

# THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

*Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm*

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 38 No. 2 October/November 2023



*(Photo by Tamara Klawitter)*

## Catholic Home Missions marks a presence in the Diocese of New Ulm

**NEW ULM** – Bishop Chad Zielinski, a member of the USCCB subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions (CHM), hosted a visit to New Ulm from five of the eight fellow CHM subcommittee members on Oct. 3-5, 2023. CHM is a U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops grant-making agency that offers financial support to mission dioceses such as New Ulm. The visiting bishops, along with CHM grant specialist Ken Ong and director Kevin Day, learned about the work of the bishop's staff and toured portions of the diocese. The bishops concelebrated Mass with Bishop Zielinski on Oct. 11 during a New Ulm Area Catholic Schools Mass at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. Pictured on the front steps of the cathedral are left, Kevin Day, Bishop Michael Warfel, Great Falls-Billings, Mont., Bishop James Tamayo, Laredo, Texas, Bishop Steven Raica, Birmingham, Ala., Bishop Zielinski, Bishop Bohdan Danylo, Eparchy of Saint Josaphat in Parma, Bishop Shawn McKnight, Jefferson City, Mo., and Ken Ong.

*(Read more about the CHM visit on page 5.)*

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NOV. 5-11



NATIONAL VOCATIONS AWARENESS WEEK

Please ask Our Lord for more dedicated, holy priests, deacons, and consecrated men and women. May they be inspired by Jesus Christ, supported by our faith community, and respond generously to God's gift of vocation. *(See the bishop's column on Vocations, pg. 2)*

## Healing Ministry offers listening, love, prayer for body, mind and spirit

by Katie Roiger  
Prairie Catholic correspondent

What does it mean to be set free? In the Gospels, Our Lord tells us that he has come to release the oppressed and imprisoned (*Luke 4:18*), but those who are more literal-minded might not think this promise applies to them. Yet even without physical shackles, there are ways of being bound to unhelpful thoughts, paralyzing fears, and discouraging struggles.

Under the direction of Deacon Mike McKeown, director of the Office of Healing Ministry for the Diocese of New Ulm, the Healing Ministry team has helped people experience freedom from mental and spiritual chains they might not have realized were fettering them. "Over and over, we hear people saying things like, 'This is the first time I've ever experienced God's

love for me,' or 'I feel like a new person,'" Deacon McKeown said about those who have undergone the ministry's prayer sessions. "The freedom people report experiencing from things like unforgiveness is amazing."

Since 2013, Healing Ministry has offered transformative prayer sessions led by trained ministry members. The sessions are based on the Unbound Prayer model developed by Heart of the Father Ministries out of Ardmore, Penn, which aims at helping individuals identify areas in their spiritual lives that are holding them back and guiding them toward the Holy Spirit's healing grace.

Healing Ministry team member Dorie Reiter, a clinical psychologist and a Diocese of New Ulm Catholic Charities counselor, said that many clients



Healing Ministry team members Tracy Felder of Holy Trinity, Winsted, (l) and Jean Schmidt of St. Michael, Milroy offer prayer for healing. For ten years the diocese has offered this ministry to those seeking healing and freedom. *(Photo submitted)*

have lived with their struggles for so long that they can't imagine what life could be like without them.

"Some have long-standing [emotional] wounds that they haven't necessarily thought of as being spiritual," Reiter added.

"Different spirits can affect us, especially in times of trauma. They may be things that help us to cope in that moment, or they seem like they're helping, but they're actually keeping us in bondage."

Sometimes, a negative spiritual influence can show itself through a recurring sin that consistently appears in an individual's confession. Although the person may recognize a pattern and realize that they need help, they may not know how to address the root of the problem.

Healing Ministry can aid in high-consequence struggles such as addiction, but it is also meant to assist with the heartbreaks and repetitive sins that many are accustomed to dealing with daily.

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## Laudate Deum: the Holy Father's cry to all people of good will for a response to the current climate crisis

by Vatican News

Pope Francis has published an Apostolic Exhortation building on his 2015 encyclical. We're not reacting enough, he says, we're close to the breaking point. He criticises climate change deniers, saying that the human origin of global warming is now beyond doubt. And he describes how care for our common home flows from the Christian faith.

"*Laudate Deum* (Praise God) is the title of this letter. For when human beings claim to take God's place, they become their own worst enemies."

That's how Pope Francis ends

his new Apostolic Exhortation, published on the Oct. 4, 2023, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi.

It's a text in continuity with his 2015 encyclical *Laudato si'*, which is broader in scope. In six chapters and 73 paragraphs, the Successor of Peter tries to clarify and bring to completion that previous text on integral ecology, while at the same time sounding an alarm, and a call for co-responsibility, in the face of the climate emergency.

The Holy Father writes: "With the passage of time, I have realized that our responses have not been adequate, while the world in

which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point. In addition to this possibility, it is indubitable that the impact of climate change will increasingly prejudice the lives and families of many persons" (2).

It's "one of the principal challenges facing society and the global community" and "the effects of climate change are borne by the most vulnerable people, whether at home or around the world" (3).

### Indubitable human origins

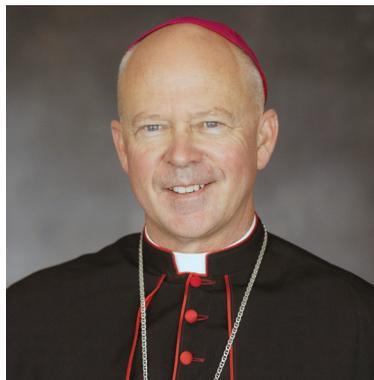
"It is no longer possible to doubt the human – 'anthropic' – origin of climate change," the pope says.

"The concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere ... was stable until the nineteenth century ... In the past fifty years, this increase has accelerated significantly" (11).

At the same time, global temperature "has risen at an unprecedented speed, greater than any time over the past two thousand years. In this period, the trend was a warming of 0.15° C per decade, double that of the last 150 years ... At this rate, it is possible that in just ten years we will reach the recommended maximum global ceiling of 1.5° C" (12).

*(Continued on page 3.)*

## That they may have life



by Bishop Chad W. Zielinski

### God Draws Straight With Crooked Lines - A Reflection on Vocations

In August, I traveled to Prague, Czech Republic, to witness the marriage of the son of some dear friends. The wedding was held at St. Thomas Church, which is served by the Augustinian Friars. During my visit, we celebrated the community's feasts of St. Augustine (August 28) and his mother, St. Monica (August 27).

Many may know the story of the great conversion of St. Augustine, crediting God's grace and the prayers and encouragement of his mother.

I was deeply drawn into the homily by Fr. William, who focused on the relationship of St. Monica and St. Augustine. God used these two, mother

and son, in extremely different places in their spiritual journey to become saintly witnesses of God's holiness. Monica, an extraordinarily holy woman of faith, ceaselessly prayed for Augustine and never wavered in her love for her son. Even into his 40s, Augustine was the quintessential "wild child," leading a life of earthly pleasures. Augustine's wayward life presented an opportunity for Monica to respond as a saintly mother, drawing her son closer to Christ. Augustine, through a radical encounter of God's grace, wisdom, and light, underwent a deep conversion that helped his mother grow in holiness herself.

This is a powerful reflection on the relationship between Monica and Augustine, with Augustine in particular drawing closer to God through conversion and then being called to be a priest and eventually a bishop.

It reminded me of the words expressed during the recent installation of our seminarian, Brent Sundve, to Candidacy for Priesthood on Aug. 20 at the Church of St. Philip in Litchfield. (See page 3.) There are only two questions that the candidate is asked, but prior to that, the ritual provides a teaching where the bishop talks to the faithful of God assembled in the church.

"Those whom God chooses to be sharers in the ministerial Priesthood of Christ, he prompts and helps with his grace. At the same time, he entrusts to us the task of inquiring about the candidate's aptitude. Once he has been duly tested, we will call and ordain him, marking him with the singular seal of the Holy Spirit for the ministry of God and the Church."

These words are a vivid reminder to all gathered that they share in the responsibility of inquiry into the candidate's gifts and talents, his movement by God's grace to growth in holiness. The bishop continues:

"Compelled by the love of Christ and strengthened by the inner working of the Holy Spirit, you have arrived at the moment when you are to express openly your desire to be bound in Holy Orders for the service of God and mankind. This desire we shall receive with joy.

From this day on, you must

cultivate more fully your vocation using especially those means that can be offered to you as help and support by the ecclesial community entrusted with this. On the part of all of us, trusting in the Lord, we will assist you with our love and prayer."

Speaking on behalf of all gathered, I promised Brent we would assist him with our love and prayers. This was a public commitment to an ongoing prayerful relationship. This ritual statement reflects the relationship of St. Monica and St. Augustine that left sacred footprints in the history of the Church for centuries, leading many souls to a deeper love of Christ.

After Brent responded, "I do," to two questions, I simply stated, "The Church accepts your resolve with joy. May God who has begun the good work in you bring it to fulfillment." The entire faithful of God gathered responded with applause, affirming their support of Brent moving forward as a candidate for Holy Orders.

