this summer's natural disasters (Hurricane Maria, Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, and the Mexican earthquake), the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) called on bishops of dioceses to consider taking up second collections in parishes for those impacted by the storms.

The overwhelming response of the faithful of the Diocese of New Ulm to the bishops' request to date has brought in over $69,000. The money collected will be sent to the USCCB and will be funneled to Catholic Charities USA and Catholic Relief Services to support the humanitarian and recovery efforts and provide pastoral and rebuilding support to impacted dioceses.

If you missed the collection(s), donations can be sent to: USCCB, Office of National Collections, P.O. Box 96278, Washington, DC 20090-6278. Please include "Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Maria, Hurricane Irma or the Mexican Earthquake" in the memo portion of the check.

Pilgrimage to
Holy Land and Jordan
with Bishop John LeVoir
Sept. 9-20, 2018
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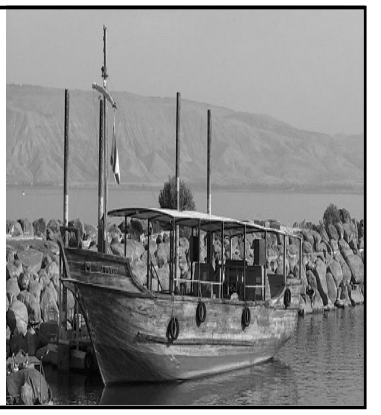

Anyone who has suffered sexual abuse or exploitation by a cleric of the Diocese of New Ulm should immediately report such misconduct to local law enforcement. They are encouraged to contact the Victim Assistance Coordinator or the Bishop's Delegate in Matters Pertaining to Sexual Misconduct, 1421 6th 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 exhort ponerse en contacto con el Coordinador de Asistencia para victimas 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.

First Choice Pregnancy Center annual Hero's Banquet held

Abortion survivor Gianna Jessen tells her story to sold out crowd

by Debra Skelley Blaschko
Prairie Catholic Correspondent

NEW ULM – "No matter the circumstances surrounding a pregnancy, women need to be given care, compassion, and truth so they can see their baby as a gift from God who will be a source of blessing to many," said Linda Reising, former executive director of First Choice Pregnancy Services in New Ulm during its seventh annual Hero for Life Banquet held Sept. 19 at the New Ulm Event Center.

This message was driven home by the evening's keynote and nationally renowned speaker, Gianna Jessen, 40, who unabashedly shared her story of surviving a saline abortion at a Planned Parenthood. Her mother was seventeen years old at the time and seven and a half months pregnant.

"The baby gulps the solution and it burns the baby inside and out and then she (the mother) is to deliver a dead baby within twenty-four hours," Jessen said as she described the horrific process.

Following the saline injection, Jessen's burned body remained in her mother's womb for eighteen hours.

"I should be blind, and burned, and dead, and yet, I live – by the power of Jesus Christ," she told the crowd of approximately 500.

Jessen's talk was interspersed with humor, messages of gratitude, and reminders that Christ's salvation is offered to all; diversions perhaps allowing people to process the gravity of what happened to her.

The focus of Jessen's story was not on the travesty of her near death by abortion, but rather on how she has chosen to live, while loving and forgiving those who have hurt her.

As a result of the abortion attempt, Jessen lives with cerebral palsy, a muscle-tone disorder. However, what many would refer to as an affliction, she refers to as a gift.

"It (cerebral palsy) allows me to really depend on Jesus for everything," she said.

Jessen explained how her "gift" allows her to be vulnerable. In Jessen's case, she struggles with balance, which makes walking and standing independently difficult.

Despite her balance issues, she refused to sit during her presentation. The assistance of two men, one on each side, offered a steady arm when needed.

Jessen explained how standing provided her the opportunity to rely on others. "I like to show that it is a beautiful thing for a woman to be vulnerable, that it is in fact her nature – and that men are actually needed, and should be treated with honor just as they are to treat us with honor and respect," she said. Standing is also her way of showing that she does not give up.

Gianna Jessen, center, an abortion survivor who lives with cerebral palsy as a result, stands with the support of Brad Finstad, left, and Glen Lewerenz, right, to address the crowd at the sold-out Hero for Life Banquet held Sept. 19, 2017, at the New Ulm Event Center. The banquet is an annual event sponsored by First Choice Pregnancy Services in New Ulm.

(Photo by Debra Skelley Blaschko)

Perfect timing

In April 1977, Jessen was born at six o'clock in the morning, which she said was "perfect timing" because the abortionist had not yet arrived at the clinic.

"If he had been there, he would have ended my life with strangulation, suffocation, or left me there to die," Jessen said. However, due to the delay, the nurse had time to call an ambulance and Jessen, weighing only two and a half pounds, was transferred to a hospital where she was placed in an incubator.

Asked by a member of the audience if she has ever met her biological mother, Jessen responded by saying that God prepared her for the unexpected meeting. While sitting in a plane, she heard God's voice asking her what she would do if her mother showed up at an event.

Then, it happened.

During an event, a woman identified herself as Jessen's birth mother. Jessen told her she was a Christian and she forgave her. The woman refused forgiveness and became argumentative. Jessen chose to walk away.

"You may come from a difficult background and you may have been told horrendous things, but you do not need to be defined by where you come from!" said Jessen.

Whoever feels miserable in their life should turn to Jesus Christ, she told the audience.

"If there is anyone walking an unusual road, I just want to say, keep going," she said. "Put one foot in front of the other and dare to just shine, dare to be different."

Editor's note: First Choice Pregnancy Services provides free and confidential services to women facing unplanned pregnancies. Executive director is Darcy Lund. Visit https://consideryouroptions.org.

Pope encourages faithful to break down walls; build bridges

(Continued from page 1)

large group discussion followed which allowed for dialogue about the different social, cultural, and pastoral realities experienced within parish and community life as well as in the diocese.

Through the discussion process, written practical responses to specific needs and aspirations were proposed. Necessary areas of action were identified and prioritized.

"It is a renewing experience to gather with people discussing the challenges of sharing their faith with others," said Fr. Stubeda. "As I walked from group to group I heard so many people who have been renewed and 'set on fire' by their experience of the Encuentro process," he said.

According to Anisabel Palma, co-chair of the diocesan V Encuentro team and the director of Hispanic Ministry at the Church of St. Mary in Willmar, the V Encuentro process is already bearing fruits in the diocese. For example, in January a meeting took place to train parish leaders on the five sessions and the consultation process of the V Encuentro, she explained. This allowed for networking and getting to know leaders of other parishes.

