



THE BISHOP'S BULLETIN

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THE VIRTUE OF
HUMILITY

LEARNING TO SURRENDER
TO OUR LITTLENESS



God's greatness shines through our humility



When I think of humility as I look back on my 55 years of life, what stirs in my heart and mind is how much humble people and our humble God have inspired me.

I think of my parents who came from humble beginnings in farm families trying to get settled in America. Neither of them liked having to speak in public or be on church committees, but they loved just being on the farm doing their daily tasks as farmers. As country school students for most of their education years and the need to work hard to get ahead, they learned the value of humble beginnings, humble lifestyles, and a humble disposition before God.

When I think of humility, I think of my severely disabled uncle Donnie who humbly needed someone else to feed him, help him go to the bathroom, even bathe him. His humble need helped me to eventually discover that while I can do the things he couldn't, he taught me that realizing everything we have is a gift from God often shared through others.

He also taught me that if we offer "what little we have" (everything), God makes those little offerings into great spiritual and material gifts fruitful. I know first hand the incredible power of Donnie's humble prayers that continue to produce incredible spiritual fruits in my life.

When I think of people who choose to be humble, I think of the many men and women in my life who have lived humble lives: my aunts who took vows of poverty, the religious sisters and lay men and women who taught me in school or college with no or little pay. I think of the humble parishioners I have met through the years who humbly share their time, talent and treasure for the glory of God, the good of the church or others.

I think the men and women who let God's gifts to them radiate throughout the world, like St. Teresa of Calcutta, St. John Paul II and others, show us in little or big ways how to live in the truth that everything we have and are is because

of God's gracious blessings. They freely share those blessings in the way God has planned for their lives whether that be the disabled, the consecrated, lay or clergy men and women who give all the glory to God and live and share in their poverty so God can use our littleness to bring about His greatness through each of us.

The most humble of all beings is God who, out of love, created us in His image and likeness, humbled Himself to become man in the person of Jesus to suffer and die for our sins, and the Holy Spirit who continues to pour forth grace into the hearts of those who are humble enough to realize all is gift from our great God. May God in His greatness and humility help us to live in the truth of how much He loves us and give us all good things so that in our humility His greatness can shine throughout the world to the glory of His goodness.

In a simple way, I think of humility as the awareness that everything we have and who we are is because God blessed us with that "everything." Pride, on the other hand, is when we take credit for the good things God has blessed us with, or we, in false humility, don't acknowledge the truth that those good things in and through us are because of God's giftedness to us.

The truth of who we are is as God knows us to be. Pride, on the other hand, is to believe we are something other than what we really are or to take credit for something that God has given us but we take the credit for it.

Let us follow the example of Our Blessed Mother, Mary. According to St. John Paul II, the foundation of her holiness was her deep humility: she was "fully aware of her own littleness before the greatness of God. In the truth Mary beholds herself, others and the world" (homily for All Saints Day, November 1, 2000). Let us follow her example and see all things, including ourselves, with the Lord's vision.

 See more from the Bishop on next page

Thank you Father Mike Griffin

Reminder: The bishop's schedule is subject to change due to current circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic. Changes to his schedule and any Masses will be updated on the diocesan website as information is available.

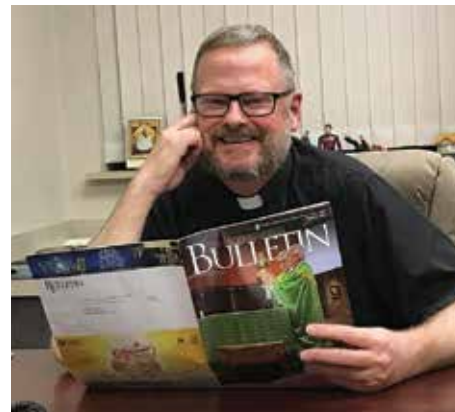
January

- 2 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph, broadcast on Keloland TV or live stream via sf catholic.org
- 7 Christmas party with diocesan staff
- 9-15 Region VIII Bishop's Retreat and Conference
- 16 4:00 Confirmation, St. Ann (Geddes), St. Peter the Apostle (Platte) at St. Ann
- 17 1:30 Confirmation, Sacred Heart (Yankton), St. Benedict (Yankton) at St. Benedict
- 20 7:00 Confirmation, St. Mary (Sioux Falls)
- 30 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph, broadcast on Keloland TV or live stream via sf catholic.org
- 31 1:30 Confirmation, St. Michael (Sioux Falls), Christ the King (Sioux Falls) at Cathedral of Saint Joseph

February

- 3 8:40 Catholic Schools Week Mass, St. Mary High School, Dell Rapids
- 1:30 Catholic Schools Week Mass, Aberdeen Catholic Schools, Roncalli High School
- 4 8:30 Catholic Schools Week Mass, St. Lawrence Catholic School, Milbank
- 1:00 Catholic Schools Week Mass, St. Thomas Aquinas, Madison
- 6 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph, broadcast on Keloland TV or live stream via sf catholic.org

Thank you Father Mike Griffin for your nearly 30 years of humble service as The Bishop's Bulletin executive editor. On behalf of all our readers and staff who have been blessed by your humble service and sharing of your time and talents, may our great God reward you!



In Gratitude,

+ Donald E. DeGrood

Safe environment commitment of the Diocese of Sioux Falls...

...in order to be effective in fulfilling her mission to evangelize and to remain true to Christ's calling for us all, the Church's ministries and institutions must be safe places for both children and adults. The Diocese, therefore, pledges to preserve safe environments in all of its facilities and catechetical programs. Those clergy, religious, diocesan, parish and school employees, and volunteers who collectively carry out the Church's ministries, remain committed to fulfilling this solemn pledge to protect those children entrusted to her for formation in the Catholic faith.

Aware that some who have ministered in the name of the Church have caused harm, the Diocese of Sioux Falls also pledges to assist any who may have been harmed. As a diocese, we desire to help individuals heal from injury that has been caused to them. If you or someone you know has been abused, regardless of who caused the harm, please contact us. We promise to cooperate with civil authorities in any investigation. We promise to do our best to help facilitate a process for healing. Whether the need is for counseling, an opportunity to tell your story or something else, as a diocese, we are ready to assist.

Our chancellor or victim assistance coordinator can be reached toll free at 1-800-700-7867 or 605-334-9861. We will do our best to help.



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Bishop's initiative provides insight on challenging culture

By Renae Kranz

The first generations of Christians, led by the Apostles, faced an enormous challenge after Pentecost: convert to Christianity a world hostile to the good news of Christ's resurrection and the gift of salvation. They faced great persecution and even death, but their work and the perseverance of many generations after them built a Christian culture that has survived for centuries. This was a culture built on the foundations of Christian faith and Catholic institutions that made practicing faith a natural part of life.

That Christian culture, known as Christendom, is now gone.

In the early '70s, Archbishop Fulton Sheen said of the state of Christianity, "We are at the end of Christendom. Not of Christianity, not of the Church, but of Christendom. Now what is meant by Christendom? Christendom is economic, political, social life as inspired by Christian principles. That is ending—we've seen it die."

That sounds really bad, doesn't it? But Archbishop Sheen assured us this was not all bad news.

"These are great and wonderful days in which to be alive. ... It is not a gloomy

picture—it is a picture of the Church in the midst of increasing opposition from the world. And therefore live your lives in full consciousness of this hour of testing, and rally close to the heart of Christ."

Bishop Donald DeGrood wants to help us understand where we stand in our culture today, how to live as Catholics within it, and even how to grow the Church in the midst of opposition. And it's all tied into his vision of *Lifelong Catholic Missionary Discipleship Through God's Love*.

A new initiative

With the bishop's wonderful vision in mind, he has tasked both Father Scott Traynor and Dr. Chris Burgwald to head up a new initiative to help lay and ordained alike understand where we are now and where we need to go as Catholics. It all starts with the help of an insightful book, "From Christendom to Apostolic Mission: Pastoral Strategies for an Apostolic Age" from the University of Mary.

"I was fortunate that someone recommended this book to me," Bishop DeGrood said. "When I read it, I was impacted by the significant insights it offered to help me understand more fully what happened to the

world, our country and our church related to losing such great moral and spiritual values as a culture."