Following the celebration of the Mass and installation of Brent as a candidate, I visited with parishioners of St. Philip's and the Shepherd of Souls Area faith Community. I heard from person after person their stories of how this community has actively supported Brent and helped him grow into the Catholic he is today, and of their support for his continued formation in seminary.

Many times during my visits to parishes, I share how the Diocese of New Ulm is not scheduled to have an ordination for another four years. With a sincere desire, the faithful respond, "Bishop, can't you get more priests from somewhere?"

I understand their desire to have a good and holy man serve their parish. However, priests are born into families, nurtured in the faith, and further supported and encouraged by their parish families. Each priest is different in his human gifts and talents, different in relationships with others. God uses all of these varied abilities of the man discerning a call to priesthood or woman to religious life as they relate to the faithful of God in the parish community. I always say that God has this incredible ability to "draw straight with crooked lines." All he needs is for us to cooperate with his grace poured forth in

abundance and freely given. National Vocation Awareness Week will be celebrated this year Nov. 5-11. I encourage you to pray and ask the intercession of St. Monica for the grace and patience to "keep your radar on" with an awareness of those desiring but struggling to see and grow in their vocation to holiness, which we all receive at our baptism. Also, pray fervently for the intercession of St. Augustine for an openness of heart to receive God's grace, light, and the courage to respond.

Like St. Monica, those of you who are parents have a special call to form your children to know, love, and serve God in this life. In a practical sense, that means engaging your children in conversations about the faith. Whether you send your children to Catholic schools or faith formation programs, let it not end there. Speak often of your own call to holiness and desire to follow God. Remind them often to spend time in silence, be open to hearing the Lord's voice, and know they will find joy in life as long as they follow Him.

As a family of faith, look for opportunities of invitation and

plant seeds in those around you. When you see the light of God's grace and gifts in an individual, tell them, encourage them, and then add them to your prayer list.

As we enter into National Vocation Awareness Week, I remind you that the call for vocations comes not from the seat of the bishop of New Ulm but from the pews of the parishes at Sunday Mass. Vocations come in God's time, perhaps in converts to the faith, like Brent. They come from real, sometimes surprisingly sinful people whose stories God uses to remind us of his mercy, like Augustine. And they come from compassionate, playful men or women whom we think "would make good parents," for indeed, priests and religious offer spiritual parenthood for the people of God.

I ask you to join me in seeking the intercession of Saints Augustine and Monica for an openness to holy vocations in the people of the Diocese of New Ulm. Thank you for your "yes" to Christ to promote God's holiness through your vocation and joyful witness of the Gospel.

## Bishop's calendar

**November 1:** All Saints Day Mass at Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm, 8:25 a.m.

**November 2:** Mass and School Visit, St. Philip, Litchfield

**November 4:** Diocesan Ethics Conference

**November 5:** Last Masses for St. John, Faxon Township and St. Joseph, Henderson

**November 6:** Faith Formation Day Mass, St. Aloysius, Olivia

**November 7:** Diocesan Staff Meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center, New Ulm

Diocesan Senior Leadership Team Meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center, New Ulm

Diocesan Corporate Board Meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center, New Ulm

**November 8:** Committee on Parishes/Priest Personnel Board Meeting, St. Aloysius, Olivia

**November 9-16:** USCCB Meetings, Washington DC

**December 9:** Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration, St. Joseph, Montevideo

**December 12:** Diocesan Senior Leadership Team Meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center

Diocesan Finance Council/Priests Council Meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center

Diocesan Priests Council Meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center

**December 13:** Diocesan Advent Morning of Reflection, Diocesan Pastoral Center

**December 14:** Diocesan Priests Pension Plan Board Meeting, Diocesan Pastoral Center

**December 15:** Mass and School Visit, Holy Redeemer, Marshall

*Editor's note: Calendar represents Bishop Zielinski's schedule at the time "The Prairie Catholic" went to press.*

## THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

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# October's Synod on Synodality encourages listening to the Holy Spirit in order to understand God's will for the Church in the third millennium

**ROME** – The first Vatican assembly for the global Synod on Synodality kicked off on Oct. 4, 2023, bringing together clerics and laity alike for nearly one month of discussions. Initiated by Pope Francis in 2021, the Synod on Synodality is a multiyear, worldwide undertaking during which Catholics were asked to submit feedback to their local dioceses on the question “What steps does the Spirit invite us to take in order to grow in our ‘journeying together?’”

Before the October gathering, the synodal process had already undergone diocesan, national, and continental stages. October's gathering (Oct. 4–28) was one of two global assemblies at the Vatican. The second will be held in October 2024 to advise Pope Francis on the topic “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission.”

Typically, a synod is a meeting of bishops gathered to discuss a topic of theological or pastoral significance in order to prepare

a document of advice or counsel to the pope. However, for the first time, the October gathering included voting delegates who were not bishops. Nearly a third of the 364 voting delegates were chosen directly by the pope, including laypeople, priests, consecrated women, and deacons. Fifty-four voting members are women.

## Minnesota represented at Synod

The Diocese of New Ulm's neighboring bishop, the Most Reverend Robert Barron of Winona-Rochester, was elected by his brother bishops, along with four other bishops, to be part of the U.S. contingent of Catholic bishops attending the recent Synod.

In an article that appeared in *The Courier*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Winona-Rochester, Bishop Barron wrote that he felt prepared as to what to expect at the Synod as he served as a delegate to the Synod on Young People five years ago. “We will work six days a week – Monday



Clergy and laity gathered at the Vatican Oct. 4-29 to discuss synodality, with an emphasis on communion, participation and mission.

(Photo by Vatican Media)

through Saturday – deliberating in plenary sessions and small language groups. There will be delegates from all over the world, this time including a large contingent of laypeople,” Bishop Barron said. “Our discussions will be based on what they call an *Instrumentum Laboris*, or “working document,” which for this synod represents the culmination of two years of listening sessions with Catholics from across the globe.

“At the last synod I attended, we produced and voted on a final document expressive of our convictions. This won't happen at the October synod, since there will be a follow-up session this

time next year. Only when that has played out will, presumably, a final statement be prepared,” Bishop Barron said.

The bishop said that he expected the pope to be personally present at practically every session but not say very much, wanting the delegates to feel free to express their opinions.

## What does synodality mean?

Synodality was defined by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's International Theological Commission in 2018 as “the action of the Spirit in the communion of the Body of Christ and the missionary journey of the people of God.”

The 2021 synod preparatory document described synodality as “the form, the style, and the structure of the Church.” The latest document published by the Vatican adds that synodality can also be understood as something that “does not derive from the enunciation of a principle, a theory, or a formula but develops from a readiness to enter into a dynamic of constructive, respectful, and prayerful speaking, listening, and dialogue.”

“At the root of this process is the acceptance, both personal and communal, of something that is both a gift and a challenge: to be a Church of sisters and brothers in Christ who listen to one another and who, in so doing, are gradually transformed by the Spirit,” the document says.

Pope Francis has described the Synod on Synodality to be “a journey in accordance with the Spirit, not a parliament for demanding rights and claiming needs in accordance with the agenda of the world, nor an occasion for following wherever the wind is blowing, but the opportunity to be docile to the breath of the Holy Spirit.”

## Climate crisis

(Continued from page 1.)

This has resulted in acidification of the seas and the melting of glaciers. “It is not possible to conceal” the correlation between these events and the growth of greenhouse gas emissions. Unfortunately, the Holy Father bitterly observes, “the climate crisis is not exactly a matter that interests the great economic powers, whose concern is with the greatest profit possible at minimal cost and in the shortest amount of time” (13).

## Barely in time to avoid more terrible damage

“I feel obliged,” continues Pope Francis, “to make these clarifications, which may appear obvious, because of certain dismissive and scarcely reasonable opinions that I encounter, even within the Catholic Church.”

Yet, “we can no longer doubt that the reason for the unusual rapidity of these dangerous changes is a fact that cannot be concealed: the enormous novelties that have to do with unchecked human intervention on nature in the past two centuries” (14).

Unfortunately, some effects of this climate crisis are already irreversible, for at least several hundred years, and “the melting of the poles will not be able to be reversed for hundreds of years” (16).

We are, then, barely in time to avoid even more terrible damage. The Pope writes that “certain apocalyptic diagnoses may well appear scarcely reasonable or insufficiently grounded”, but “we cannot state with certainty” what is going to happen. (17).

Therefore, “a broader perspective is urgently needed ... What is being asked of us is nothing other than a certain responsibility for the legacy we will leave behind, once we pass from this world” (18).

Recalling the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic, Pope Francis repeats that “Everything is connected and no one is saved alone” (19).

To read the *Apostolic Exhortation in its entirety* visit [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

## Litchfield native receives the call to candidacy for ordination to the priesthood

by Christine Clancy  
*The Prairie Catholic*

**LITCHFIELD** – Diocese of New Ulm seminarian Brent Sundve received the call to candidacy for ordination to the priesthood on Aug. 20, 2023, during a Mass celebrated by Bishop Chad W. Zielinski at St. Philip's in Litchfield. The rite for Admission to Candidacy is an important step for a seminarian as it is an opportunity to express publicly his intention to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders.

Sundve, 49, is studying for the priesthood at the Saint Paul Seminary in St. Paul. He is the son of Mary Sundve of Litchfield.