Also benefiting from the process was the prayer group that began at St. Joseph's in Montevideo. They connected with the coordinators of the prayer group formed at St. Mary's in Willmar and as a result, the two groups started mutual visits during their sessions, which provided support for one another.

"We can see our parishes are starting to help each other. This is especially important since the position of Hispanic Ministry director remains vacant at the diocesan pastoral office," said Palma.

V Encuentro. What's next?

Moving forward, the needs, priorities, and actions identified during the diocesan consultation process will be complied into a document and presented to Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm. The identified challenges will continue to be addressed in parishes throughout the diocese.

In April 2018, a three-state regional V Encuentro will take place in Alexandria, Minn. Sixteen delegates who attended the diocesan gathering will represent the Diocese of New Ulm.

At this three-state gathering, the regional team will present for consideration the three highest priorities that were identified at the diocesan gathering. Once again, a consultation process will take place, with input from all participating dioceses.

The process will culminate in a national gathering Sept. 20-23, 2018, in Grapevine, Texas. From the sixteen New Ulm diocesan regional delegates, four will be selected to represent the diocese at the national gathering. The final consultation document resulting from the national gathering will be given to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for review and final acceptance.

Pope Francis has offered his support to the Catholic bishops for the V Encuentro. He has challenged the bishops and their faithful to create a "culture of encounter which encourages individuals and groups to share the richness of their traditions and experience; to break down walls and to build bridges."

The Holy Father asked the bishops and their faithful to consider how the local churches can best respond to the growing presence, gifts, and potential of the Hispanic community. "The Church in America as elsewhere is called to go out from its comfort zone and be a leaven of communion; communion among ourselves, with our fellow Christians, and with all who seek a future of hope," the pope said.

"We need to become ever more fully a community of missionary disciples, filled with love of the Lord Jesus and enthusiasm for the spread of the Gospel. It is my hope that the Church in your country, at every level, will accompany the Encuentro with its own reflection and pastoral discernment," said the pope.

Editor's note: The Diocese of New Ulm's Fourth Plan for Parishes (Figure 3.19) shows the percentage of growth of the Hispanic population in the diocese by county. Overall, the identified Hispanic population within the diocese has increased by over 450 percent from 1990 to 2010.

Diocesan Ministries Appeal making a difference!

by Deacon Mike McKeown

Each year, parishes of the Diocese of New Ulm take part in the annual Diocesan Ministries Appeal (DMA).

Now in its eleventh year, financial contributions to the DMA have made it possible for the diocese to provide vital services to the spiritual and physical well-being of men, women, and children in west central Minnesota.

Eighty percent of every DMA dollar supports designated ministries that help pass on the Catholic faith, assist those in need of spiritual and/or physical assistance, provide spiritual guidance, and nurture youth and adults in their faith. The remaining twenty percent of contributions are gifted to the donor's parish.

The 2016 Diocesan Ministries Appeal – "A Legacy of Faith, A Future of Hope" – has come to a close. The appeal generated $983,000, or ninety-eight percent of the overall $1,000,000 goal and $196,626 was gifted to parishes to be used for special projects.

Kick-off for next DMA soon!
The 2017 DMA – "Together We Are One" – will be introduced in parishes Nov. 11–12 (video weekend) and Nov. 18–19 (commitment weekend). The theme is a reminder of all the things we can accomplish if we work together.

All donations to the DMA are restricted gifts to be used in support of the specifically designated ministries: Catholic Charities, youth, Catholic schools, religious education/adult faith formation, permanent diaconate, Hispanic ministry, and social concerns.Contributions, no matter what amount, help sustain, reinforce, and support these important ministries that are so vital to the diocese.

Deacon Mike McKeown is director of the Office of Development for the Diocese of New Ulm; mmckeown@dnu.org.

Catholic Charities vital in providing help, creating hope for those struggling

by Christine Clancy
The Prairie Catholic

NEW ULM – In November Catholic Charities, the charitable arm of the Diocese of New Ulm, will mark ten years of serving those in need throughout the 15 counties of west central Minnesota.

Catholic Charities services in the diocese were initiated in 2007 following the overwhelming response to the first Diocesan Ministries Appeal launched in 2006. The appeal identified Catholic Charities counseling and related services as a primary beneficiary and a principal rationale for the creation of the DMA.

Since then, with annual support from members of the diocese to the DMA, Catholic Charities has provided help and created hope for more than 12,000 people regardless of religious, social, or economic backgrounds – irrespective of their ability to pay.

"Catholic Charities services would in no way be possible without the support of the DMA and the generosity of so many in the diocese," said Tom Keaveny, director of the Catholic Charities diocesan office.

When a natural disaster hits, like the July 11, 2016, tornado that ripped through the communities of Watkins and Litchfield, Minn., Catholic Charities' national organization allows the local diocesan Catholic Charities to immediately apply for funding for humanitarian assistance.

"Whether we immediately assist with a grief and loss issue following a community tragedy or respond to an individual in crisis, the DMA provides support for all our work," Keaveny said.

Counselors available in four regions in diocese
Catholic Charities' home base is located at the Catholic Pastoral Center in New Ulm, with a staff of four counselors and one support professional. Counselors are available at three outreach offices located in Hutchinson, Marshall, and Willmar.

According to Keaveny, individual, marriage, and family counseling are at the core of Catholic Charities services.

(Continued on page 9)

Bishop's Guild – a key factor in success of annual diocesan appeal

The Bishop's Guild is a recognition society of individuals who give to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal at a level of $1,000 or greater per year. Membership is divided 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 2016, there were 342 members of the Bishop's Guild.

Though this group represents only 10% of our givers, nearly 46% of all donations to the Diocesan Annual Appeal came from the Bishop's Guild.

GOLD
Duane and Kristine Anderson – St. Michael, Morgan; John and Sharon Illikman – St. Mary, New Ulm; Craig and Carla Johnson – St. Francis Benson and St. Mary Willmar; Curtis and Christie Louwagie – St. Mary, Cottonwood; Douglas and Leanna Olsem – Holy Redeemer, Marshall; Thomas and Jan Rauenhorst – St. Aloysius, Olivia

SILVER
John Altenburg – Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm; Robert Asfeld – St. Mary, Beardsley; Bruce and Juanita Bot – St. Edward, Minneota; Rick and Ruth Bot – St. Edward, Minneota; Mike and Becky Boyle – Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm; Daniel and Grace Coudron – Holy Redeemer, Marshall; Dallas and Joann Dolan – St. Mary, Seaforth; Margaret Fitzpatrick – Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm; Charles and Chris Honzay – St. Mary, Bird Island; Bishop John M. LeVoir – Undesignated; Glen and Lana Mathiowetz – St. Mary, Sleepy Eye; Timothy and Lora Rahe – Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm; Dcn. Robert and Debra Reitsma – St. Clara, Clara City, St. James, Dawson, St. Andrew, Granite Falls, and St. Joseph, Montevideo; Steve and Juli Sanders – Holy Redeemer, Marshall; Glen and Deb Schilling – St. Peter, St. Peter; Fr. George Schmit – St. Mary, Bird Island; Nancy St. Sauver – St. Andrew, Granite Falls; Gerard Stifter – Holy Trinity, Winsted; Patrick and Colleen Wildt – St. Michael, Morgan.