The bishop says he had some sense about what was happening in the world and the Church, but the book helped to clarify many things.

"As I read the book it was like a veil was lifted so I could see so much more clearly what was happening," the bishop said. "The insights resonated in my heart as I pondered and prayed on them. My heart was lit on fire with an 'aha, now I see' moment of understanding. I am now motivated to change how I approach the challenges we face in our culture and my ministry as a bishop."

To start this initiative, Bishop DeGrood has sent a copy of this book to all priests, deacons, seminarians and religious, as well as all parish and school staff members and staff at the Chancery. This group has been invited to go through a book study during Advent and the first part of the new year in order to get a good handle on what the bishop wants us all to learn from this book.

Bishop has invited parishes to consider offering a study of the book for their parishioners. To help parishes facilitate this effort,

bulk book orders will be made available to parishes along with short video overviews of each chapter featuring Father Scott and Dr. Burgwald. Small group conversations will be encouraged, but individual study can also be done.

Why now?

In light of the bishop's vision, we need to align everything in the diocese so every parish and school, every Catholic group and family is all about *Lifelong Catholic Missionary Discipleship Through God's Love* and can contribute to growing the Church, even in a time when we live in a secular culture that is trying to reduce the Church's influence. The goal is to help everyone get to heaven by living our lives according to God's will and plan for each of us.

Father Scott describes Christendom as a time when even if people were very passive about their faith, the culture led them naturally toward God and the Church. You could be like a stick floating downstream and still find God. In the secular culture we now find ourselves in, if you just go along with the flow and the culture, you will be led away from Christ and the Church.

This applies directly to parish life, according to Father Scott. He says if we keep assuming the passive things we do will attract others to the Church, we will continue to see a decline in our parish families and in those seeking God. It's the reason Bishop DeGrood has created his vision for us. He wants to help as many people as possible receive God's love, and this book is a good way to start this new path of deepening friendship with God by understanding the cultural influences of our day.

"The book is really important because we're living in a different cultural situation today, and this initiative of lifelong Catholic missionary discipleship is a response to that new cultural situation," Father Scott says. "So the more people can understand what's at stake in this cultural shift, the more they'll understand the importance of pursuing the vision the bishop has placed before us."

The challenge of living as a Catholic in a secular culture can be a little frightening. But Father Scott points out there are real opportunities for followers of Christ in this time. And

if we know what the challenges will be, we can be prepared to face them effectively.

Up to the challenge

Remember the stick I talked about earlier, floating downstream? Our challenge is to not be that dead stick. Instead, Father Scott says we must be actively swimming upstream, against the current of our secular society. And while we're swimming, we should be on fire for Christ.

"It has always been important to live our faith deeply in an integral way and in a fruitful way. It's what we're called to do," he says. "Jesus desires that we would live in intimate and unceasing communion of love with Him, that it would no longer be we who live, but He who lives in us. This is always the call and invitation of Christ and His Church, to live in relationship with God, to live our faith. That's always important because salvation is on the line. The way I choose to live today has eternal consequences. So it's more important for us to be more integrally alive in our faith so we don't get swept away by the culture."

We have to make an intentional effort to grow in our relationship with God and help others do the same thing, but Father Scott reminds us it must be done with love. We have to be careful in this challenging time

to not become judgmental or condemning in our actions toward others, and then remember that God has a gift He wants for every person.

"In love for them, I want what's best for them, too," Father Scott says. "That's our call as disciples of Jesus Christ. Every person I meet is a battleground. No person I meet is the enemy. That's really important in God's love."

Keep the right mindset

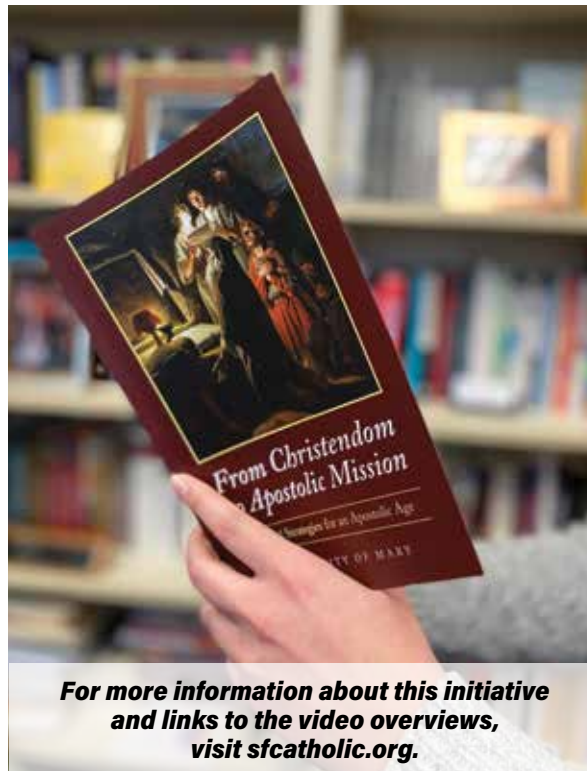
With all this opportunity and need to help grow the Church, the very body of Christ, we may feel some frustration when things aren't happening as quickly as we would like. Living the bishop's vision will be a real challenge and is a long-term effort. The Apostles didn't convert the world overnight. Father Scott and the bishop want us to remember we aren't alone in this fight for souls.

"It's really important to understand that in all things, it's God who does the heavy lifting. None of us, no matter how passionate we are or how deeply we believe, can change the hearts and minds of another human being," Father Scott emphasizes. "What we can do is engage relationally with them to create a favorable environment in the way that we interact with them to receive that grace they can only receive from God.

"When I'm letting him do the heavy lifting, I'm not trying to be God. I'm letting God be God, but I'm ready to say, 'Here I am, Lord. Send me.' There's always joy and ease and peace."

Father Scott thinks this book and initiative will be encouraging and comforting to the average Catholic and will give them the language they need to understand why it feels more challenging to live their faith today.

As for Bishop DeGrood, he just wants us to receive God's love and share it with others. "My hope and prayer is that many people will read the book and see the cultural challenges we find ourselves in. If we call upon God to bless us with the graces of the Apostolic Age, we will be happier than we ever have been in the past because we are saying to God, 'Fill me with your life and love and then watch what happens.'"



For more information about this initiative and links to the video overviews, visit sf catholic.org.

Pride is a sneaky sin. It's the sin of the Fall in the Garden of Eden. It creeps around seeking the ruin of souls.

It seems like pride would be easy to recognize since it's considered by many to be the root of sin, but it's surprisingly stealthy in its manifestations. One way we often see it is when we think to ourselves, "I can do this on my own." Or it could be, "I don't need God for this." Or even, "Look at all the good I've done."

It's an easy trap to fall into—we want to be our own god. This was the sin of Adam and Eve, and it continues to be our biggest downfall.

God didn't leave us without an antidote, however. There is one virtue that is a powerful weapon against the sin of pride: the virtue of humility.

RECOGNIZING PRIDE

Father Jeff Norfolk, pastor at Risen Savior Parish in Brandon, has seen the devastation of prideful thinking firsthand during his time as a priest, as a chaplain in South Dakota prisons, and as a person who has lived in the culture for 40 years. He sees the problem starting from a young age when children are taught they have to make themselves successful, that it all depends on them. After five years of working on college campuses in his priesthood, he saw kids work really hard, but they couldn't be what they wanted to be.

"That's really devastating when you teach someone that and then it doesn't come to fruition," Father Norfolk says. "I think that's really detrimental to how we live as human beings. And it's so contrary to who God made us to be."



THE VIRTUE OF HUMILITY

LEARNING TO SURRENDER TO OUR LITTLENESS

by Renae Kranz



FATHER JEFF NORFOLK, PASTOR RISEN SAVIOR PARISH, BRANDON

Father Norfolk sees how pride can act as a root of each of the other seven deadly sins: greed, lust, envy, gluttony, wrath and sloth. When we try to make ourselves happy or successful without God, it's easy to fall into gluttony or lust or greed because we begin to grasp after these things rather than reaching out for God. Or when an obstacle pops up in life and suffering follows it, we allow anger and rage to consume us because things didn't turn out how we wanted.