Admittance to candidacy is the first formal step toward



(Photo by Christy Baker)

priestly ordination, followed by installation as a lector, installation as an acolyte, ordination to the diaconate, and finally, ordination to the priesthood.

For those interested in a vocation to the priesthood or a religious life, contact the diocesan Office of Vocations, [brolling@dnu.org](mailto:brolling@dnu.org), (507) 233-5331.

# Para que tengan vida – Dios endereza lo que está torcido – Una reflexión sobre las vocaciones

por Bishop Chad Zielinski

En agosto, viajé a Praga, República Checa, para presenciar el matrimonio del hijo de unos queridos amigos. La boda se celebró en la Iglesia de Santo Tomás, que es atendida por los Frailes Agustinos. Durante mi visita, celebramos las festividades de San Agustín (28 de agosto) y su madre, Santa Mónica (27 de agosto), siendo San Agustín el fundador de la comunidad. Muchos pueden conocer la historia de la gran conversión de San Agustín, atribuyendo la gracia de Dios y las oraciones y el aliento de su madre.

Me encantó la homilía del Padre William, quien se centró en la relación entre Santa Mónica y San Agustín. Dios utilizó a estos dos, madre e hijo, en lugares extremadamente diferentes en su viaje espiritual para convertirlos en santos testigos precisamente de la santidad de Dios. Mónica, una mujer santa de una fe extraordinaria, oró incansablemente por Agustín y nunca vaciló en su amor por su hijo. Incluso pasado de los 40 años, Agustín se comportaba como el arquetipo del “niño rebelde”, llevando una vida de placeres terrenales. Fue la vida desenfrenada de Agustín lo que le presentó una oportunidad para que Mónica respondiera como madre santa, acercando a su hijo a Cristo. Agustín, a través de un encuentro radical con la gracia, la sabiduría y la luz de Dios, experimentó una profunda conversión que ayudó a su madre a crecer en santidad. Esta es una poderosa reflexión sobre la relación entre Mónica y Agustín, con Agustín en particular acercándose a Dios a través de la conversión y siendo llamado a ser

sacerdote y eventualmente obispo.

Me recordó las palabras expresadas durante la reciente instalación de nuestro seminarista, Brent Sundve, como candidato al sacerdocio el 20 de agosto en la Iglesia de San Felipe en Litchfield. Solo se hacen dos preguntas al candidato, pero antes de eso, el ritual ofrece una enseñanza donde el obispo se dirige a los fieles de Dios reunidos en la iglesia.

“Aquellos a quienes Dios elige para ser partícipes del sacerdocio ministerial de Cristo, él los impulsa y ayuda con su gracia. Al mismo tiempo, nos confía la tarea de indagar acerca de la aptitud del candidato. Una vez que haya sido debidamente probado, lo llamaremos y ordenaremos, marcándolo con el sello singular del Espíritu Santo para el ministerio de Dios y la Iglesia.”

Estas palabras son un vívido recordatorio para todos los reunidos de que comparten la responsabilidad de investigar los dones y talentos del candidato, su movimiento por la gracia de Dios hacia el crecimiento en la santidad. El obispo continúa: “Impulsados por el amor de Cristo y fortalecidos por la obra interior del Espíritu Santo, han llegado al momento en que deben expresar abiertamente su deseo de ser consagrados en el Santo Orden para el servicio de Dios y de la humanidad. Este deseo lo recibiremos con alegría. A partir de este día, deben cultivar más plenamente su vocación utilizando especialmente los medios, que la comunidad eclesial confiada con esta tarea, les pueda ofrecer como ayuda y apoyo. De nuestra parte, confiando en el

Señor, los ayudaremos con nuestro amor y oración”.

En nombre de todos los reunidos, prometí a Brent que lo ayudaríamos con nuestro amor y oraciones. Esto fue un compromiso público de una relación de oración continua. Esta declaración ritual refleja la relación entre Santa Mónica y San Agustín que dejó huellas sagradas en la historia de la Iglesia para los siglos futuros, llevando a muchas almas a un amor más profundo por Cristo.

Después de que Brent respondió “Sí” a dos preguntas, simplemente dije: “La Iglesia acepta tu resolución con alegría. Que Dios, quien ha comenzado la buena obra en ti, la lleve a su cumplimiento”. Toda la comunidad fiel de Dios reunida respondió con aplausos, afirmando su apoyo a Brent mientras avanza como candidato a las Órdenes Sagadas.

Después de la celebración de la Misa e instalación de Brent como candidato, pude conversar con varios feligreses de San Felipe y de la Comunidad de Fe del Área del Pastor de Almas. Una y otra vez, escuché sus historias personales y su apoyo a la participación de Brent en su comunidad parroquial y su formación continua en el seminario.

Muchas veces, durante mis visitas a las parroquias, comparto que la Diócesis de New Ulm no tiene programada una ordenación sacerdotal durante otros cuatro años. Con un sincero deseo, los fieles responden: “Obispo, ¿no puede conseguir más sacerdotes de alguna parte?”

Comprendo su deseo de tener a un hombre bueno y santo sirviendo

en su parroquia. Sin embargo, los sacerdotes nacen en familias, se nutren en la fe y reciben apoyo y aliento adicional de sus familias parroquiales. Cada sacerdote es diferente en sus dones y talentos humanos, diferente en sus relaciones con los demás. Dios utiliza todas estas habilidades variadas del hombre que discierne una llamada al sacerdocio o una mujer a la vida religiosa en relación con los fieles de Dios en la comunidad parroquial. Siempre digo que Dios tiene esta increíble habilidad de “trazar líneas rectas con líneas torcidas”. Todo lo que necesita es que cooperemos con su gracia derramada en abundancia y libremente dada.

La Semana Nacional de Conciencia Vocacional se celebrará este año del 5 al 11 de noviembre. Les animo a rezar y a pedir la intercesión de Santa Mónica por la gracia y la paciencia para “mantener su radar encendido” con una conciencia de aquellos que desean pero luchan por ver y crecer en su vocación a la santidad, que todos recibimos en nuestro bautismo. También, oren fervientemente por la intercesión de San Agustín para tener un corazón abierto para recibir la gracia, la luz y el coraje de Dios para responder.

Al igual que Santa Mónica, aquellos de ustedes que son padres tienen un llamado especial a formar a sus hijos para que conozcan, amen y sirvan a Dios en esta vida. En un sentido práctico, eso significa involucrar a sus hijos en conversaciones de fe. Ya sea que envíen a sus hijos a escuelas católicas o programas de formación en la fe, no permitan que eso sea todo. Hablen a menudo de su propio llamado a la santidad

y el deseo de seguir a Dios. Recuérdenles a menudo que pasen tiempo en silencio, estén abiertos a escuchar la voz del Señor y sepan que encontrarán alegría en la vida mientras lo sigan.

Como familia de fe, busquen oportunidades de invitación y siembren semillas en quienes les rodean. Cuando vean la luz de la gracia de Dios y los dones en una persona, díganles, anímense mutuamente y luego añádanlos a su lista de oración.

Mientras celebramos la Semana Nacional de Conciencia Vocacional, les recuerdo que el llamado a las vocaciones no proviene del asiento del obispo de New Ulm, sino de las bancas de las parroquias en la Misa dominical. Las vocaciones vienen siempre en el tiempo de Dios, tal vez en conversos a la fe, como Brent. Vienen de personas reales, a veces sorprendentemente pecadoras, cuyas historias Dios utiliza para recordarnos su misericordia, como Agustín. Y vienen de hombres o mujeres compasivos y divertidos de quienes pensamos que “serían buenos padres”, porque en verdad, los sacerdotes y religiosos ofrecen la paternidad espiritual para el pueblo de Dios.

Les pido que se unan a mí en buscar la intercesión de los Santos Agustín y Mónica para abrirse a las vocaciones sagradas en el pueblo de la Diócesis de New Ulm. Gracias por su “sí” a Cristo para promover la santidad de Dios a través de su vocación y alegre testimonio del Evangelio.

## Healing Ministry provides means of being open to the Holy Spirit

(Continued from page 1.)

The team has held sessions for people grappling with low self-esteem, anxiety, doubt, depression, anger, resentment, and much more.

Fr. Bob Mraz, a retired priest of the Diocese of New Ulm who serves as the Healing Ministry’s spiritual director, said that unforgiveness is a common spiritual roadblock that people seek help with during their prayer sessions.

“[People ask themselves] ‘Have I forgiven God for what happened to me? Have I forgiven myself for

what I’ve done? Have I forgiven others?’” said Father Mraz. “We help people go through that.”

The fruit of the prayer isn’t always experienced through emotions. Father Mraz said that the important part of the process is the disposition to forgive rather than the feeling of being forgiving.

“People sometimes say, ‘I don’t think they deserve it,’” Father Mraz said. “That doesn’t matter. When you’re praying for them, you’re changing your attitude from hurt or vengeance to concern, and when you pray for them, God is giving that other

person the grace to change. You become a better person, and they become a better person.”

Each client who seeks out Healing Ministry can be assured confidentiality. The team is skilled in assisting people regardless of their reason for seeking spiritual help. They also provide the crucial components of understanding and empathy.