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Fr. Dennis Labat

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Robert and Carolyn Brix, Tom and Sandra Gunter, Kenneth and Bonnie Haas, Brian and Brenda Harguth, Fr. Paul Timmerman*, Larry Tomes

St. Malachy, Clontarf
David Johnson

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David and Kyong Ae Paskach, Jerry and Donna Sanders

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Fr. Paul Timmerman*

St. Brendan, Green Isle
Fr. John Berger, Dcn. Timothy and Debra Dolan*, Fr. Keith Salisbury*, Michael and Sue Vos

(Continued on page 7)

Bishops Guild membership *continued from page 6*

St. Clotilde, Green Valley
Laurence and Ardyce Louwagie

St. John, Hector
Tony and Brenda LeGare

St. Anastasia, Hutchinson
James and Catherine Allen, Todd and Dorothy Bradley, Dolores Brunner, Tom Burich, Fr. Patrick Casey*, Dennis and Luann Drazkowski, Nole and Nicole German, Larry and Betty Gunderson, Tom and Mary Inglis, Leon and Patricia Johnson, Shawn and Jessica Knorr, Jeffrey and Gail Lehn, Emmet and Marge McCormick, Tom and Linda McGraw, Fr. Gerald Meidl, Roselyn Peterson, Richard and Bea Prellwitz

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Fr. Ronald Huberty*, Sherry Karen Johnson

St. Joseph, Lamberton
Fred and Dolores Berg

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St. Aloysius, Olivia
Fr. Patrick Casey*, Pat and Shirley Maher

St. John, Ortonville
Bill and Diane Hartman, Joseph and Hillary Henrich, Roman and Carol Taffe, Dcn. Paul and Julie Treinen

St. Catherine, Redwood Falls
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Holy Redeemer, Renville
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Travis Volkenant

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St. Mary, Sleepy Eye
Dorothy Klein, Armin and Lucille Losleben, Msgr. Eugene Lozinski, Diane Maurer, Russ and Ann McCabe, Ron and Melissa Miller, Robert Novotny, Wayne and Patti Pelzel, Joan Portner, Tom and Mary Portner, Joe and Judy Schwartz, John and Rosemary Schwartz, Mark and Anita Schwartz, Arthur Sellner, Beverly Sellner, David and Kathleen Sellner, Charles and Kathy Spaeth

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St. Raphael, Springfield
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St. Boniface, Stewart
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St. Dionysius, Tyler
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St. Anne, Wabasso
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St. Paul, Walnut Grove
Kerry and Becky Knakmuhs

St. Mathias, Wanda
Richard and Mary Berg, Fr. Patrick Casey*, Fr. Anthony Hesse*, David and Cindy Moldan, Gerald and Lucy Moldan, Art and Dawn Rohlik, Daniel and Linda Weber

St. Anthony, Watkins
Fr. John Brunner, Fr. Richard Gross

St. George, West Newton
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St. John, Wilno
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Gifts without designation:
Brian and Ronda Mathiowetz, Mary Lou Mathiowetz

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

2018 Diocesan Distinguished Service Award recipient 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

Making a joyful noise!

New pipe organ installed at Cathedral in New Ulm

by Clay Schuldt
New Ulm Journal

NEW ULM – In August, the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm completed a two-year project to install a new pipe organ. Its previous organ, built in the 1980s by Dan Jaeckel of Duluth, was relatively young. But structural issues made the organ's replacement necessary, said Cathedral's Director of Sacred Music, Nathan Knutson.

"You could push on a side and the wall would move," Knutson said.

The old organ's frame was made from plywood material with a shorter lifespan.

In June of 2015, the old organ was removed. After two years of refurbishing the pipework and adding new equipment, the church's new organ will be ready to play for an audience this month.

The new organ was designed by several companies. The wood work was done by JF Nordlie Company out of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. JF Nordlie has built approximately 50 organs, but Cathedral is one of the largest the company ever built.

A Norwegian wood carver hand carved basswood pipe shades, with gold leaf gilding as well as other decorative imagery to match Cathedral's interior.

The new organ was not completely built from scratch. Cathedral was able to recycle equipment from the previous organ for use in the new instrument. The old pipes were sent to a company in Ohio to be refurbished and returned for re-installation in the new organ.

Nathan Knutson, Director of Sacred Music at the Cathedral in New Ulm, stands next to the new organ's row of pipes located in the loft of the Cathedral. Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm blessed the organ during a special Mass on Aug. 13, 2017. *(Photo by Clay Schuldt / New Ulm Journal)*

The Cathedral was even able to incorporate its bell tower into the design. The organ requires a large air supply to produce sound. An air duct system was placed in the back to pull wind in from the bell tower.

Knutson said the church's first organ used the bell tower for the same purpose.

The new organ will have more pipes than it's predecessor. It will have a total of 2,500 pipes, but Knutson said the instrument will not be any louder. Ironically, the greater number of pipes will allow the organ to play lower.

Knutson gave assurances the organ will be able to produce the very Germanic and forceful tones Cathedral is accustomed to, but it will be able to perform the lighter music as well.

The organ's keyboard uses a complex electronic system that expands the style of music that can be performed on the organ.

The cost of the new organ has been covered by Holy Trinity Cathedral. The church was able to plan and budget for the new instrument for the last several years. Knutson believes it is a good investment. The new wood cabinet for the instrument should last over 100 years.

The organ also features a state-of-the-art humidification system for the dry winter months. This should help maintain the organ's rich sound. There are organ pipes in the world from the 1400s that still function to this day. It is possible this organ will grace Cathedral with beautiful music for generations to come.

Cathedral will be celebrating its new pipe organ with a series of concerts throughout the upcoming year that will feature music ranging from Bach to modern organ composition to demonstrate the range of the new instrument.

FREE Organ Concerts

Nov. 19 - Chad Winterfeldt of St. Peter at 1 p.m.

Dec. 3 - New Ulm native Kraig Windschitl of Minneapolis at 3 p.m.

Jan. 14 - Fr. Garrett Ahlers of New Ulm at 3 p.m.