Even sloth or laziness begins with pride. When we feel like we can do whatever we want with our time with no consequences, we might decide to be lazy. Because it's our time, we will determine how to use it. God doesn't come into play at all.



LOIS HERON, PARISHIONER AT THE CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JOSEPH

When you start to really consider all the ways pride rears its head, it can become overwhelming to try to overcome it. Lois Heron, parishioner at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph, has actively struggled with pride almost her whole life. She calls it her besetting sin, meaning something that troubles her persistently.

At one point in her life when she and her family were facing a deep struggle, she found herself turning inward to handle the problems on her own. She created thick and high boundaries around herself because of her pride, but she came to realize she needed to pray about it. That was the beginning of recognizing the pride she was holding onto.

“I was already acquainted with the saints and the Scriptures and praying with the Lord about it, but I didn’t have the tools to work through it,” Lois said. “This is where God’s grace came in through our journey.”

It was at this time that she and her husband were making their way into the Catholic Church from Protestantism. Hope came back slowly as she prayed, and she longed for the Eucharist and confession to help her through her trials. Once she was able to receive both of those sacraments, her struggle broke open and she began to gain traction in her fight against pride. She says she felt a bit like Jacob after wrestling with God in Genesis.

“Those were very difficult years, but I wouldn’t trade them for anything because what they’ve done for me, what they’ve done for my husband, what we’ve seen unfold

in our family and the miraculous healing in the trauma that we were experiencing. I had to go through those. The Lord had to allow it,” Lois says. “That seemed to be a big catalyst for really helping me to gain traction in humbling myself.”

Father Norfolk suggests some very concrete ways to recognize pride in our own lives. The best way is to be attentive to our thoughts as we go through our day and notice any patterns of pride, self-reliance or a false self-security that develop. Ask yourself why you were anxious or angry in a specific situation. Those thoughts usually arise because we feel a loss of control and we don’t like that feeling.

He says we should also be attentive to our feelings and desires. If the things you desire don’t materialize the way you want, are you upset? Or can you accept your new situation?

Another way to spot pride is to pay special attention to your own self-talk. In recalling the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:9-14), the Pharisee’s pride had him extolling his own supposed virtues and comparing himself (a righteous man in his own eyes) to the tax collector who prayed nearby. The tax collector, who knew he was a sinner and needed God’s mercy, beat his breast and wouldn’t even look up to heaven as he prayed. This is a stark picture of the difference between pride and humility.

With this in mind, Father Norfolk says to be aware of times we might be affirming ourselves and ask this question, “Why am I not receiving that affirmation from God? Why does it have to come from myself?”

“This is part of the reason I think silence is so important is so I can receive the Father’s affirmation,” Father Norfolk says. “And I don’t get caught in myself trying to affirm and trying to make myself feel good about myself, because that’s self-focused, that’s self-centered.”

In Father Norfolk’s experience, we as Americans have an especially hard time with pride because of everything we have available to us. Since we can get pretty much anything we want, it’s hard to feel a need for God. But the need is real. He has a plan for us that is better than any of our own plans. It may not be a plan with a smooth path, but it will lead us to the joy of a deep relationship with our Creator.

“When it comes to a relationship with Jesus, it’s not about working harder, it’s about giving yourselves over more to him,” Father Norfolk says. “And so it’s this contrast of how we’ve been taught and formed for so long, and now Christ comes and says, ‘Actually, I don’t want you to do more. I want you to let ME do more.’”

It requires surrender.

FREEDOM THROUGH HUMILITY

In Matthew 18:3 Jesus says, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” That verse speaks to Father Norfolk of the need not to become little, but to accept that we ARE little. It’s an important distinction to accept that we don’t need to be made little. We’re already little. We need Jesus to help us accept our littleness.

“As human beings, we’re already weak and we’re finite and we have limitations, but we don’t accept that well,” Father Norfolk says. “So for me, part of the key of becoming childlike is just to accept that I’m limited and that I have weaknesses and instead of getting frustrated or angry, I just turn to Jesus and say, ‘Here I am again, acknowledging my littleness, accepting my littleness. Thank you for your grace. Thank you for your love. Please help me to become strong. Please help me to recognize how much I need you.’”

Both Father Norfolk and Lois often turn to prayers like the Litany of Humility and the Litany of Trust to help them pray through their struggles with pride and ask Jesus for help. They also both turn to our Blessed Mother Mary and her Magnificat as a beautiful example of humility. From the beginning of her Immaculate Conception, God gave Mary graces she could not accomplish on her own.

Father Norfolk points out that Mary begins her Magnificat in the Gospel of Luke by rejoicing in God’s goodness to her. Then she makes a bold statement: “All generations will call me blessed.” Father Norfolk says that sounds very prideful, but that is not what Mary is expressing.

“She understands what God has done in her life, and she’s claiming that,” Father Norfolk says. “Mary accepts who she is. In my littleness he’s reached out to me, he’s provided for me. And then this is who he’s made me to be. I think the Magnificat is a powerful place to look to.”

Lois also sees the value of Mary’s rejoicing and prays it every morning.

“Those first few words, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my savior.’ There’s the attitude I should have,” Lois says. “And then the next line is, ‘For he has regarded the lowest state of his handmaiden.’ And when I’m praying that, I think the lowest state, my pride. And he’s looked on that. But my job is to magnify the Lord and keep my eyes fixed on Him. And then that fiat comes little by little.”

Humility puts our focus back on God and helps us be honest with ourselves about who we really are: not our own god, but children of God the Most High. Eve couldn’t accept her identity and grasped for something that wasn’t hers. Mary accepts and humbly makes her fiat to God at the annunciation.

Father Norfolk works daily toward this acceptance and humility rather than grasping and falling back into pride. He says he has to be honest with himself about falling short on loving well, being patient or having it all together.

“So I have the willingness and the honesty to accept who I’m not. And yet also the truth, that by your grace and by your transforming power of being in relationship with you, I can become, in union with you, who you made me to be,” Father Norfolk says in his own fiat.

He says the greatest tool we have to grow in humility is gratitude. Being grateful every day turns our hearts back to God and holds our gaze on Him instead of ourselves.

The tools Lois turns to most in her struggle with pride are sacrifice, uniting her suffering and her joys with Christ, and living the sacramental life. The same tools can help shore up our own struggles. All throughout the fight against pride, God never leaves us alone.

LET LOOSE THE BONDS

Lois has noticed during her long struggle with the sin of pride that just when she gets one facet of it taken care of, a new facet will pop up for attention. “We can’t handle Him cleaning out every closet all at once. And so in fits and starts in life, I’ve been humbled and I’ve submitted to the humbling,” she says.

As a visual person, Lois compares working through the many manifestations of pride to the raising of Lazarus by Jesus. When Lazarus stood in front of the crowd, he was bound with strips of burial cloth, and Jesus told them, “Unbind him, and let him go.” (John 11:44) Lois sees that as a picture of transformation.

“Sometimes when I’m going through a lesson on pride, it’s like I feel some of the bandages or the death chords being unwrapped by the Lord as I cooperate,” Lois says. “Slowly over time, it loosens, but He only leads us as much as we can be led at any given point.”

It’s taken many years to learn humility for Lois, and God has only given her what she was ready for at the time. She says it’s been like teaching a baby to walk as He holds her hand to help her learn.

“He’s going to release his grip little by little to see if I’m learning that humility thing yet. And maybe, maybe not. Or then I fall,” Lois says. “And it seems like all of life’s been like that, but each time I’m learning to walk. So each time I’m learning humility.”

Thankfully Lois has seen that the Lord is patient, not only with her, but with all of us. Confession has been a key component in learning humility for her, along with the Eucharist and good spiritual direction.

“The Lord is faithful to bring just little moments, words from people I trust, sacred Scripture, a homily, just a moment in nature, and it’s like he’s giving me nuggets,” she says. “But I have to stay in tune and open. And there’s the rub, but that’s where confession helps, I think because the more you confess it, the more open you become.”

It all comes back to humility. Jacques Philippe captures it well in his book, “Interior Freedom.”

“Humility is truth. I am what I am in God’s eyes: a poor child who possesses absolutely nothing, who receives everything, infinitely loved and totally free. I have received everything in advance from the freely bestowed love of my Father, who said to me definitively: ‘All that is mine is yours.’”