“Every member of our team has been through this prayer themselves and have gone through sensitive issues in our own lives,” Deacon McKeown said. “We know what it’s like to be the

receiver of the prayer. There’s no judgment on our part.”

Deacon McKeown and Reiter stressed that Healing Ministry is not meant to replace therapy or the sacraments. Instead, it provides another means of being open to the Holy Spirit’s compassion, forgiveness, and strength. “The most powerful place of healing is the sacraments, but sometimes people need help to be disposed to receive the grace of the sacraments, and that’s where this prayer can help,” Deacon McKeown said.

Neither do Healing Ministry’s

Team members claim to possess any extraordinary power. Fr. Mraz explained that the team is simply one of the many instruments through which God chooses to work.

“Healing and deliverance are always done in the name of Jesus,” he said. “God does all the healing.”

*Editor’s note: For more information on Healing Ministry in the Diocese of New Ulm contact Deacon Mike McKeown, mmckeown@dnu.org, (507) 233-5310.*



## Catholic Home Missions *strengthening the Church at home*

by Christine Clancy  
*The Prairie Catholic*

**NEW ULM** – In 1998, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) established the Catholic Home Missions (CHM) Appeal to help support U.S. dioceses and eparchies where population density, economic challenges, and limited resources make sustaining faith formation and social outreach ministries difficult. The annual appeal is taken up in most parishes on the last weekend in April.

Each year, the Catholic Home Missions bishops' subcommittee, comprised of eight U.S. bishops, evaluates and makes funding decisions on grant applications from what are referred to as "mission dioceses."

Considered one of the smallest rural dioceses in the nation, the Diocese of New Ulm is eligible annually to apply for Catholic Home Mission grants. In 2023, the diocese received \$95,000 in grant funds to support the offices of Youth Ministry, Communications, and Continuing Education of Clergy.

For over 35 years, Catholic Home Missions has consistently supported the diocese," said Deacon Mike McKeown, director of Development for the Diocese of New Ulm. "The grant we receive each year provides

valuable support to our diocesan ministries."

Kevin Day, director of Catholic Home Missions in the National Collections Office at the USCCB in Washington, told *The Prairie Catholic* that between 75 and 88 dioceses and eparchies throughout the U.S. and five national territories receive home missions funding. That represents approximately 35% of all the dioceses in the U.S. and U.S. territories that do not have economic resources to support themselves," he said. According to Day, this year, the subcommittee approved more than \$7.5 million in grants that will be distributed to 75 home mission dioceses.

New Ulm's bishop, Chad Zielinski, has served on the CHM subcommittee since 2022. In October, the Diocese of New Ulm hosted the annual CHM allocation meeting held Oct. 4-5. "It is the intention of the board to meet in a diocese that is a recipient of Catholic Home Mission support," said Bishop Zielinski. Five out of the eight bishop subcommittee members were able to make the trip to New Ulm along with two CHM staff. (See cover photo in *this issue*.)

The visit began on Wednesday morning with the bishops concelebrating a New Ulm Area Catholic School Mass with Bishop Zielinski at the Cathedral. The



St. Anthony Catholic School first grader Colton Bailey gives Bishop Bohdan Danylo from the cathedral parish of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of St. Josaphat in Parma, Ohio, an "elbow bump" greeting following the all school Mass at the Cathedral on Oct. 4. Looking on is third grade teacher, Kristin Hillesheim. (Photo by Tamara Klawitter)

pews were filled with students, school staff, and parishioners. "It was great to see the look of awe on the faces of the children as it is quite the rarity that six bishops would gather for a daily school Mass," said Bishop Zielinski. One of the visiting bishops, Bishop Danylo, a Catholic Ukrainian Rite bishop, wears very ornate vestments. "Instead of a mitre, he wears a crown," the bishop noted. "I am guessing this is the first time for many gathered that they saw an Eastern

Rite Catholic bishop in all his ornate vestments. I saw looks of utter amazement on some students' faces," the bishop said. Following Mass, the students had the opportunity to visit with the bishops which they very much enjoyed.

While in New Ulm, the CHM visitors toured the Diocesan Pastoral Center and met with diocesan staff to hear about the invaluable work that is supported through the CHM grant money.

The bishops applauded the great work of the staff and gave them high compliments for their "amazing work accomplished by such a small team."

A large portion of the CHM visit was spent on reviewing this year's grant applications. "I am deeply humbled by the profound impoverished state of some of the dioceses that receive CHM funding," said Bishop Zielinski. "The diocese of Puerto Rico especially caught my attention as they have been pummeled with hurricanes year after year with very little resources to rebuild," the bishop said. "For many of these small rural dioceses such as New Ulm, many programs that directly impact faith formation, and social outreach would not be possible," he said.

On the last day of the New Ulm visit, Bishop Zielinski showed his guests the Berghold Memorial and the diocese's shrine, the Way of the Cross before venturing to the Church of St. George in West Newton Township, where they received a delicious home-cooked German style lunch prepared by parishioners Alma Forst and Kathy Kokesch. The bishops bestowed on the two cooks the "Best Ever German Potato Salad" award!

Before heading back to Minneapolis to catch an early morning flight, the group had the opportunity to experience the diocesan rural landscape with a visit to Langhorst Farms outside of Lafayette where they observed vast soybean fields and learn about the large harvesting equipment.

## Long-time advocate for the Guatemalan poor, dies at age 85



Fr. John Goggin

Fr. John Goggin, a priest of the Diocese of New Ulm and pastor of the San Lucas Toliman Mission in Guatemala, died on Sunday, Oct. 22, 2023, at the age of 85. A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Oct. 26 in Guatemala, where Fr. Goggin was buried.

Several years back, Fr. Goggin

had been diagnosed with cancer and since August was under 24-hour care at the Mission Hospital in San Lucas.

Fr. Goggin was ordained for the Diocese of New Ulm on May 30, 1964, at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm by Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler. Following ordination, he served as associate pastor at the Church of St. Anastasia in Hutchinson until July of 1967, when he began studies at the University of Ponce in Puerto Rico for approximately three months to study Spanish before being assigned to serve as associate pastor at the Diocesan Mission Parish of San Lucas Toliman on Dec. 8, 1967. He was appointed pastor on June 14, 2012.

A quiet and self-effacing man who preferred humble service over the spotlight, Fr. Goggin devoted

his life to serving the people of San Lucas. His parish work was focused on the communities surrounding San Lucas, where he performed thousands of baptisms, confirmations, weddings, and funerals.

He will be remembered for his sly sense of humor and his full-throated laughter, often gently slapping the table to emphasize the hilarity of it all. Fr. Goggin greeted everyone with a twinkle in his eye and a proffered hand. In the earlier years, he stayed connected with the outside world through his ham radio and installed the first parabolic dish in San Lucas.

During the transitional years of the Mission (2012-2015), following the death of the Mission's longtime pastor Monsignor Greg Schaffer, Fr. Goggin was instrumental in navigating a

settlement with the workers of the Mission and became the principal architect of the Mission which so ably serves the community today. Once asked what was the most formative and important value that

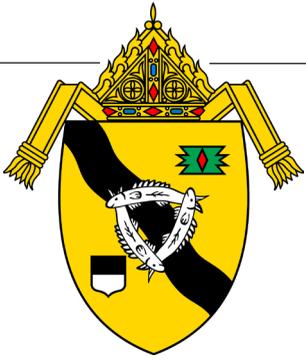
informed his ministry, Fr. Goggin said, "To follow the Gospel and treat everyone as a child of God."

### Friends of San Lucas pays tribute to Fr. Goggin

**NEW ULM** – On Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023, the Royal Oak Event Center in New Ulm was filled with around 250 people, all gathering to support the Mission in San Lucas Toliman in Guatemala and pay tribute to Fr. John Goggin for his 56 years of service to the Mission. The event was hosted by Friends of San Lucas (FOSL), a nonprofit organization that supports the work of the Mission.

New Ulm's bishop, Chad W. Zielinski, was present at the event and spoke eloquently about Fr. Goggin and his ministry. In honor of Fr. Goggin, the bishop presented a \$2,500 check to the Friends of San Lucas on behalf of the Diocese of New Ulm to cover the cost of building a modest home for those in need.

This year, with a \$160,000 match in place, the FOSL raised just over \$350,000 thanks to the generosity of so many.



DIocese OF NEW ULM

DIOCESAN MINISTRIES

appeal



“Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.” (Luke 6:38)



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

On the 27th of September, I was honored to celebrate one year of serving as your shepherd. As I visit your parishes and schools, your strong faith and devotion greatly impress me. Our parishes across 15 counties have a rich diversity but are intimately united as a diocesan family, reflecting that we truly are **“One in Christ.”**

I am grateful for your continued support of the Diocesan Ministries Appeal (DMA). Your contribution, no matter how large or small, supports vital diocesan ministries that provide family and crisis counseling, emergency response, religious and spiritual formation, strengthening of marriages and families, and helps prepare our seminarians to be the priests of tomorrow.

By contributing to the Diocesan Ministries Appeal you are supporting nine vital diocesan ministries. (See pie chart)

Parishes also benefit from your generosity. Twenty percent of each DMA dollar is given to your parish of choice to be used for a designated purpose.