Feb. 11 - Sean Connolly of Sleepy Eye at 3 p.m.

March 18 - Mozart's Requiem, St. Peter Choral Society at 3 p.m. *(Tickets at New Ulm HyVee)*

DCCW seeks nominations for 2018 Woman of the Year

The New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women is seeking nominations for the 2018 Woman of the Year award to be presented at the DCCW convention on April 28, 2018, at the Church of St. Catherine in Redwood Falls.

Guidelines and nomination forms are available through your parish CCW president or at www.nudccw.org.

All nominations will be kept confidential until the award is presented at the April convention.

For further information contact Beth Boyle, NUDCCW 1st vice-president, 110 Wilson Street, Tyler, Minn, 56178, jimbethboyle@gmail.com.

Nominations are due by Jan. 31, 2018.

That my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the Almighty Father

by Fr. Aaron Johanneck

In the September 2017 issue of The Prairie Catholic, we began to unpack the following statement from the Second Vatican Council's, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, on participation in the Sacred Liturgy, especially in the Holy Mass:

"[Christ's faithful] should be instructed by God's Word and be nourished at the table of the Lord's Body; they should give thanks to God; by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn also to offer themselves; through Christ the Mediator, they should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all" *(SC 48)*.

Sursum Corda
Lift Up Your Hearts
Reflections on the Sacred Liturgy

We discussed what it means for the faithful to be "instructed by God's Word," "nourished at the table of the Lord's Body," and to "give thanks to God." Now we will move to the next statement: "by offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, [the faithful] should learn to offer themselves."

At the beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the priest invites the people to prayer saying, "Pray brethren (brothers and sisters) that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father."

We have discussed how the Mass is a sacrifice because it is the sacramental (and real) re-presentation (making present) and offering of the one-time sacrifice that Christ offered to the Father on the cross for us. The Mass is the sacrifice of the priest (my sacrifice . . .) since through his ordination he acts *in persona Christi capitis*, or in the person of Christ, Head of the Church. The power given to him at his ordination makes the celebration of the Mass possible. Through this power Christ's sacrifice is made present and the bread and wine are transubstantiated into His Sacred Body and Blood.

The sacrifice of the Mass is also the sacrifice of the entire Church. Therefore, it is offered also by the faithful (. . . and yours) in the manner proper to them by virtue of the union with Christ and membership in his Mystical Body (the Church) brought about by Baptism. They offer the sacrifice of Christ along with the priest, albeit in a different manner.

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church explains, "The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. With him, she herself is offered whole and entire. She unites herself to his intercession with the Father for all men. In the Eucharist the sacrifice of Christ becomes also the sacrifice of the members of his Body" *(CCC 1368)*.

The Catechism continues, "The lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with his total offering, and so acquire a new value. Christ's sacrifice present on the altar makes it possible for all generations of Christians to be united with his offering" (1368).

Through our union with Christ and with his Paschal Mystery brought about by baptism, we are united to the sacrifice of Christ made present in the Mass. We are able to enter in by uniting ourselves to his perfect offering of love to the Father and by offering every aspect of our lives, and our very selves, to the Father through Christ and in the Holy Spirit. For this reason the priest can invite us into "my sacrifice and yours."

Now we have come to the heart of the true, conscious, and active participation of the faithful in the Church's liturgy: when you come to Holy Mass, offer yourself with Jesus!

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

Experienced Catholic Charities counselors available to address diverse issues

(Continued from page 6)

Experienced counselors are available to address diverse issues related to individual stress or family conflict, chemical dependency, pornography and other addictions, communication breakdowns, domestic violence, separation and divorce, parenting and co-parenting skills, grief and loss and many other mental health needs.

Additional services include counseling and crisis response, educational and support groups, financial assistance following natural disasters, assistance with immigration legal services, and a wide variety of referral support and regional emergency preparedness activity.

At the national level
Catholic Charities USA serves as the networking and resource organization for all the Catholic Charities agencies nationwide.

For more than 100 years, the non-profit organization has guided and supported the vast network of Catholic Charities agencies (170 nationwide) in a shared mission of providing service to people in need, advocating for justice in social structures, reducing poverty, supporting families, and empowering communities.

While no two diocesan Catholic Charities are the same, the mission of providing help and creating hope is common to all.

In the Diocese of New Ulm, Catholic Charities USA has provided four $10,000 emergency assistance grants to help people following natural disasters. These funds have served as a catalyst for diocesan second collections and other local community contributions totaling nearly $200,000.

Delores Faber of Watkins is grateful for the support she received from Catholic Charities after her home was heavily damaged following a tornado that ripped through her community in 2016. "There is no place like home and I can't emphasize how good it felt to come home this August (2017) after the repairs of the past year and my own physical rehabilitation," said Faber, who was also injured during the storm.

"The power of prayer was first and foremost and the support of Catholic Charities was crucial early in my recovery from the tornado," Faber said.

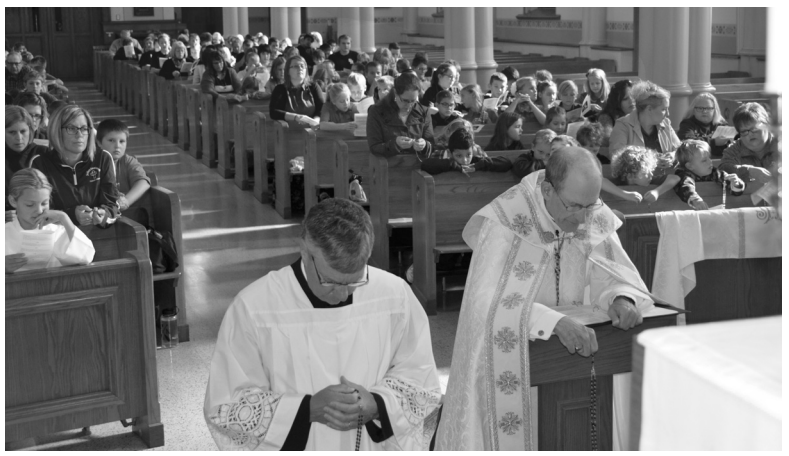
Through the important services provided by the ministry of Catholic Charities, a message of hope permeates that gives those seeking help a sense that beyond the darkness there is light.

Editor's note: To learn more about local services provided by Catholic Charities, visit dnu.org/catholiccharities/ or call toll-free 866-670-5163.