LITANY OF HUMILITY

O Jesus! Meek and humble of heart,
Hear me.
From the desire of being esteemed
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being loved
Deliver me Jesus.
From the desire of being extolled
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being honored
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being praised
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being preferred to others
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being consulted
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the desire of being approved
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being humiliated
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being despised
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of suffering rebukes
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being calumniated
Deliver me, Jesus.

From the fear of being forgotten
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being ridiculed
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being wronged
Deliver me, Jesus.
From the fear of being suspected
Deliver me, Jesus.

That others may be loved more than I,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be esteemed more than I
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase
and I may decrease,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be chosen and I set aside,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be praised and I unnoticed,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may be preferred to me in everything,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.
That others may become holier than I, provided that I
may become as holy as I should,
Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.

Amen

It seems like the Church has too many rules



How do I answer others who complain that the Catholic Church is all about rules?



It's unfortunately the case that many people—including many Catholics—believe that the Church is overly focused on “rules,” particularly when it comes to questions of morality. There are a number of ways to respond to these sorts of questions and complaints; this month I'm going to focus on a couple possible responses.

First, it's worth noting that while it can seem to some that the Church is all about “no”—what we can't or shouldn't do—the truth of the matter is that ultimately, the Church is about “yes”: about our yes to God and to our neighbor, about our love for Him and them, and about their true happiness and our own. All of our recent popes have been highlighting the importance of showing that the Catholic life is not one of toil or drudgery but of joy and fulfillment. Pope Francis' most important document, for example, is tellingly titled “The Joy of the Gospel.” The “yes” of our faith was a major theme of Pope Benedict, and St. Pope John Paul II repeatedly spoke about and lived a life of profound Christian joy. All of the “no's” of the Church, then, are about enabling and empowering us to say “yes” more easily.

Relatedly, it's important people understand the Church does not “make up” sins, that popes, bishops and priests do not “decide” to make certain things sinful. Instead, when the Church teaches certain actions are sinful, she is warning us that they are spiritually dangerous to us. Just as a parent tells a small child not to touch a hot iron or not to cross a busy street out of love and concern, so, too, does the Church warn us that certain actions—no matter how appealing they might seem—are harmful to us. That's what a sin is: something which is harmful to us, at least on the spiritual level (and often on the emotional and physical levels

as well).

It's even more important to remember that the Church doesn't even make those decisions on her own; all of the Church's teachings come from God Himself, in either what He has explicitly revealed in Scripture or Tradition or in what is implicitly found within those teachings. In all of her teachings, including those on morality, the Church simply echoes the Blessed Virgin Mary, who at the wedding feast of Cana said to “do whatever He tells you” (John 2:5).

Now, there's no doubt that initially, it can be hard to live in the way the Church proposes, the way that God teaches; again, sin can often appear to be pleasing to us. If we think about other aspects of our lives, though, we see that in the vast majority of cases—if not all of them—doing what is best for us is often hard to do, at least at the beginning. Whether it's about eating less junk food, exercising more, spending meaningful time with family or getting out of debt, doing what we know is best for us isn't always easy. And yet, we know that we will be better off if we persevere and push through the struggles and difficulties.

The same is true in our spiritual life. Living rightly, living according to the Church's teachings, living in Christ and His truth and love, can certainly be a struggle. But it remains the best way to



live, the way that will lead to true peace, joy, happiness and fulfillment. Contrary to what many think, the Church's teachings are not senseless; in fact, they are completely sensible, even the most sensible, the most rational, the most intelligent way to live, as we see when we look at them closely.

May we all live our faith resolutely and with joy, that others might see the Catholic way of life and be drawn to it.

Be sure to check out the additional resources at sfcatholic.org/answer. If you have a question you need an answer to, email rkrantz@sfcatholic.org.

Chris Burgwald holds a doctorate in theology and is the director of Adult Discipleship and Evangelization for the Diocese of Sioux Falls.



Read a book-a-month to feed your faith

We've been spending more time at home lately given the current circumstances of the world. While we're there, why not use our time well and feed our faith?

To start the new year off right, we've gathered recommendations for great Catholic books from readers in the Chancery offices. Pick one each month and grow closer to Christ this year.

Dr. Chris Burgwald



The Adventure of Discipleship - Daniel Keating
Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II - George Weigel

Brianna Wingen



You are Enough: What Women of the Bible Teach You About Your Mission and Worth - Danielle Bean

Emily Leedom



Men, Women and the Mystery of Love: Practical Insights from John Paul II's Love and Responsibility - Edward Sri
An Introduction to the Devout Life - St. Francis De Sales

Eric Gallagher



Searching for and Maintaining Peace: A Small Treatise on Peace of Heart - Jacques Philippe
True Devotion to Mary - St. Louis de Montfort

Melinda North



My Other Self: Conversations With Christ on Living Your Faith - Clarence J. Enzler

Renae Kranz



Bible Basics for Catholics: A New Picture of Salvation History - Dr. John Bergsma
Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist - Brant Pitre

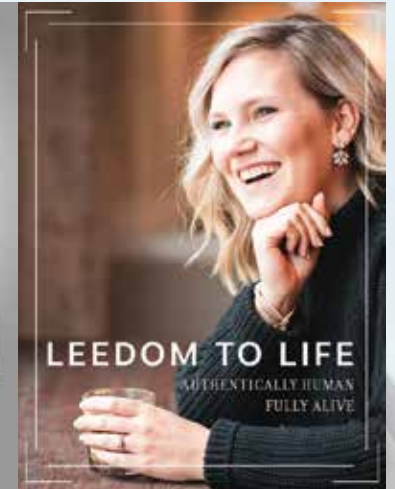
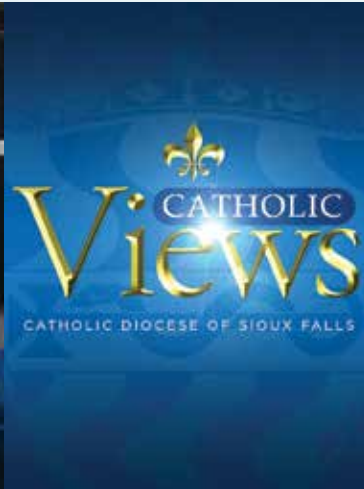
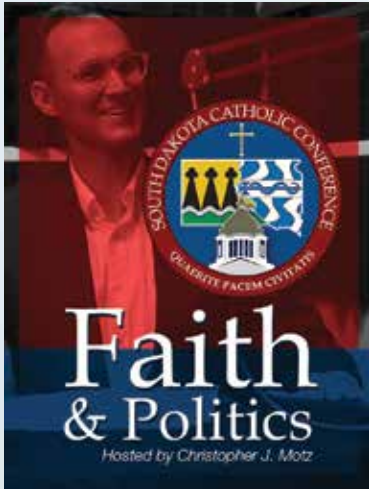
Father Scott Traynor



Into Your Hands, Father: Abandoning Ourselves to the God Who Loves Us - Father Wilfred Stinissen
Because God is Real: Sixteen Questions, One Answer - Dr. Peter Kreeft

For all the over-achievers out there, here are a few extra recommendations: "The Great Divorce" by C.S. Lewis, "God, Help Me: How to Grow in Prayer" by Jim Beckman, and "A Boy Who Became Pope" by Fabiola Garza (children's book).

LISTEN WHILE YOU WORK OR ON THE GO (AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD)

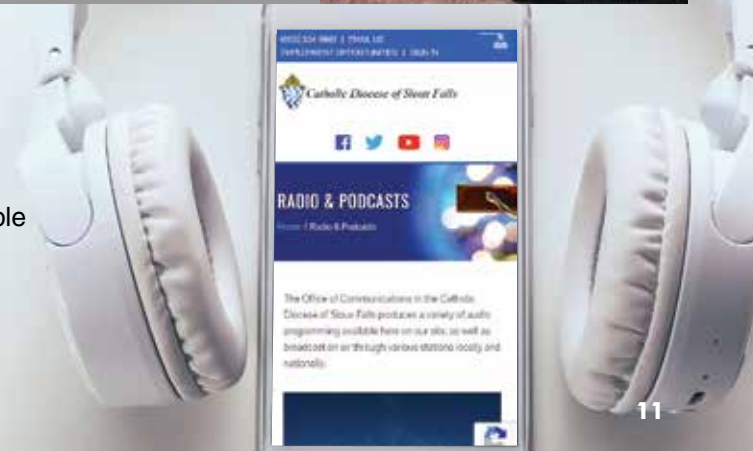


PODCASTS

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Discover a wide variety of catholic podcasts, produced and available through the Communications Office of the Diocese.

sfcatholic.org/radio-podcasts



The power of praying for your kids' friends

By Melinda North

When my husband and I found out we were pregnant with our first child, we did what I imagine most first-time parents do—we purchased the book “What to Expect When You’re Expecting.” Little did we know advice and help would come pouring in even when we didn’t ask for or particularly want it. We quickly learned to choose what recommendations we wanted to implement and which ones we didn’t.