Your ongoing generosity and support of the Diocesan Ministries Appeal is **Making a Difference!** You are changing the lives of many, and I am grateful.

I look forward to my next visit to your parish, and I pray that the Light of Christ continues to shine brightly upon your faces.

May God bless you and your family.

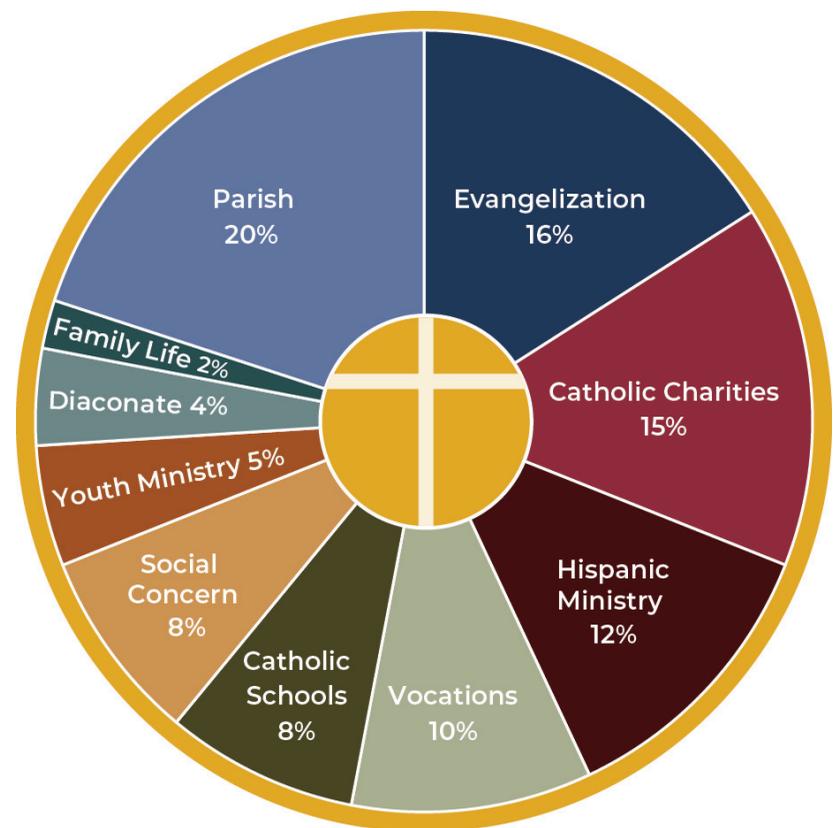
The Most Rev. Chad W. Zielinski

*Chad W. Zielinski*

Bishop of New Ulm



ONE IN CHRIST



**\$1.3 Million Goal!**

Learn more about the important work of each ministry supported by the annual appeal, track your parish's progress, or view the 2023 DMA promotional video.  
[www.dnu.org/diocesan-ministries-appeal/](http://www.dnu.org/diocesan-ministries-appeal/)

# Bishop Zielinski welcomes six new aspirants to formation for the diaconate

by Deacon Mark Kober, director  
Office of the Permanent Diaconate

The Diocese of New Ulm has again started a new cohort for the formation of permanent deacons. This will be the third in diocesan history: the initial cohort of permanent deacons began formation in 2007, followed by a second in 2013, both instituted by Bishop Emeritus John M. LeVoir, who served the diocese from 2008 to 2020.

Fifty years ago, the Catholic Church reinstated the permanent diaconate, and the men of the Diocese of New Ulm have responded generously to the call. Currently, there are 18 deacons serving in 12 area faith communities throughout the diocese.

“Serving the Diocese of New Ulm for one year now, I have had the honor of meeting our permanent deacons and their wives,” said New Ulm’s bishop, Chad Zielinski. “I am grateful for their ‘yes’ to one another as husband and wife in following Christ in a life-giving ministry. We are abundantly blessed to have such great men be witnesses of sacrificial service,” Bishop Zielinski said.

The bishop said he is also grateful to the deacons’ wives and children who make countless sacrifices in support of the diaconal ministry.

“United in heart and mind with my brother deacons, I join them in praying for our aspirants as they say ‘yes’ to Christ through the different phases of the formation process.”

Diaconate formation in the Diocese of New Ulm consists of five years of study and spiritual conditioning to prepare the men to be ordained a permanent deacon. In the case of the six men who have begun the formation process, their tentative ordination will occur in 2028.

Several steps are involved in the five-year formation process. Following the application and inquiry period, there are two years of discernment in what is called “aspirancy,” during which the man (aspirant) and his wife (if married) prayerfully consider how the diaconate will impact their lives.

“Candidacy” is a three-year process. During this period, the man will be installed first as a lector then an acolyte of the Church in separate installations. Within the fifth year, a special discernment results in the decision of the bishop whether to move forward with ordination. This year includes special training on practical liturgical abilities and preparations.

#### Four areas of development.

The deacon candidate’s formation centers around four areas of



Six men are currently a part of the Deacon Formation Program of the Diocese of New Ulm. Aspirants and their wives are, (left), Jeff and Karen Strock of Lambertton, Antonio Medina and Anisabel Palma of Willmar, Brad and LuAnn Schloesser of St Peter, Gina and Harmon Wilts of Kerkoven, Mercy and Tim VanMoer of Marshall, and Jamie and Sharon Good (Sharon not pictured) of Glencoe and Deacon Mark Kober, director of the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program. *(Photo by Christy Baker)*

development: academic, human, spiritual, and pastoral.

Academically, the men will learn systematic theology taught by visiting professors and other professionals over weekends spent at Schoenstatt on the Lake in Sleepy Eye. Human development will concentrate on the home and family life, learning how to balance the needs of the family and the Church. Spiritual direction is required, and the spiritual life of prayer and the sacraments is advanced during this period.

All the men in formation are expected to work with their parish pastor to develop pastoral skills.

If a candidate is married, it is crucial that the wife be actively involved in the formation process and must agree to every phase of formation with a formal letter written on behalf of her husband to the bishop. Special attention is given to answering all of their questions and concerns, as the candidate’s marriage is their primary vocation and takes priority over all else. The wives

attend most weekends of classes and formation.

Diaconate formation is a wonderful gift to the faithful as the Lord provides workers for the vineyard through the efforts of all God’s people. Please pray regularly for the six men and their wives throughout this diaconate formation process.

*For more information contact Deacon Kober, [mkober@dnu.org](mailto:mkober@dnu.org), (507) 233-5318.*

# St. Anne’s Catholic School in Wabasso still going strong after 100 years

by Elli Burmis  
Prairie Catholic correspondent

**WABASSO** – “All Catholic schools are vital by providing a place where each student, parent, staff and beyond can encounter Jesus Christ, [but] St. Anne School has a unique quality of family and community,” principal Mary Franta describes what sets St. Anne’s Catholic Elementary School (K-6) in Wabasso apart. Franta further emphasizes how St. Anne’s thriving community is largely attributed to its rich history and faithful family support. According to Franta, “Students today are direct descendants of those [who first attended] in 1923. Many students and staff are third and fourth generations of St. Anne’s School and surrounding parishes.”

Today, St. Anne’s families continue to be passionately

involved and invested in the educational programming and ministries of the school. As Franta describes, “The community has a deep history of supporting St. Anne’s School [as well as supporting] our mission to provide affordable tuition for any child. Beyond the finance piece, the community is very engaged in our day-to-day operations.”

For instance, Franta details the beautiful gathering of students and families at the student-led Mass every Thursday morning. Franta furthermore shares how the Thursday morning Mass is her favorite part of the week. “It’s difficult to find a parking spot near the church at this time because parents, grandparents, and other parishioners fill the church to worship alongside us.” That being said, the strong sense of family and community is only one of the many characteristics that make St.



St. Anne’s elementary students get ready for the parade on Saturday, Sept. 30, in recognition of the 100th Anniversary of Catholic education in Wabasso. *(Photo submitted)*

Anne’s so unique and special.

Initially established in 1923 by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, St. Anne’s first opened with 93 students. Since then, Franta explains, “The mission, values,

faith [and] character has [not] changed very much over the years. From the start, the school has been a place to learn about our faith and receive an excellent academic education along the way,” adding, “How could it be any different?”

With this year marking the 100th Anniversary of the school, St. Anne’s alums, families, students, and staff gathered on Saturday, Sept. 30, to celebrate this momentous occasion and give thanks for such an amazing legacy and community. The day’s festivities, organized by a committee of alumni, included school tours, Mass, dinner, and a reception. Because the weekend also coincided with the Wabasso Public High School Homecoming events, St. Anne’s had entries in the parade, and celebrants were invited to join in watching the football game as well.

Many people submitted photos and other memorabilia, and the alum committee created ways to share and display these memories.

*(Continued on page 11.)*

# Newly released study finds that almost two-thirds of US Catholics believe in Real Presence



A new study released in September from the Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) shows that almost two-thirds of adult Catholics in the United States believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, but only 17% of adult Catholics physically attend Mass at least once per week. This is a significantly different result from the often-cited 2019

Pew Research study that suggested only one-third of adult Catholics in the U.S. believe in the Church's teaching on the Blessed Sacrament.