Diocese well represented at National Council of Catholic Women Convention

WASHINGTON – The National Council of Catholic Women, founded March 4, 1920, celebrated its 97th year of service to God and the Church at the NCCW convention held Sept. 6-9, 2017, in Dallas, TX. This year's convention theme was Catholic Women: Living the Joy of the Gospel. Twenty-two people from the Diocese of New Ulm attended the annual gathering, which was one of the largest diocesan delegations to attend this year's event. Those attending the NCCW convention from the diocese are (front row, left), Msgr. Eugene Lozinski, CCW diocesan moderator, Betty Thooft of Tyler, Ronda Mathiowetz of Leavenworth, Julie Kramer of Vesta, Dorothy Vandendriessche of Marshall, Beth Boyle of Tyler. (Middle row): Chris Heiderscheidt of Sleepy Eye, Jan Noyes of Marshall, Sharon Illkman of New Ulm, Annette Rohlik of Lucan, Mary Wiering of Tyler, Roselin Jonas of Hutchinson, Shirley Nowak of Silver Lake, Jody Nomeland of Lake Benton. (Third row): Heather Hoffmann of Sleepy Eye, Marianne Schotzko of Comfrey, Jane Steffes of Hendricks, Betty Strommer of Clara City, Donna Sanders of Cottonwood, Kathy Urban of Glencoe. (Back row): Leanna Olsem of Marshall, Arlene Woelfel of Redwood Falls, Anita Schwartz of Sleepy Eye, Sandi Gunter of Clara City, Sheryl Kaiser of Marshall. *(Contributed photo)*

Annual Children's Holy Field Trip held at Cathedral



Deacon Rick Christiansen (front-left) and Bishop John M. LeVoir pray the Rosary with Catholic elementary school students, home schooled students, and adults during the Oct. 4, 2017, Children's Holy Field Trip held annually at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm. This year, nine of the 14 elementary schools in the diocese participated. *(Photo by Christine Clancy)*

by Julie O'Halloran

NEW ULM - The Diocese of New Ulm held its 14th annual Children's Holy Field Trip on Oct. 4, 2017, at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm with Bishop John M. LeVoir presiding. There were 240 Catholic school students, home schooled students, and adults in attendance. Nine of the fourteen Catholic elementary schools in the diocese were represented.

Those attending experienced beautiful prayer focused on the Rosary and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. The fifth grade students of St. Mary's School of Bird Island were honored to lead the Rosary.

When asked about the day in New Ulm, the students had many positive responses. St. Mary's of Bird Island fifth grader Grayson O'Neill said it was "really cool and exciting" and it made him happy saying the Rosary with all of the many people. "It was an awesome experience. It was peaceful and joyful. I liked it a lot!" said O'Neill.

Classmate Miraya Ryberg also enjoyed the experience. "I really felt closer to God, Jesus, and Mary," Ryberg said. "Later in the day, we learned more about the diocese," she said.

This is the fourth year I have experienced the Children's Holy Field Trip with my students and the second time students in my class led the decades of the Rosary. The Rosary is a powerful prayer to our Blessed Mother that strengthens our lives. In the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in the monstrance, which was present at the altar, the Rosary becomes even more powerful and meaningful.

In a world that is at times surrounded by negativity and violence, it is good to have the opportunity to teach the students to stop and pray, and feel the peace and calm it can bring. Joining with students from other schools is a huge statement on how important prayer is and the common bond the students share.

Following the Rosary, Bishop LeVoir addressed the students with a homily that was practical and easy for them to relate to in their own lives.

Before the prayer service, a number of the schools toured the Cathedral and learned about its history and the meaning of the religious art and paintings. A visit to the Way of the Cross and the pastoral center in New Ulm were also stops for some schools. Typically, students will enjoy lunch at one of the parks in town.

The Children's Holy Field trip was a great day to deepen one's faith no matter what your age.

Julie O'Halloran is a fifth grade teacher at St. Mary Catholic School in Bird Island.

Notice:

Sleepy Eye parish offers Traditional Latin Mass

In the Diocese of New Ulm, the Traditional Latin Mass (the extraordinary form of the Mass), is celebrated Sundays at 11:30 a.m. at the Church of St. Mary, 636 1st Avenue, North, Sleepy Eye.

Overdoses, suicides, gun violence and God-talk

Faith in the Public Arena

by Jason Adkins

Our society is failing to get to the bottom of the issues. We spend our energy trying to treat the symptoms of social crises, while either ignoring or remaining in denial about the deeper problems in today's world, which exist first and foremost within the human heart.

Mass shootings, suicides, drug addiction – the litany of crises goes on. We hear about them all the time. Conferences, rallies, and awareness campaigns sprout up at every turn as we seek solutions and meaningful change.

But unless we address these problems with an eye to the whole of the human person – a union of body and soul made for relationship with God and others – that change will not come.

"Diseases of despair"
For example, a recent column in MinnPost's Health section cited recent statistics from the Minnesota Department of Health showing that drug and alcohol-related mortality and suicide are on the rise. This disturbing trend is attributed to an increase in "diseases of despair," meaning Minnesotans are suffering from an increasing lack of hope, with grave consequences.

The author of the article identifies unemployment, income inequality, and lack of opportunity as the main sources of this hopelessness. The implied solution, therefore, is to intervene in some way to change these socioeconomic conditions, which have fomented widespread despair.

If people are more economically secure and have more opportunities, the thought goes, their sense of hopelessness will disappear.

Although unemployment or opportunity gaps certainly have some explanatory value in this case, the overall approach of the article is a striking example of what Pope Francis calls the "technocratic paradigm" in action.

The technocratic paradigm
In his most recent encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis describes the technocratic paradigm as "the tendency, at times unconscious, to make the method and aims of science and technology an epistemological paradigm which shapes the lives of individuals and the workings of society" (*LS* 107).

A technocratic approach to social crises, then, is one which reduces them to considerations of science – social or hard sciences – and technology *alone*.

Put another way, it's an instance of reducing a complex human problem to simple economics. Hopelessness can allegedly be engineered out of society, if we create the right program or implement the right policy.

Even the term "diseases of despair" is telling. Despair is now considered a disease, and a disease can be treated, for example, by the state health department.

Healing the whole of the human person
Of course, we ought to address the difficult problems of mass shootings, substance abuse and suicide, and use all the means at our disposal to combat them. Yet, though this sort of action is necessary, it is not sufficient. It fails to speak to the whole of the human person, which is why we continue to struggle with solutions.

Despair is not like the flu; it reaches deep into the human soul. For this reason, Pope Francis calls technocratic solutions *one-dimensional*; they address only one aspect of the human person, and often overlook the most important human realities.

The need for God-talk
Is it any wonder that in an increasingly secular society people do not know for whom or for what they are made? Without such knowledge, they develop psychoses, or chase things to fill the God-sized hole in their heart, falling into behaviors that are destructive or that lead them into despair.