When a family is given the wonderful gift of caring for a child, the responsibility seems overwhelming. You are tasked with loving and caring for this little human in hopes they will grow up into well rounded, healthy, happy and holy adults. More often than not, you want to keep them safe from getting hurt or making choices you know will cause them pain. That is why we cover the electrical outlets, test the temperature of their food, make sure they get enough sleep, and never leave them unattended.

After child number three, we soon learned that the better we planned and controlled the schedule of our days—mealtime, playtime, movie time, sleep time, snack time—the easier life was.



Melinda’s son Nick (third from left) with some of the friends she prays for.

When control of the daily schedule slipped and food or sleep wasn’t given at its usual time, chaos erupted.

This proverbial “control,” as you can imagine, begins to slip away as these little humans grow and become mobile. As much as you try to control the surroundings, it’s hard to limit the scrapes, cuts



Melinda North, executive assistant to the bishop for the Diocese of Sioux Falls

and bruises they will receive throughout their childhood. No one prepares you for the fear you will experience when the control slowly slips away. When they start sitting on their own, you make sure there are pillows around them so they don’t fall over or hit their heads. They begin walking on their own so you ensure the door to the stairs is closed or the gate is shut. They start climbing on and up everything possible, and you tell yourself to breathe, relax and stay close so they don’t fall.

Eventually the day comes when you drop them off at daycare, school, sleepover, party or whatever, and you hear your own parent’s voice saying, “Be good, remember your manners, make good choices,” and secretly pray they don’t do the stupid things you did when you were their age.

As much as we would like to prevent it, the inevitable happens. They begin to drive and no longer need you to drop them off or pick them up. Our little human is not so little any more.

When our children were 11, 7, 6 and 4, I was sharing my fears with a mentor and good friend of mine. Having raised

a happy, healthy, loving daughter of her own while being a successful, full-time executive, she gave me the best advice I have ever received. She said, “Start praying for your children’s friends now and don’t ever stop.”

She went on to say, “You quickly learn that you cannot save them from making mistakes or getting hurt, but there is someone who loves them more and wants the best for them. God! Turn to Him and trust He will take care of the rest.”

I’ve prayed for many things for my kids, but to pray for their current and future friends? Interesting and brilliant idea.

Only God knew how much this simple prayer would impact and change not only my children’s lives, but mine as well. My prayer life has always been a time for me to bring the joys, blessings, fears and challenges of life to the Lord, place them in His hands and ask for His help. In my prayer for my kids and their friends, the response to me was a resounding, “Trust me.”

I quickly learned I was afraid because I could not control the environment around my kids. I no longer controlled what they ate, how they spoke or their activities and actions. The hardest part now was not just to let go of the fear, but to let go of the control and then trust in God. As a self-proclaimed “control freak,” that is not so easy.

So now I still pray that God surrounds our kids with good, happy, healthy and holy friends, but also that I can let go and surrender completely to Him and His desires for my children.

We can want and desire all the best things in life for our children, but only God can provide them. Therefore, we pray for our kids’ friends. We pray that God is working not only in our kids’ lives but in the lives of their friends as well.

As I’m sure you have already guessed, God has blessed our kids with some of the best friends anyone could ask for. Will they make mistakes and bad choices? Probably, but I will continue to pray that they use those mistakes to grow closer as friends and closer to God. I will pray they continue to turn to God in all things and remember what is at the core of it all—unconditional love.

Vocations Q&A

with Father Martin Lawrence

Father Martin Lawrence is the pastor of St. Dominic Parish in Canton and St. Magdalen Parish in Lennox as well as the director of the Office of Liturgy and Worship for the diocese. He was ordained to the priesthood June 13, 2003.

This month, he is the lucky first subject of our new page focusing on religious vocations in our diocese.

Q. Tell us a bit about your family and where you grew up.

A. I grew up in the city of New Orleans, and I am the third of three boys. My parents, Joseph and Helen, are both deceased as well as my oldest brother, Anthony. I am the product of Catholic education, and firmly believe in Catholic schools. I met then-Bishop Robert J. Carlson in 1999 and he recruited me for the Diocese of Sioux Falls. The rest is history.



Father Lawrence accompanying Bishop DeGroot during his ordination as they showed the congregation the Apostolic Letter.

Q. How did you get your call to the priesthood?

A. I would have to say my call to the priesthood came about through my family, especially my devout grandparents and older relatives. They encouraged my education in the faith and taught me to love Catholicism and Catholic culture. Also, my family was great friends with some of the older Redemptorist Fathers in my hometown. These holy men were also a great inspiration to me.

Q. Is there a particular part of Catholicism that really fascinates you? (liturgy, history, spirituality, etc.)

A. The Sacred Liturgy and Church history.

Q. Who was most influential in your life?

A. My mentor growing up, Father Reinhard Stump, a Redemptorist priest now deceased. He taught me much about the Church and the spiritual life.

Q. What's your favorite part of being a priest?

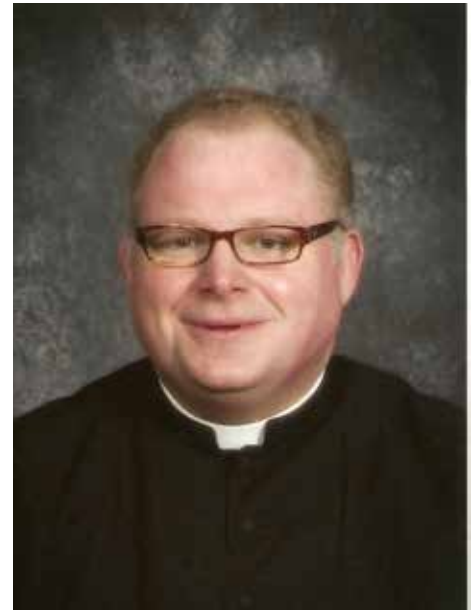
A. Celebrating Holy Mass and bringing the Sacraments to the sick.

Q. What's the most challenging thing?

A. Preaching and preparing for the Sunday homily.

Q. What did you do before the priesthood? (other jobs, college major, etc.)

A. I studied music and history at Louisi-



Father Martin Lawrence

ana State University in Baton Rouge and taught history before I entered seminary. I earned a Masters in Church History from Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Q. Who is your go-to saint? Why?

A. St. Joseph. I have loved him since childhood, and Joseph is my confirmation name. I was also ordained a deacon and priest in St. Joseph Cathedral.

Q. What do you do in your spare time?

A. I enjoy reading and listening to music.

Q. What is something most people don't know about you?

A. My mother and father were both half Sicilian. Even though I am from Louisiana and love the cuisine, I don't have a drop of Cajun blood in my veins!

Q. If you could have supper with anyone from history (besides Jesus), who would it be and why?

A. St. Philip Neri (1515-1595). I have read everything written about him that I can get my hands on, and I feel like I've already met him. I want to possess his joyful love of God and others.

Q. How can your parishioners best help you become a better priest?

A. Pray for me!



Thoughts from a college student: It's not enough to just be nice

By Meghan Vogel

As modern-day Americans, we live in a very busy and often self-centered culture. This culture lacks the value of pausing and taking silent time to reflect on life and the real gravity and sacredness of what it means to be a human person created in the image and likeness of God.

Our culture maintains some slight sense of Christian values which become more apparent during the Christmas and New Year seasons as we give gifts and share time with family and friends. We also see this as we make resolutions to try to improve ourselves or our lives in a meaningful way.