The national study was commissioned by the McGrath Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, "to better understand what the current Catholic population (self-identified) believes about the Catholic Church's teaching on the Eucharist," the report stated.

The survey included 1,031 respondents ages 18 or older with a margin of error of 4.45 percentage points. It was offered in both English and Spanish, and administered through an online form or via telephone with a live interviewer from July 11 to Aug. 2, 2022. The CARA study, which also points to a high correlation between weekly and monthly Mass attendance and belief in the Real Presence, comes amid the second year of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops three-year National Eucharistic Revival that will culminate with a National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis in July.

According to its website, the Revival is aimed to: "Inspire a movement of Catholics across the United States who are healed, converted, formed, and unified by an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist – and who are then sent out on mission 'for the life of the world.'"

The study reports that 64% of respondents (all over 18) indicate that they believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, but only 17% go to Mass on a weekly basis. This is not good news.

## National Eucharistic Revival is more relevant now than ever!

Tim Glemkowski, CEO of the National Eucharistic Congress said: "What the recent study shows is the deep need for a true Eucharistic revival, one that pushes past mere notional assent and awareness of the Church's teaching but is about providing an encounter with Jesus in the Eucharist, leading to a lived relationship of discipleship."



REFLECTIONS ON THE SACRED LITURGY BY BISHOP CHAD W. ZIELINSKI

[www.dnu.org/liturgy-matters](http://www.dnu.org/liturgy-matters)

As a part of the Eucharistic Revival in the Diocese of New Ulm, Bishop Zielinski offers reflections on the liturgy based upon a book by Abbott Jeremy Driscoll, OSB, titled "What Happens At Mass." Weekly reflections will be posted over a 36-week span and available in both audio or text. Visit [www.dnu.org/liturgy-matters](http://www.dnu.org/liturgy-matters) and learn more about the Mysteries of the Sacred Liturgy.

*New reflections offered weekly.*

## A few of the major findings as indicated in CARA survey

- **Seventeen percent** of adult Catholics attend Mass at least once a week. An additional 5% currently watch Mass on television or online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior, to the pandemic, 24% of Catholics attended Mass weekly in 2019.

- **Eighteen percent** of adult Catholics attend less than weekly but at least once a month. Twenty-six percent attend Mass a few times a year, likely on Ash Wednesday, Easter and/or Christmas. Thirty-five percent rarely or never attend Mass.

- **Ninety-three percent** of adult Catholics have received their First Communion and 86% were Confirmed.

- **Respondents** are most likely to say Baptism is a meaningful sacrament to them (71% "very" meaningful and 17% "somewhat" meaningful). The next most meaningful are marriage (69% "very" meaningful and 16% "somewhat" meaningful) and then Eucharist/Holy Communion (66% "very" meaningful and 19% "somewhat" meaningful).

- **Forty-nine percent** of adult Catholics always receive Communion when attending Mass and 18% do so frequently or usually. Eighteen percent seldom receive Eucharist at Mass. Fifteen percent never receive Communion at Mass.

- **Respondents** were asked to explain in their own words what they believe happens to the gifts of bread and wine after Consecration during Mass. Responses were recoded into four categories.

- **Thirty-five percent** of respondents responded that they believed in the Real Presence. Eight percent remarked that they believe the gifts to be unchanged by Consecration and that these are symbols. Eighteen percent of respondents answered about what happens in a procedural manner after Consecration. Finally, the remaining responses, 39%, could not be categorized into any of the previous groupings of responses.

- **Forty-nine percent** correctly believe that the Church teaches, "Jesus Christ is truly present under the appearance of bread and wine." Fifty-one percent incorrectly believe the Church teaches, "Bread and wine are symbols of Jesus' actions at the Last Supper, meaning that Jesus is only symbolically present in the consecrated bread and wine." Results of this question indicate that 1. This group includes those who skipped the question which represents 18% of all respondents, and 2. There is substantial confusion about what the Church teaches about the Eucharist with slightly more adult Catholics not knowing this correctly than those correctly identifying the teachings

- **Among the highest levels** of awareness of Church teachings about the Eucharist are among those who attend Mass weekly or more often. Nearly nine in ten correctly identify the Church teaching on the Real Presence.

- **After asking** the open-ended question about the respondents' beliefs in the Eucharist and a closed-ended question about their understanding of Church teachings about the Eucharist, respondents were asked more questions to help clarify their beliefs. When presented with a direct question about the Real Presence, 44% of adult Catholics say they believe "Jesus Christ is truly present under the appearance of bread and wine." Forty-eight percent said they personally believe that the "bread and wine are symbols of Jesus' actions at the Last Supper, meaning that Jesus is only symbolically present in the consecrated bread and wine." Nine percent selected "neither of the above" options.

- **Combining the results** from the closed-ended questions about Church teachings and their personal beliefs, 38% of respondents correctly know what the Church teaches and believe in the Real Presence. Forty-eight percent of respondents don't know what the Church teaches and believe that the bread and wine are symbols or have some other belief. Thus, most who do not believe in the Real Presence

are not expressly rejecting the teaching as they do not know this is what the Church teaches. Nine percent of respondents know what the Church teaches but do not believe it. Five percent believe in the Real Presence but are unaware that this is what the Church teaches.

- **Following the open-ended** and closed-ended question respondents were asked directly, "Just to clarify, do you personally believe that after the Consecration during a Catholic Mass, that Jesus Christ is truly present under the appearance of bread and wine upon the altar?" Fifty-seven percent of respondents said that they believe Jesus is truly present under the appearance of bread and wine.

- **Among all respondents** stating a belief in the Real presence, 95% of weekly Mass attenders believe in the Real Presence. Eighty percent of those who attend less than weekly but at least once a month believe as well.

- **Respondents were asked** where they learned the information leading to their beliefs about the Eucharist. A majority, 53%, said they learned from their parents followed by sacramental preparation or religious education in a parish (44%), at Mass (41%), or at Catholic school (37%).

- **Seventy-eight percent** of those who said they learned from the Bible believe in the Real Presence as do 76% of those who learned about the Eucharist at Mass. Learning from parents is less effective, as only 67% of those who said this is a source for their beliefs about the Eucharist stated a belief in the Real Presence. Learning about the Eucharist from parish-based programs schools results in 73% believing in the Real Presence and learning from Catholic schools 75%. Seventy-two percent who learned from the Catechism believe in the Real Presence as do 60% who learned about the Eucharist on the Internet.

To read the full CARA study visit <https://cara.georgetown.edu/>

# National Council of Catholic Women

*A path of renewed encounter*



Those from the Diocese of New Ulm attending the National Council of Catholic Women Convention in August were: Donna Sanders of St. Mary's, Cottonwood; Shirley Nowak of Holy Family, Silver Lake; NUDCCW spiritual advisor Monsignor Eugene Lozinski; Jackie Finstad of Cathedral of the Holy Trinity, New Ulm; Chris Heiderscheidt of St. Mary's, Sleepy Eye; Arlyce Anderson of Holy Rosary, Mankato; Marianne Schotzko of St. Paul's, Comfrey; Sharon Illikman of St. Mary's, New Ulm; and Dorothy Vandenriessche of Holy Redeemer, Marshall. (Not pictured – Kathy Urban of St. Pius X, Glencoe.)

by Jackie Finstad  
NUDCCW president

The 2023 National Council of Catholic Women held its annual convention Aug. 23-26 in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The convention's theme, "Path of Renewed Encounter," was in recognition of the current National Eucharistic Revival, a three-year initiative by the United States Conference of Catholic bishops that aims to "inspire, educate, and unite the faithful in a more intimate relationship with Jesus in the Eucharist."

Hundreds of Catholic women from across the country attended the recent national convention including nine women from the Diocese of New Ulm along with their diocesan Council of Catholic Women spiritual advisor, Msgr. Eugene Lozinski.

Convention speakers aimed to stimulate interest and call women

to action on behalf of issues that affect the county's religious, moral, and material well-being. Several presenting covered topics such as: capital punishment, homelessness and realities and strategies to combat the issue, and discovering the transformative power of the Eucharist.

In addition to the keynote speakers, the three national commissions – Spirituality, Leadership, and Service – conducted training sessions, and the Leadership Training Development Team offered a session on the history of suffrage and the importance of voting in elections.

In an attempt to increase membership in the Council of Catholic Women while at the same time engaging new members to build a relationship with God and live a Christian life, a new resolution was adopted. The resolution aims to foster belief in the Real Presence of Christ in

the Holy Eucharist by utilizing NCCW's study guide based on the encyclical of Saint John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* (On the Eucharist in Its Relationship to the Church) which will be promoted at the parish level, encouraging frequent and regular Eucharistic Adoration.

In his homily at the convention's closing Mass, Bishop Timothy P. Broglio, Archbishop for the Military Services USA, said, "This Sunday, we look for a moment of new beginnings as the National Council of Catholic Women inaugurate leaders in new roles, and we renew our concrete profession of our faith and celebrate a path of renewed encounter."