As Pope Francis puts it: "When human beings fail to find their true place in this world, they misunderstand themselves and end up acting against themselves" (*LS* 115).

Therefore, we cannot stop at the level of the specifically scientific when it comes to social crises. We must look deeper to the root causes, which lie at the heart of what it means to be human.

It is our duty as Christians to remind people – all people, regardless of belief – that they are made for loving relationships, with God and with others.

Such "God-talk" is not inconsistent with a commitment to pluralism or respecting others. It is, instead, a reminder to all people about the reality of who the human person is – created by God body and soul, which, as the ancients and our nation's Founders could attest, is a truth that can be known by reason outside the light of faith.

Unless we propose an integrated vision of the person, we will be unable to address fully all of the causes of the social crises around us.

Jason Adkins is executive director of the Minnesota Catholic Conference.

ACTION ALERT!
Support the Federal Disaster Assistance Nonprofit Fairness Act

In the aftermath of a natural disaster houses of worship often play an irreplaceable role in the recovery of a community. Discrimination that treats houses of worship as ineligible for federal assistance in the wake of a natural disaster hurts the very communities most affected by the indiscriminate force of nature.

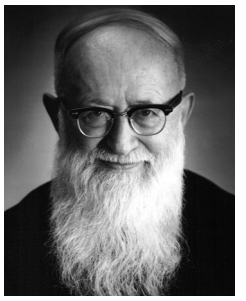
The Federal Disaster Assistance Nonprofit Fairness Act of 2017 (H.R. 2405/ S.1823) will ensure that churches, synagogues, mosques, and other houses of worship damaged in Hurricanes Harvey and Irma, as well as in future disasters, will be eligible for federal financial aid to repair their damaged buildings on the same terms as other, similarly eligible nonprofits which receive aid from FEMA.

Call your senators and representatives today and ask them to support S.1823.
Senator Amy Klobuchar – (612) 727-5220
Senator Al Franken – (651) 221-1016

Representative Tim Walz – (202) 225-2472
Representative Collin Peterson – (202) 225-2165

Bishop grants partial indulgence for Catholics who visit Schoenstatt shrine

Schoenstatt Family Shrine



Fr. Joseph Kentenich

SLEEPY EYE – In conjunction with the Schoenstatt Movement's Jubilee Year commemorating the 50th anniversary of the death of their founder, Servant of God Fr. Joseph Kentenich, Bishop John M. LeVoir has granted a partial indulgence for all Catholics who visit the Schoenstatt Jubilee Family Shrine in Sleepy Eye, Minn., from Oct. 2, 2017 until Sept. 15, 2018.

In addition to the shrine visit, one must have sacramentally confessed one's sins, have received the Holy Eucharist, and have prayed for the intentions of Pope Francis. If one or more of these conditions are not able to be fullfilled on the day of the visit, it may be fullfilled within several days before or after the visit to the shrine.

What is an indulgence?
Indulgences have been a part of Catholic devotional life for centuries.While often misunderstood, the practice of granting and obtaining indulgences is deeply rooted in sacred scripture and Church teaching. Indulgences inspire the faithful to live more fruitful and holy lives, which thereby lead to a more intimate union with Christ and with his Church.

By its very nature, every sin inevitably causes distress. Sin disrupts one's relationship with God, with the Church, with other people, and with the world as a whole. Through the sacrament of Reconciliation, sins are forgiven, and the eternal penalty that is due to sin – namely, damnation, the eternal loss of the presence of God – is taken away. However, consequences still remain. The Church refers to this as temporal punishment and offers the practice of indulgences to bring about further reconciliation and purification.

Indulgences can involve a variety of outward actions such as charitable works or inward reflections and prayer, which remove the temporal punishment and unite us more closely to Christ and his Church. They are termed *partial* or *plenary* to correspond to the removal of part or all of the temporal punishment.

Current practice
While the sacrament of Reconciliation remains the only ordinary means of reconciliation with God and with the Church, indulgences are offered as an extraordinary means of grace, which may lead to deeper conversion.

The Church has a longstanding tradition to live more virtuously as Christian disciples. In drawing closer to Jesus, we renew our hope for reconciliation, and we bear witness to our trust in our merciful Father.

Sources used: *Indulgences and Our Spiritual Life,* USCCB

*Catechism of the Cath*olic Church, #1471-1484

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Total distribution	23,571	23,302
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Total	**23,692**	**23,402**

Upcoming opportunities for youth and young adults

by Kevin Losleben

This past summer, the Diocese of New Ulm hosted its 2017 annual boys' and girls' summer camps. This year, however, each camp received a new name to better fit the charism of each camp.

The girls' camp – formerly called Young Women's Discipleship Camp – has focused over the years on embracing one's identity as a beloved daughter of God, who has worth and dignity in the eyes of our Heavenly Father. In a culture that often sees sexuality as something to be chosen, the aptly named Camp Beloved emphasizes our God-given sexuality as a gift to be cherished and embraced.

Formerly called Young Men's Discipleship Camp, the boys' camp challenges the mediocrity that society encourages young men to fall into. Thus, the diocesan boys' camp received the name Camp Greatness.

Check out www.dnu.org/youth for next summer's camp dates.

Upcoming events

The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry is excited to host a number of events this school year.

– Set in a candlelit church, *Cor Jesu* features contemporary praise music, a brief sermon, and provides an excellent opportunity for people of all ages (and stages in their walk with Christ) to get to know our Lord in a prayerful setting. The event is hosted by various parishes throughout the diocese. There are six dates set for the 2017-18 academic year. Visit www.dnu.org/cor-jesu.

– The Diocesan Youth Council exists to give youth of the diocese an opportunity to grow deeper in their faith by providing opportunities for fellowship, intellectual growth, spiritual growth, and human development.

– Nov. 12 is Invite–a–Friend Sunday, to be held from 2-6 p.m. at the Church of St. Aloysius in Olivia. Join us for games, a talk, and Vespers. Meet new friends from around the diocese.

– From Nov. 16-19, youth from across the nation will gather in Indianapolis, Ind., for the National Catholic Youth Conference. Hosted by the National Federation of Catholic Youth Ministry, the theme this year is "Called | Llamados." Contact your local youth ministry coordinator for more information.

– The Broom Tree Retreat is for youth in grades 9-12 who wish to go deeper in their relationship with Christ. Focusing on prayer and continuing conversion, the retreat is held at the Broom Tree Youth and Family Camp in Irene, S.Dak. Last year's pilot program went very well and many of the youth who attended look forward to next year's retreat Jan. 19-21. Visit www.dnu.org/broom-tree-retreat.