We feel a sense of longing for something better, for something more, but many people do not seek that in the person of Jesus

who will ultimately fulfill them. This may happen because they don't know about him or because their hearts are closed to him or the fullness of truth in the Catholic Church for some reason.

A sad consequence of our self-centered culture is that Christian faith often gets watered down to a matter of simply being nice to other people. No one wants to take the risk of offending anyone else by standing as a witness to real Christianity.

We see evidence of this in cards that say "Happy Holidays" or "Season's Greetings" rather than saying "Merry Christmas." To avoid offending anyone who does not celebrate Christmas or does not believe in Christ, these cards use ambiguous words. And upon the arrival of the New Year, resolutions often consist of going to the gym more, going on a diet, going on expensive vacations, or other

self-serving goals.

We can see clearly, then, that our culture values self-improvement and being inoffensive—being nice—to other people. But for us as devout Catholic Christians, is this self-serving way of life really enough?

The short answer is no, it is not enough. Christ doesn't call us to blend in with the culture like chameleons in order to make sure no one ever feels offended by our beliefs. Rather, He calls us to live courageous lives of being set apart by and for Him. At our Baptism, we received our mission to be a priest, prophet and king for Christ. In our baptismal role as prophets, we are called to preach the Good News of the Gospel—to evangelize.

Now, of course, there is a balance to be found in the mission of evangelization. Before we can really begin to lead another

person to Christ, we must make sure we are striving to know, love and serve Him ourselves in a deep and personal way. We must always seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit through prayer in our efforts and desire to evangelize others. We cannot rely on our own weak selves, and we should strive not to view the other person as our own personal project to keep chipping away at until that person converts.

Only God can do the work of changing a person's heart. But He does want to use us as instruments in this process.

So, what is our mission as evangelists meant to look like, then? The simple answer is genuine kindness.

Being kind is radically different than merely being nice. Genuine kindness flows from a full life of the virtue, true joy and self-sacrificing care of Christ. When we are nice, we may reach out to a person and get to know him or her but then we never go any further than that surface level. In kindness, we reach out in care to the other person, we meet him or her, and get to know that individual. We get a sense of where that person is currently at in his or her life, and then we take that individual on a journey from there to the heart of Christ.

For some people, intellectual knowledge may appeal to them to lead them to Christ. Others may want or need logical explanations. Still others may be led to Christ through the sharing of personal experiences with Christ. When we get to know the individual, we will know how to best reach him or her.

The most important point is we must never settle for mere niceties. Being nice to other people is simply not enough. After all, if we truly care about a person, we should look beyond ourselves with a genuine desire for that person to know and love Christ in a deep and personal way and to have eternal life with Him some day in heaven.

So, every person does need to hear the full Gospel message as deep and radical as it is, because whether they realize it or not, their hearts were made for the Gospel—they were made for Christ!

Where is a good place to begin with evangelization? The first place to start is on your knees in prayer. You may know that as devout Catholics we are especially called to pray, fast and give alms, especially during the Advent and Lenten sea-

sons, but the reality is we can always do these things in the ways that we discern God is calling us to do them throughout the whole year.

As this New Year begins, pray for your family members and friends who either do not know Christ, who have learned about Christ but still remain closed to Him, who have left the faith, or who believe in Christ but have not yet come to accept the fullness of faith in the Catholic Church. Pray that God will soften their hearts and that He will use whatever means to best reach them to lead them to Him.

Pray for guidance from the Holy Spirit about what your role in evangelization

“

Christ doesn't call us to blend in with the culture like chameleons in order to make sure no one ever feels offended by our beliefs. Rather, He calls us to live courageous lives of being set apart by and for Him.

- Meghan Vogel

of your family members and friends is meant to look like. Prayer is extremely powerful and transformative; God can and does work miracles through prayer. You can also fast and offer up your fasting for the intention of the conversion of specific family members or friends. And you could give alms to a charitable organization that spreads the Catholic faith to the poor while simultaneously caring for their physical needs.

You should also know that there are two major ways to lead a person to Christ—through example and through words.

Leading through example is the most important way to lead others to Christ. If others see you actively practicing what you believe, they will view you as legitimate. They will notice the way you treat other people and the positive difference you make in the lives of your family members, friends and people within your community. As they witness this example, they will gradually begin to realize that there is something special going on, and they may just begin to feel drawn to it and want to become part of it.

Leading through words is secondary to

leading through example, but still important. When you feel called to speak to another about your faith, pray about what you are called to say to that person and how you are to say it. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak through you and guide your words. If you ask Him, He will do it.

There may be occasions where you may be called to share your personal experiences of God with another person. At other times, you may be called to offer an explanation of your beliefs, or you may be called to invite a person to a Bible study or to attend Mass with you. The important point is to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit with courage, trusting that even if it seems as though nothing comes from what you do or say, God is still at work. The conversion is up to God, not you. You are simply His humble servant.

As you may be given the opportunity to communicate or gather with family and friends during the Christmas and New Year seasons, this time of coming together could be a perfect opportunity for you to share your faith with the people you love.

You could reach beyond the surface level, go further than simply being nice, and extend yourself in genuine kindness to those people, as you share with them the Gospel message about Christ who is God and the Son of God, fully human and fully divine. He came to earth in flesh to die for us to save us from our sins, and He offers a newness and freedom far greater than any New Year's resolution can bring us.

He is the real newness we long for. And He is also the real reason for our entire life, starting here on earth and extending into eternity.



Meaghan Vogel is a student at South Dakota State University majoring in Human Development and Family Studies. She is a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Madison.

Bishop DeGroot consecrates diocese to Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Joseph



Bishop Donald DeGroot offered prayers of consecration for our diocese to Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Joseph at a Mass on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. As our spiritual mother, Mary is the patroness of the Americas, and St. Joseph, as a spiritual father, is patron of our diocese and the Universal Church.

In a statement announcing the Mass, Bishop DeGroot said, “By consecrating our diocese to these two amazing spiritual advocates, protectors and intercessors, we can be assured of great spiritual fruitfulness in our diocese and in souls who are open to the amazing transformational love of God.”

The statement went on to say that through these prayers, our bishop—who is our spiritual father and high priest of the diocese—is praying in a profound way for us as his flock, that we will be freed from the temptation of our spiritual foes in order to live in the freedom of the children of God, which we are by our baptism. And by praying the prayers of consecration with Bishop DeGroot, we can participate in this great spiritual work.

If you would like to view and pray the prayers of consecration, you can find them at sfcatholic.org/bishop-degroot/consecration-prayers-for-the-diocese-of-sioux-falls.



This Year, Make Protecting Your Family the First Resolution You Keep.



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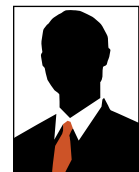
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Pope Francis proclaims Year of St. Joseph

(CNA) - Pope Francis announced a Year of St. Joseph on Dec. 8 in honor of the 150th anniversary of the saint's proclamation as patron of the Universal Church.

The year begins Dec. 8, 2020, and concludes on Dec. 8, 2021, according to a decree authorized by the pope.

The decree said Francis had established a Year of St. Joseph so "every member of the faithful, following his example, may strengthen their life of faith daily in the complete fulfillment of God's will."

It added that the pope had granted special indulgences to mark the year.

The Dec. 8 decree was issued by the Apostolic Penitentiary, the dicastery of the Roman Curia that oversees indulgences, and signed by the Major Penitentiary, Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, and the Regent, Msgr. Krzysztof Nykiel.

In addition to the decree, Francis issued an apostolic letter dedicated to the foster father of Jesus.

The pope explained in the letter, entitled *Patris corde* ("With a father's heart") and dated Dec. 8, that he wanted to share some "personal reflections" on the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

"My desire to do so increased during these months of pandemic," he said, noting that many people had made hidden sacrifices during the crisis in order to protect others.

"Each of us can discover in Joseph—the man who goes unnoticed, a daily, discreet and hidden presence—an intercessor, a support and a guide in times of trouble," he wrote.

"St. Joseph reminds us that those who appear hidden or in the shadows can play an incomparable role in the history of salvation."

Pope Pius IX proclaimed St. Joseph patron of the Universal Church on Dec. 8, 1870, in the decree *Quemadmodum Deus*.