*For more information about the National Council of Catholic Women visit [www.nccw.org](http://www.nccw.org)*

# Encountering Jesus through the Gospel

by Leonard Gutierrez  
Office of Evangelization

The woman at the well in the Gospel of John (*John 4:4-26*), also known as St. Photina, is a relatable figure for every man and woman today. The meaning behind the story is so profound, that we can only begin to scratch the surface. Perhaps we can take a step deeper into the water today by dipping our heads below the surface to see where Jesus might be wanting to meet us both expectedly and unexpectedly. Let's first remember the story before we begin to dig into our own.

The story is about a Samaritan woman who has given her heart and body to a number of men through a series of failed romantic relationships. As she goes to collect water, she meets a man who "tells her all that she ever did." Surprisingly, Jesus cuts to the chase in conversation. He says to her, "Give me a drink." Jesus knows she not only has come to draw water from the well but is searching for the living water that only he can provide. Jesus then tenderly tells her what she has been wanting to hear. It is profound when we take a moment to place ourselves in the sandals of the woman! We fall incredibly short of knowing how profound this meeting is if we don't take a deeper look.

Once being united as Israel, Jews and Samaritans separated because of civil war and exile. Samaritans intermarried with pagan nations and many began worshipping pagan gods, as we see in *2 Kings 17:24-31*.

The Samaritans had intermarried with five foreign nations and each introduced their own god. One of them was Baal, which meant in Hebrew, "lord" or even "husband." The prophets considered the worship of these gods as similar to the infidelity of a spouse, since God's relationship with Israel was likened to a union between husband and wife. The prophets foretold that God would return to Samaria as a bridegroom and invite

the bride back into relationship with him. In *Hosea 2:14-20* we read, "I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her... And I will make for you a covenant... betroth you to me forever." Jesus fulfills this prophecy here at the well. The well was also a place where many of Israel's ancient leaders found their wives (See *Genesis 24:11; Genesis 29:2; and Exodus 2:15*).

Perhaps a question might help us begin this journey of peeking below the surface of the water: If Jesus walked through your front door right now, what would your heart long for him to say to you? If you're like me, we may hope to hear, "I love you" or "I'm with you" or "you are strong."

When we take this question to heart, we may desire to hear from him something more true to our human experience. We want to be known as we are, rather than covered up with feel-good phrases. What is able to reach the woman's heart is that she isn't told a sweet phrase but something uncomfortable yet freeing. Jesus tells her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and he whom you now have is not your husband."

Perhaps today we too want Jesus to tell us what we already know to be true: "you're tired," "you're hurting," or "you're unhappy." He sees the most secret of places in our hearts and desires to transform them into glory. Where there is Christ, there is truth. Where there is truth, there is light. Where there is light in the darkness, there is he who also says to us, "I who speak to you am he." We can trust the voice of God. We can trust that he heals, even though it may hurt.



Leonard Gutierrez is the director of the Office of Evangelization for the Diocese of New Ulm, [lgutierrez@dnu.org](mailto:lgutierrez@dnu.org); (507) 233-5361.

## Have you been married 65 years or more?

*The Prairie Catholic* will be honoring couples who will celebrate a **65th or beyond** wedding anniversary in the year 2024. Recognized couples must be a member of a parish in the diocese. Complete this form and return it, along with a current photograph (NO NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS, PLEASE), **no later than Nov. 30, 2023**, to *The Prairie Catholic*, 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073, or e-mail submission to [cclancy@dnu.org](mailto:cclancy@dnu.org). Announcements will be featured in the January/February 2024 edition of *The Prairie Catholic*.

Groom's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Bride's MAIDEN Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish and City Where You Were Married: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Married: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Years Married As of Dec. 31, 2023: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number or E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

# Ask a Canon Lawyer

## This month's question:

**I was baptized and received my first Communion, but I was never Confirmed in high school with my classmates. How can I go about receiving this sacrament as an adult?**

The *Code of Canon Law* Canon 879 teaches what Confirmation is:

*The sacrament of Confirmation strengthens the baptized and obliges them more firmly to be witnesses of Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith. It imprints a character; enriches by the gift of the Holy Spirit the baptized continuing on the path of Christian initiation, and binds them more perfectly to the Church.*

Confirmation, as a sacrament, is unique in a few ways. Originating in the practice that is found in the Acts of the Apostles which tells us that those who were baptized then went to the Apostles, who would lay their hands on them and receive "the Gift of the Holy Spirit" (Cf., *Acts 8:14-17*). Under normal circumstances

Confirmation is to be administered by a bishop, who in office is a successor to the Apostles. (Although when one is in danger of death, or in some other special circumstances, a priest can administer the sacrament of Confirmation.)

As a sacrament, it is up to the bishop of the diocese to establish specific norms regarding when this sacrament is to be received under "normal" conditions, and what is to be judged as adequate preparation for candidates to receive this sacrament. In the Diocese of New Ulm, at different historical points, Confirmation in practice was received as young as about ten years old. It is presently administered in later high school years. (Some parishes in the Diocese of New Ulm have the bishop come every other year, and

some have Confirmation offered every year, so it effectively is between grades 10-12.)

Those who are baptized Catholics who do not receive this sacrament in high school in the course of the usual catechetical program in a parish setting should approach their parish priest to inquire about how to receive this sacrament. It will involve some catechesis about the sacrament, and then the priest will either add the candidate to the group who will be confirmed the next time that the bishop comes to the parish for this sacrament, or the priest can request delegation (that is, permission) from the bishop to confirm the candidate himself.

(If an adult is baptized, they will receive the sacrament of Confirmation immediately after Baptism, as is often seen at the Easter Vigil Mass each year, and Canon Law gives the parish priest the ability to confirm such individuals. In the case of a baptized non-Catholic who seeks to enter into "Full Communion"

with the Catholic Church, the parish priest is also able to administer the sacrament as he welcomes them into the Church.)

As we have experienced here in the Diocese of New Ulm, when a diocese is a vacant see (without a bishop), the priest designated as the diocesan administrator can administer the sacrament himself. Or, he can delegate parish priests to administer the sacrament of Confirmation in their respective parishes, which is what happened a number of times in recent history in this diocese.

**Next issue: What are marriage "banns"? Why are they published in some parish bulletins and not in others?**

*Editor's note: Fr. Mark Steffl is a canon lawyer and serves as judicial vicar of the diocesan Office of the Tribunal. If you have a question regarding canon law that you would like answered here, email The Prairie Catholic, [ccclancy@dnu.org](mailto:ccclancy@dnu.org).*



by Fr. Mark Steffl, STL, JCL

To be a "fully initiated member" of the Catholic Church is to have received the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Holy Communion, and Confirmation.

Full initiation as a Catholic (including Confirmation) is a requirement to be able to fulfill the role of sponsor (godparent) for Baptism and Confirmation (in addition to practicing one's faith). It is expected that a person would be fully initiated before getting married, and an individual entering consecrated life as a religious sister or brother or a man who is to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders must have received the sacrament of Confirmation.

## Burial in the Catholic Church – the Do's, the Don't's, and the Why's

*Editor's note: In March of this year, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Doctrine issued a statement reiterating the Church's preference for burial of the deceased and stating that newer methods – namely alkaline hydrolysis and human composting – do not show respect for the human body. In their statement, the committee affirms that every human being has been created in the image of God and has an inherent dignity and worth. Furthermore, since "every man and woman is a unity of body and soul, respect for the person necessarily includes respect for the body."*

*The Church considers burial to be "the most appropriate way of manifesting reverence for the body of the deceased," as it "clearly expresses our faith and hope in the resurrection of the body." While the Church permits cremation unless it is chosen for reasons contrary to the Catholic faith, the preferred method is burial.*

by Fr. Mark Steffl, STL, JCL

In this life on earth, we have a soul that is united to a body. When we are called from this life, our immortal soul leaves the body behind, at least for a while, until that time when we will be reunited one day, body and soul, at the time of the Second Coming of the Lord. As Catholics, we profess this belief at each weekend Mass in the Nicene Creed when we say, "I believe in the resurrection of the body and life of the world to come."

As such, we also recall that human

beings are made in the image and likeness of God and that the human body is more than just something that is used temporarily by the soul and can be cast aside when it is no longer useful.

Just as the Lord Jesus rose from the dead on Easter Sunday, in his earthly body in a glorified state, the Lord has also promised that our souls will be reunited one day with our bodies in the Final Resurrection.

Since we believe that one day our immortal souls will be reunited with our bodies, the Church has

always held that the body of someone who has died should be treated with the greatest dignity and respect. This also draws from Christianity's Jewish roots, one of the many things carried forward by the first Christians in the early centuries of the Church. This is also why at a Funeral Mass, the body of the individual who "is asleep in Christ" (to use the phrase of St. Paul that is so prominent in the Funeral Mass) is given such a central part of how the Church offers the prayers for the dead.

Accompanied by the deceased's family, the body is carried into the church, sprinkled with holy water, and covered with a white pall that symbolizes the new life baptism promises. At the end of the Funeral Mass, the casket is incensed, once again according the body a great dignity, as it was made a "temple of the Holy Spirit" through baptism.

As a result, the Church has always provided cemeteries for those who have died to await their own "resurrection of the body" when the Lord returns. (Some might be interested in knowing that it has been a long-standing custom for those who are laid to rest to be facing east, the direction of the

rising of the sun and the direction from which it was thought by the early Church that the Lord would return.)