Kevin Losleben is the director of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of New Ulm. Contact him at klosleben@dnu.org; 507-233-5327.

Pilgrimage to Our Lady shrine

LaCROSSE, WIS. – On Aug. 16, 2017, New Ulm diocesan priests Fr. Mark Steffl (back, far left) and Fr. Tony Hesse (far right), led 50 parishoners from Redwood Falls, Morton, Wabasso, Lucan, Seaforth, Wanda, and Morgan on a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in LaCrosse, Wis., a shrine dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Included in the pilgrimage was Mass at the shrine church, a tour, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and many opportunities to pray together.

(Contributed photo)

40 Days for Life campaign launched

by Debra Skelley Blaschko
Prairie Catholic Correspondent

MANKATO – People who thought they would never pray in front of a Planned Parenthood facility are doing just that in Mankato. Ordinary people are standing up to protect the unborn, the aged, and the vulnerable; and it is being done in a spirit of peace and caring.

The seventh annual 40 Days for Life prayer campaign to end abortion was launched on Sept. 24 at Ray Erlandson Park in Mankato. The keynote address was given by Dan Miller, State Director of Pro-Life Wisconsin.

For the duration of the pro-life campaign, (Sept. 27 to Nov. 5), there will be people praying daily in front of the Planned Parenthood facility at the Belle Mar Mall in Mankato.

While abortions are not performed at the Mankato site, Miller told the group of about 40 people, that the site is a "feeder facility" and these facilities are just as dangerous as the abortion facilities. "I have many friends who are post-abortive. Every single one of them went to a Planned Parenthood feeder facility and found out they were pregnant," Miller said. They were then referred to another location for the abortion.

"Somebody asked me to join in the 40 Days for Life campaign in January 2010 and I told him that I would rather have all four wisdom teeth pulled than go out in front of an abortion facility and pray," Miller said.

"But my friend said, you know it's changed a lot . . . we're not out there yelling at people and screaming at people, we're out there praying the Rosary," said Miller.

Some campaign volunteers are trained to do sidewalk counseling, which can help lead mothers to choose life for their babies. Miller's first-time sidewalk counseling experience was awkward and imperfect, but in the end resulted in a baby being saved from being aborted. Miller explained that after he had a conversation with a woman and her boyfriend who were considering an abortion, the woman ended up walking across the street to the pregnancy resource center where she was able to receive the care and guidance she needed to give birth to a son. That young boy became Miller's godson and is six years old now.

MANKATO – The annual 40 Days for Life prayer campaign to end abortion was launched Sept. 24 at Ray Erlandson Park in Mankato with an address by Dan Miller, state director of Pro-life Wisconsin.
(Photo by Debra Skelley Blaschko)

When addressing the crowd, Mankato 40 Days for Life campaign director, Mary Flanagan said that there is hope because the face of the prolife movement is becoming younger as people in their 20s and 30s have joined the ranks. "We are really lucky to have a triangle of prolife here," said Flanagan.

"We have 40 Days for Life which is the prayer portion of the battle, we have a chapter of Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life which tracks the political side of things, then we have Options for Women and Birthright to love the women and provide resources for them so that they can choose life for their babies," Flanagan said.

Joining Flanagan on the stage was Emily Luke, president of the newly organized Options for Women student group at Minnesota State University in Mankato. They hope to make students aware of available resources in Mankato should they face an unplanned or challenging pregnancy.

"In order for abortion to end, people of faith and prayer have to go out and put their lives on the line to show that witness, that Light of Christ to those who are in trouble, in need, and point them in the direction where they can get help like Options for Women here locally. That's who we are . . . We are not here to condemn, we are here to help," Miller said.

Editor's note: 40 Days for Life is a focused pro-life campaign started in 2007 after a Planned Parenthood opened at College Station, Texas. Currently, more than 375 locations across the United States and 24 other countries participate in the fall prayer vigil. For information about how you can get involved in the prayer campaign visit https://40daysforlife.com/.

Have you been married 65 years or more?

The Prairie Catholic will be honoring couples who are members of a parish in the Diocese of New Ulm and will be celebrating a 65th or beyond wedding anniversary in the year 2018. Complete this form and return it, along with a **current photograph** ***(no newspaper clippings, please)***, by Nov. 30, 2017, to The Prairie Catholic, 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073, or e-mail them to cclancy@dnu.org. Announcements will be featured in the January/February 2018 edition.