In its decree Dec. 8, the Apostolic Penitentiary said that, "to reaffirm the universality of St. Joseph's patronage in the Church," it would grant a plenary indulgence to Catholics who recite any approved prayer or act of piety in honor of St. Joseph, especially on March 19, the saint's solemnity, and May 1, the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker.

Other notable days for the plenary indulgence are the Feast of the Holy Family on Dec. 29 and St. Joseph's Sunday in the Byzantine tradition, as well as the 19th of each month and



Pope Francis greets a crowd from the window of the Apostolic Palace overlooking St. Peter's Square. (Vatican Media/CNA)

every Wednesday, a day dedicated to the saint in the Latin tradition.

The decree said: "In the current context of health emergency, the gift of the plenary indulgence is particularly extended to the elderly, the sick, the dying and all those who for legitimate reasons are unable to leave the house, who, with a soul detached from any sin and with the intention of fulfilling, as soon as possible, the three usual conditions, in their own home or where the impediment keeps them, recite an act of piety in honor of St. Joseph, comfort of the sick and patron of a happy death, offer-

ing with trust in God the pains and discomforts of their life."

The three conditions for receiving a plenary indulgence are sacramental confession, the reception of Holy Communion and prayer for the pope's intentions.

In his apostolic letter, Pope Francis reflected on the fatherly qualities of St. Joseph, describing him as beloved, tender and loving, obedient, accepting, and "creatively courageous." He also underlined that he was a working father.

Pope Francis has promoted devotion to St. Joseph throughout his pontificate.



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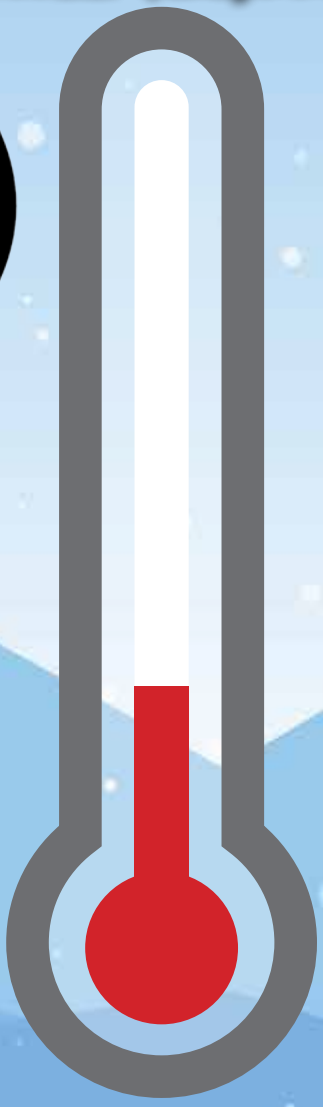


GOAL: \$25,000



ARE YOU READY FOR ROUND 2?

Join Us Online January 10th at 4 p.m.
Get your friends and family together for a party to enjoy this hilarious and joy-filled event at home through YouTube.
12 priests will compete in challenges and vote off their teammates until there is only one Collar Standing!



BENEFITTING THE NEW LUMEN CHRISTI PROGRAM

With the help of sponsors and donations leading up to the event, we've set a goal to raise \$25,000 through this event to support our new Lumen Christi Summer Missionary Program (previously Totus Tuus).

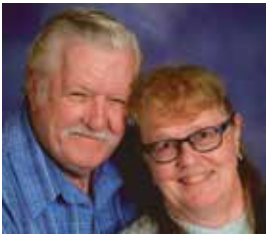
Learn more at sfcatholic.org/lumenchristi

HOST A WATCH PARTY

We're really hopeful that this event will bring parish groups and families together for an evening of fellowship and community. If you are hosting a watch party, we'd love to have your party make an appearance during the event. We'll also send you a gift just for letting us know about your party!

Learn more at sfcatholic.org/youth





BRANDON – Tom and Dolly Gerwer will celebrate their 50th anniversary on January 9. They have 3 children, 10 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild and are members of Risen Savior Parish.



BRITTON – William and Linda Richter celebrated their 50th anniversary on December 19. They have 5 children, 25 grandchildren and are members of St. John de Britto Parish.



ELKTON – Michael and Judy Kampmann will celebrate their 50th anniversary on January 9. They have 3 children, 2 grandchildren and are members of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish.



MILLER – Tom and Rosemary McGough celebrated their 50th anniversary on December 30. They have 2 children, 8 grandchildren and are members of St. Ann Parish.



MITCHELL – Harry and Shirley Northrup will celebrate their 65th anniversary on January 14. They have 7 children (1 deceased), 20 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren and are members of Holy Spirit Parish.



MITCHELL – Wilbert and Thelma Hofer will celebrate their 70th anniversary on January 11. They have 5 children, 14 grandchildren and 23 great-grandchildren (1 deceased) and are members of Holy Spirit Parish.



PIERRE – Doug and Kathy Ripley will celebrate their 50th anniversary on January 30. They have 2 children, 4 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren and are members of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish.



SALEM – Lee and Mary Ann Feterl will celebrate their 45th anniversary on January 23. They have 5 children, 8 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Mary Parish.



TEA – Mike and Cindy Holm will celebrate their 50th anniversary on January 23. They have 2 children (one deceased), 1 grandchild and are members of St. Nicholas Parish.



YANKTON – Garry and Connie Moore will celebrate their 50th anniversary on January 9. They have 4 children, 8 grandchildren and are members of Sacred Heart Parish.

Additions to November's Necrology of the Diocese of Sioux Falls

Three parishioners were inadvertently left out of the 2019-2020 Necrology published in the November issue of the Bishop's Bulletin: LaVonne Willems - April 3 (St. Rose of Lima, Garretson), Derrin Miller - Dec. 3 (Epiphany) and Anita Miller - Oct. 19 (Epiphany).

ANNIVERSARY SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We accept anniversary submissions for the following anniversary years: 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, and 70. We include them in the issue of the month of the anniversary, and late submissions will only be accepted from the prior month.

Send a color photo, your anniversary information and a self-addressed, stamped envelope by **January 14** for inclusion in the February 2021 edition to:

The Bishop's Bulletin
523 North Duluth Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
or e-mail to:
rkranz@sfcatholic.org.

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U.S. bishops approve use of coronavirus vaccines with ‘re

(CNA) - The United States bishops’ conference has said that Catholics can take two of the three available COVID-19 vaccines, even though they were developed with a “remote connection” to “morally compromised” cell lines.

In a statement released Dec. 14, the bishops also said it is morally permissible in some circumstances to receive a third vaccine, developed in close connection with aborted cell lines, but that Catholics cannot allow the pandemic to “desensitize” or “weaken our determination” to oppose the evil of abortion.

Bishop Kevin Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend, the chair of the USCCB’s doctrine committee, and Archbishop Joseph Naumann of Kansas City in Kansas, chairman of the USCCB’s pro-life activities committee, outlined their concerns about the vaccines in statement dated Dec. 11 and published on Dec. 14.

“In view of the gravity of the current pandemic and the lack of availability of alternative vaccines, the reasons to accept the new COVID-19 vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna are sufficiently serious to justify their use, despite their remote connection to morally compromised cell lines,” said the bishops.

In the statement, the two bishops also outlined concerns regarding the three vaccinations produced by Pfizer, Moderna, and AstraZeneca, and outlined the position taken by the Church on other vaccinations developed either in part or entirely from cell lines from an aborted child.

“The Holy See, through the Congregation for the Doctrine

of the Faith and the Pontifical Academy for Life, has offered guidance on the question of whether it is morally acceptable to receive a vaccine that has been created with the use of morally compromised cell lines,” the bishops said.

“Both the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Academy for Life emphasize the positive moral obligation to do good and in so doing to distance oneself as much as possible from the immoral act of another party such as abortion.”

The bishops also noted that “with regard to people involved in the development and production of vaccines, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith explains that ‘in organizations where cell lines of illicit origin are being utilized, the responsibility of those who make the decision to use them is not the same as that of those who have no voice in such a decision.’”

In 1972, a female child was aborted in the Netherlands, and cells from her kidneys were extracted and developed into the cell line now known as “HEK293.” “HEK” stands for “Human Embryonic Kidney.” Cells from the HEK293 line have been commonly used in biologic research since the late 70s.

The vaccinations produced by Pfizer and Moderna did not use HEK293 in their design, development, or production, but did use cells from the line in a confirmatory test, said the bishops.

“While neither vaccine is completely free from any connection to morally compromised cell lines, in this case the connection

remote connection' to abortion

is very remote from the initial evil of the abortion," said the bishops.

Conversely, the vaccine produced by AstraZeneca "should be avoided if there are alternatives available," said the bishops, as this vaccine is "more morally compromised."

"The HEK293 cell line was used in the design, development, and production stages of that vaccine, as well as for confirmatory testing," said Rhoades and Naumann. The two compared the AstraZeneca vaccine to the current rubella vaccine, which also was reliant on "morally compromised cell lines."

Rhoades and Naumann acknowledged that while Catholics should avoid the AstraZeneca vaccine in preference for one of the other two, it may not be possible for someone to do this without putting society at risk from the coronavirus. If this were to happen, a Catholic would be permitted to receive that vaccine.

"It may turn out, however, that one does not really have a choice of vaccine, at least, not without a lengthy delay in immunization that may have serious consequences for one's health and the health of others," said the bishops.

"In such a case, just as accepting a vaccination for rubella with a morally compromised vaccine is morally permissible because of the lack of alternatives and the serious risk to the public health, so it would be permissible to accept the AstraZeneca vaccine," they said.



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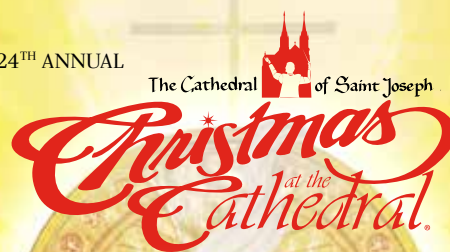
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Catholic Schools Week kicks off January 31

For the 47th year, Catholic Schools Week will celebrate Catholic education in the U.S. from January 31 to February 6. This week-long celebration is marked with Masses, assemblies and activities for students, families, parishioners and the community.

The theme for this year is “Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service.” Our Catholic schools are tasked with forming students to love God and their neighbors, and become good members of society, bringing the Gospel to their communities and living as an example of faith.

Brenda Anderson, principal at St. Lawrence School in Milbank, says this week allows them to share the great things Catholic schools do for their communities. It’s a great way to show how invested they are in their students’ education and how much they appreciate the community’s support.

“We love the opportunity, not only to share our faith throughout the school during this special week, but to celebrate

it with the entire community,” Anderson said. “It is the perfect time to thank all of those who have helped make St. Lawrence School an amazing place to send your child to receive a faith-based education.”

St. Lawrence School will celebrate Masses, including one with Bishop DeGroot, host a Soup Day, and prepare their classrooms for special activities. With this year’s theme in the classrooms of “Son Quest Rainforest,” they will focus on five different Bible stories and incorporate crafts, games and snacks into their learning. The kids love the special activities during the week.

“They are all so excited and look forward



Students celebrated Mass at the Elmen Center during Catholic Schools Week 2020.

to the fun that we bring into Catholic Schools Week,” Anderson said. “The students talk for years about what fun Catholic Schools Week is, and they share that with their friends who don’t attend St. Lawrence. It is an opportunity for them to share their excitement that comes with learning about God each and every day.”

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Recitation of the rosary planned

Friday, Jan. 1 - The rosary is recited for the faithful departed on the first Friday of the month at 10 a.m. in St. Michael Cemetery in Sioux Falls.

Pray at Planned Parenthood with Jericho's Wall group

Tuesday's - In Joshua 1:14 fighting-age men are called to go to Jericho's wall to fight for the women and children. Today we are called to step out for our faith. Men are meeting on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. at our wall of Planned Parenthood to pray the rosary for our women and children. We are asking for men to join us. If you have questions, call Paul at 605-201-5428. Women are welcome.

Orientation for Society of St. Vincent de Paul available

January 11-13 - A virtual three-evening orientation will be held for anyone interested in learning about St. Vincent de Paul ministry to the poor. Watch in your home, 7-9 p.m., Monday-Wednesday, Jan. 11, 12, 13. Preregister at: <https://forms.gle/5rpVok3MeNxpD6D29>. More info at 605-332-1493 or dcnhenryknapp@sfcatholic.org.

Traditional Latin Mass available

The Traditional Latin Mass, or the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, is offered every Sunday at 2 p.m. at St. Dominic Parish in Canton. The Latin Mass is also offered on most holy days of obligation and principal feasts of the Church Year at 7:30 p.m. St. Dominic Church is located at 800 E. Walnut Street. For more information, please call 605-764-5640 or email Father Lawrence at fmartinlawrence@sfcatholic.org.

Audio recording of Bishop's Bulletin for visually impaired

Audio recordings of The Bishop's Bulletin are available for the visually impaired each month. Deacon Roger Heidt lends his voice to bring the stories in the monthly magazine to life. If you would like to receive this recording, contact Josh Easter at josh.easter@state.sd.us.

Confraternity of the Holy Rosary seeks new members - All are welcome to enroll in the Confraternity of the Holy Rosary, offering many spiritual benefits to its members. For information, contact Jim Miles, 605-759-2654 (dustoff1525@yahoo.com).

Applicants for permanent diaconate being accepted

Men of the diocese are invited to consider becoming a deacon. If you are thinking God may be calling you to a deeper life of service to His Church and His people, apply for the next diaconate class. The diocese is accepting applications for a formation class that will begin in the fall of 2020. Contact your pastor or Deacon John Devlin if you would like more detail. You can call 605-988-3715 or email dcn-johndeclin@sfcatholic.org.

Catholic Family Services

Catholic Family Services Counseling Service-During this pandemic, in addition to our current in-person counseling we are offering a HIPPA compliant tele-health format. It is user friendly and as long as you have internet availability, can be accessed by phone or computer.

GriefShare Program/Catholic Family Services will host and facilitate Saint Joseph Cathedral Parish's GriefShare program. The video series is watched as a large group followed by small group discussions according to the participant's particular loss (loss of a spouse, child, parent, sibling etc.) The program will run for 11 weeks covering 13 different topics surrounding grief. GriefShare will begin again on February 2- April 13 from 6-8 p.m. Cost of the workbook is \$15 (scholarships available) and there will be an opportunity for a free will offering to help cover the additional costs. For more information about GriefShare or to register, please contact Catholic Family Services at 605-988-3775 or email cfs@sfcatholic.org. Space is limited and pre-registration is required.

Surviving Divorce Program/Begins Tuesday, February 2 in Sioux Falls. Sessions are held on Tuesday evenings, 6-8 p.m. Cost of \$45 per person includes a Personal Survival Guide, refreshments and all materials for six weeks. For information, or to register contact Catholic Family Services, 605-988-3775 or cfs@sfcatholic.org. Scholarships are available.

Sacred Heart Monastery

Online offerings: As we pray for the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, we seek to extend our Benedictine Hospitality through online programs. Go to www.yanktonbenedictines.org/retreats-online-group for updated information on new topics, dates and registration information. A Lenten morning of reflection is planned for February 20.

January 8/ Online Lectio Divina, Fridays, January 8, 15, 22 and 29, from 10-10:45 a.m. Meet online for Lectio Divina, a time for praying with the Gospel of the following Sunday. To register any time, contact group leader, Sr. Penny Bingham OSB at pbingham@yanktonbenedictines.org or 605-668-6023, sending her your email address.

Spiritual Direction/ Due to social distancing restrictions, we are currently offering spiritual direction online. Share your experience of God with an experienced companion-guide and intensify your spiritual journey. Scheduling is flexible, typically meeting once a month. Contact benedictinepeacectr@yanktonbenedictines.org or 605-668-6292 for more information.

Notices

The DISC Mission Grant application forms for 2021 are now available. Any mission or Catholic organization in the national or international community may apply. Past grants have ranged from \$250-\$1,000. The grant application is now an online-only application and is due April 30. Please list Dawn Wolf in the DISC Member Name field and the Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls in the DISC Member (Arch)Diocese field. You can find the application at <http://www.discinfo.org/membership/bishop-richard-pates-mission-grant/>. Grants are typically awarded in mid June to early July.



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