Groom's Name: _____ Bride's **MAIDEN** Name: _____

Parish and City Where You Were Married: _____ Date Married: _____

Number of Years Married As of Dec. 31, 2018: _____

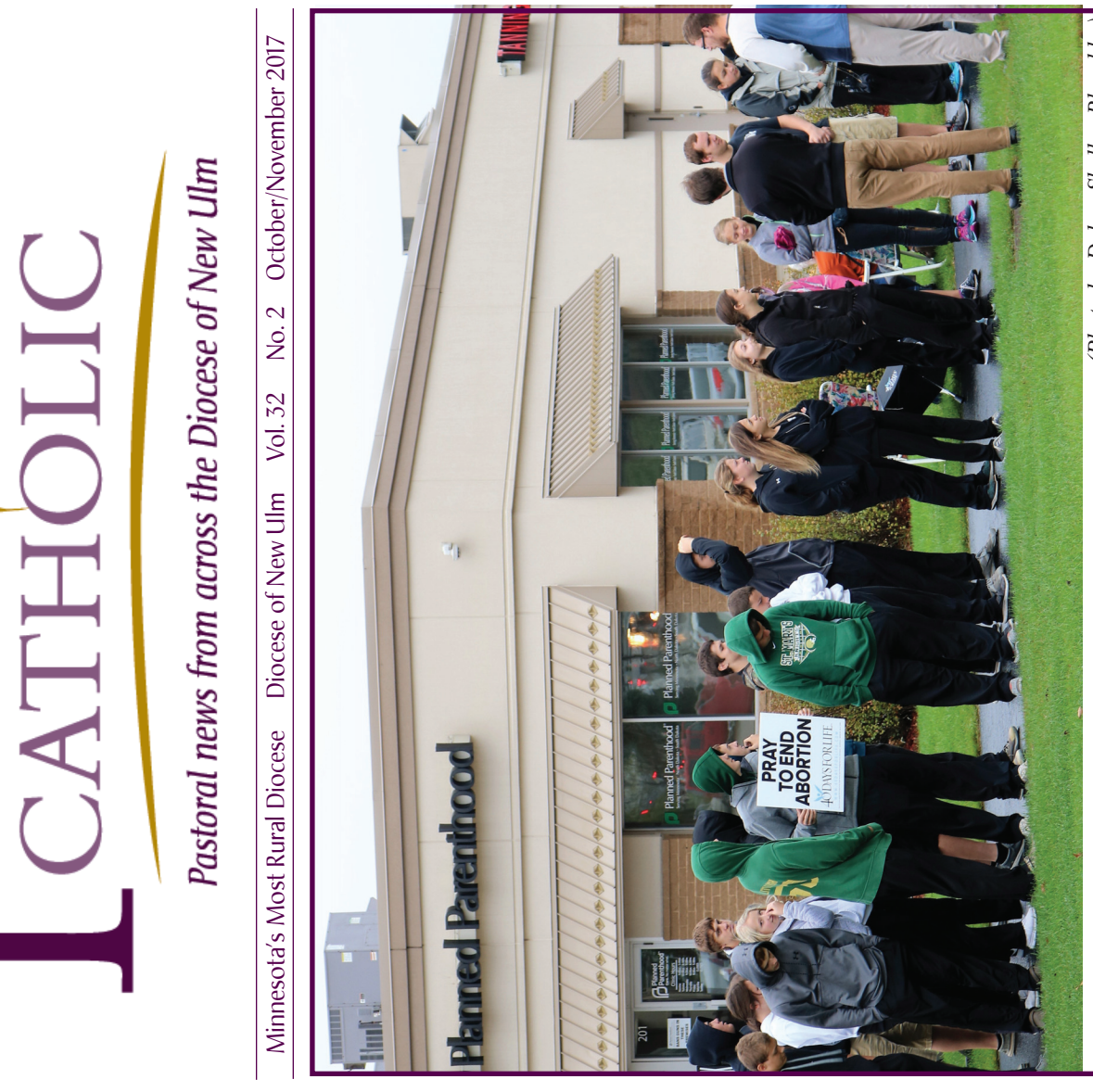
Current Parish: _____ City: _____

Contact Phone Number or E-mail: _____

THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese | Diocese of New Ulm | Vol. 32 | No. 2 | October/November 2017



(Photo by Debra Skelley Blaschko)

Students take a stand for the protection of life!

MANKATO – On Oct. 3, 2017, St. Mary's Sleepy Eye junior and senior high school principal Andrew Bach and teacher Neil Kirchoeffer led their 9th and 10th grade students in praying the Rosary while standing in front of the Planned Parenthood facility in Mankato. The group made the school trip to Mankato as part of the 40 Days for Life prayer campaign to end abortion. The goal of the quiet and peaceful assembly was to educate and inspire the community about hope and options like adoption for women who may be challenged with a difficult and personal decision that may first arise during a visit to the clinic.

(Read more about the 40 Days for Life campaign on page 11.)

catholic trends

VATICAN CITY (CNA/EWTN News) – In a written speech on Sept. 21, 2017, Pope Francis reiterated the Catholic Church's commitment to the protection of minors from sexual abuse, stating that the Church will continue to take a "zero tolerance" stance against offenders.

"Let me say quite clearly that sexual abuse is a horrible sin, completely opposite and in contradiction to what Christ and the Church teach us," the pope's prepared remarks stated.

"That is why, I reiterate today once again that the Church, at all levels, will respond with the application of the most firm measures to all those who have betrayed their call and abused the children of God."

Pope Francis addressed members of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors at the opening of their plenary assembly in September.

The Church "irrevocably and at all levels seeks to apply the principle of 'zero tolerance' against sexual abuse of minors," the pope continued.

He explained that the disciplinary measures which have been adopted by particular churches must apply to everyone who works within the institutions of the Church.

"However, the primary responsibility is of the bishops, priests, and religious, of those who have received the vocation to offer their lives to the service, including the vigilant protection of all vulnerable children, young people, and adults," he continued.

The pope noted how he has personally had the privilege of listening to the stories of victims and survivors of abuse and that in these encounters people have openly shared the effects that sexual abuse has had on their lives and on the lives of their families.

The Holy Father said that he wanted to share at that gathering the "profound pain I feel in my soul for the situation of abused children." The sexual abuse scandal is, he continued, "a terrible ruin for the whole of humanity" affecting vulnerable children, young people and adults in every country and society.

The whole experience has also been "very painful" for the Church and is something "we are ashamed of," he said.

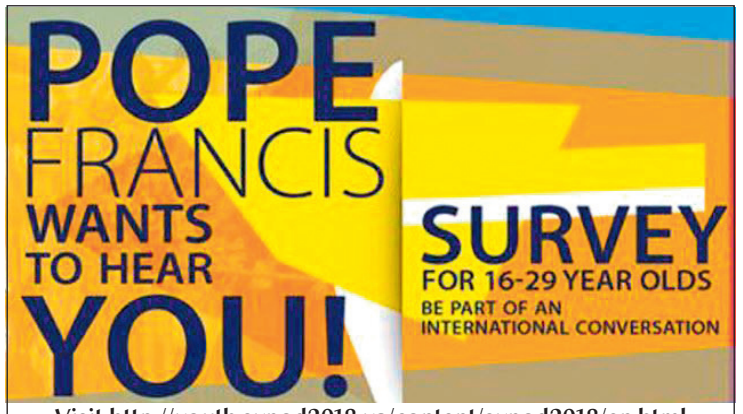
"But we have also experienced a call, which we are sure comes directly from our Lord Jesus Christ: to embrace the mission of the Gospel for the protection of all vulnerable minors and adults."

Following the audience with Pope Francis, he said the commission will hold their plenary assembly to continue to discuss these projects and prepare recommendations for the Pope for the continued work of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors.

The pope said that the Church is called to be "a place of piety and compassion, especially for those who have suffered."

"I am fully confident that the (Pontifical) Commission will continue to be a place where we can listen with interest to the voices of the victims and the survivors. Because we have much to learn from them and their personal stories of courage and perseverance," the pope said.

WASHINGTON - On Oct. 3, 2017, the U.S. House passed the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, which bans abortions after 20 weeks of gestation, about the time doctors have determined that an unborn child can feel pain. Introduced by Rep. Trent Franks, R-Arizona, it would punish doctors who perform an abortion after 20 weeks, except in cases of rape, incest, or if the life of the mother is threatened. Physicians could face up to five years in prison. Women seeking abortions would not be penalized under the bill. President Trump said he would sign the measure if it reached his desk. The Senate still must schedule consideration of the bill, but that seemed unlikely.



Visit http://youth.synod2018.va/content/synod2018/en.html
"Documents" (pull-down menu)