In 1963, the Church, for the first time, allowed for or "permitted" cremation, providing that it was not done out of a rejection or denial of the Christian belief about the resurrection of the body. But the Church still makes clear that "the preferred method for honoring the remains of the dead, however, remains burial of the human body."

In a document from 2016, at the direction of Pope Francis, the Church added to this, that if a body is cremated, the remains (ashes) should be buried as a body and not remain in the possession of family members, such as in a home. Nor should they be scattered in the air, on land, in the sea, or "preserved in mementos, pieces of jewelry or other objects."

More recently, the bishops of the United States released a statement in 2023 against two contemporary "trends" relating to the disposition of bodily remains called "alkaline hydrolysis" and "human composting."

In alkaline hydrolysis, the body is placed in a metal tank containing a chemical mixture of water and alkali at high temperature and pressure to speed decomposition, dissolving the body. In human composting, the body is laid in a metal bin surrounded by composting material that causes microbes and bacteria to break down the body, aided by heat and oxygen. Both of these newer practices, the U.S. bishops note, do not show adequate respect for the human body, nor express hope in the resurrection."

In their document, the bishops concluded by reminding us that "Human beings are not pure spirits like the angels. We share in the physicality of the material order" being both body and soul and that we will at the end of time our soul will be reunited with our body. The bishops remind us that "the way we treat the bodies of our beloved dead must always bear witness to our faith in and our hope for what God has promised us."

## Diocese's Family Life director recipient of 'Hero for Life' award

**SLEEPY EYE** – On Thursday, Sept. 21, First Choice Pregnancy Services of New Ulm hosted its 13th annual fundraiser. The “Hero for Life Banquet” was held at the Sleepy Eye Event Center in Sleepy Eye, where it honored Sr. Candace Fier, ISSM, with the Hero for Life Award.

Sr. Candace is a founding member and a current Board of Directors member of First Choice Pregnancy Services which was founded in 2010. Her passion and dedication to creating a culture of life have been a foundational part of her life and work. An Ivanhoe, Minnesota native and a registered nurse, Sr. Candace served as the director of the FertilityCare Services department of Divine Providence Health Center in Ivanhoe beginning in 1990.

Almost two decades later, she brought her passion for pro-life work to her current position as the director of the Office of Family

Life for the Diocese of New Ulm. It was in this capacity that Sr. Candace posed the question to several members of the New Ulm community about starting a pregnancy help center.

This question started the journey of establishing First Choice Pregnancy Services which eventually resulted in an ultrasound machine being donated in honor of Bishop Emeritus John M. LeVoir’s appointment to New Ulm.

Throughout the founding and development of First Choice Pregnancy Services, Bishop LeVoir provided support and inspiration through his pro-life dedication. “Pregnancy centers offer vital services to women who are pregnant and in troubled situations,” stated the now retired bishop. “These women need people who care for them and their needs during pregnancy and after giving birth. They need



Pro-life advocate Sr. Candace Fier is a founding Board of Directors member of First Choice Pregnancy Services. (Photo by Christine Clancy)

people who affirm them and their unborn child. So, when Sr. Candace approached me about supporting a new pregnancy center in New Ulm, I answered with a resounding ‘yes.’ She took it from there.”

From its earliest beginnings, First Choice Pregnancy Services has

been an endeavor blessed by God that has touched and transformed many lives. The center offers pro-life options and resources to women and families before, during, and after pregnancy, and all services are free.

“I have been extremely impressed with the operations of First Choice

Pregnancy Services as well as the pro-life message that echoes throughout the entire Diocese of New Ulm. This message is visible on many billboards, heard in our pulpits, reflected in our diocesan publications, expressed in marches, and is the mantra of our diocesan Family Life office,” said Bishop Chad Zielinski.

“Sr. Candace is one of those ‘hero voices’ that is reflected in her actions to declare that all life at all times is sacred,” said the bishop. “She has taken a stand announcing that the divine blueprint of God is reflected in every person and courageously continues to be a prophet for those ‘who want to be born.’ It is because of her prophetic voice and actions that more and more of those children who want to be born are today in the arms of someone who loves them. A job well done good and faithful servant of God!”

## School's community support large part of academic success

(Continued from page 7.)

Among the alums was Jane (Fischer) Lensing, a St. Anne's graduate from the first high school class of 1949. Lensing has continued to live in Wabasso her whole life and has always been involved in the St. Anne's community. She said she especially enjoyed participating in the parade and reflecting on how the school has joyfully served her family over the years. As part of the first graduating class, Lensing recalled, “We were always the oldest. When the high school opened, we were so happy! Before then, [St. Anne's] only went up to eighth grade. We were the first-ever freshmen, then sophomores, then juniors, and finally the first graduating class. It was so cool!”

Though Lensing is honored to have graduated from the first St. Anne's high school class, the school holds an even more significant and special place in her heart for the gift it has provided to her and her family for multiple generations. As Lensing shares, “I firmly believe in Catholic education. It was my school, and all my seven kids went there. My granddaughter and her kids went there. It feels weird that no one else in the family is going there right now because someone always has. I'm



Jane (Fischer) Lensing, represented St. Anne's first graduating class of 1949 in the 100 Year Celebration parade. Lensing is chauffeured by Tom Franta of Wabasso and a St. Anne alum. (Photo submitted)

92, and I just feel so lucky to be a part of all of it.”

The St. Anne's community was so thankful that Lensing could join the celebration. Her and her family's story is another beautiful testimony to the inspirational impact and faithful family support of St. Anne's legacy.

Ultimately, the 100th Anniversary Celebration perfectly exemplified the faith-based and family-oriented legacy and community of St. Anne's Catholic School, with many passionate people coming together to support what they call home.

Since opening 100 years ago, “St. Anne's has undergone

renovations, additions, and the opening of both junior and high schools,” according to the school's website. Up until the 1970's, the school educated grades 1-12. “The alumni who attended high school have such fond memories of their time [at St. Anne's] and continue to remain involved in our school and share their stories,” Franta said.

Today, St. Anne's educates approximately 102 students, preschool through sixth grade and the numbers are excitedly increasing. As Franta describes, “Wabasso is a rural farming community. Yet, throughout St. Anne's history, the parish has continued to avidly support the school, oftentimes with great

personal sacrifice,” she said.

“Back when the first building was erected and through [various] additions and renovations of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, when farming times were tough, the parish community put forth their blood, sweat, and tears to build and support the school. That kind of effort is only the result of a love for Catholic education and a desire to pass on the faith to others,” said Franta.

That same passion is alive today more than ever. “For the first time in many years, the town of Wabasso is growing. Young families are returning to their hometown. It's an exciting time for our school as we see our numbers increasing and church pews packed with babies,” Franta happily shares.

These demographic statistics,

combined with the numerous facility repairs and maintenance needs, have raised the prospect for a new St. Anne's school building. Reflecting on the past, Franta explains, “Through the examples of our founders 100 years ago of hard work and dedication, our community has expressed an overwhelming desire for these traditions to continue.”

In June, the school officially launched its capital campaign for the new construction. Remarkably, over 35% of the funds had already been raised after only a few weeks, according to Franta.

With the success of the 100th Anniversary Celebration and a new construction project underway, St. Anne's School is alive and thriving with passion and joy for its ongoing legacy—here's to the next 100 years!

### Statement of ownership, management, circulation

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<b>Total</b>	<b>21,185</b>	<b>20,981</b>



**All of the U.S. bishops will descend upon Baltimore Nov. 13-16 for their 2023 Fall Plenary Assembly in which** they will be voting on several new committee chairmen and offering updates on conference initiatives such as their National Eucharistic Revival. They will also be voting on items such as updates and materials related to the bishops' guidance on political responsibility ahead of the presidential election in November 2024.

The meeting comes shortly

following the close of the first October session of the universal Church's Synod on Synodality in Rome, which is part of the culmination of a four-phase process aimed at refocusing "our gaze on God" and being "a Church that looks mercifully at humanity," as Pope Francis put it last month.

The U.S. bishops' assembly takes place amid the second year of the Eucharistic revival, which they launched in 2022 in part to respond to a Pew Research poll that indicated that only one-third

of adult Catholics in the U.S. believe in the Church's teaching on the Blessed Sacrament. Elections

At the meeting, six new chairmen for committees and a new conference secretary will be chosen. Once chosen, the bishops will each serve one preliminary year as chairman-elect and begin their three-year tenure as chairman following the fall assembly in 2024.

The assembly's public sessions on Nov. 14 and 15 will be livestreamed on the USCCB website [www.usccb.org/plenary-assembly-november-13-16-2023](http://www.usccb.org/plenary-assembly-november-13-16-2023).

**The annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection is scheduled in parishes throughout** the Diocese of New Ulm on Dec. 9-10. In 1988, Catholic bishops of the United States launched the Retirement Fund for Religious to address the significant lack of retirement funding for Catholic sisters, brothers and priests in religious orders. For most of their lives, elder religious worked for little to no pay. There were no 401(k) plans or pensions.

Religious communities are financially responsible for the support and care of their members. Income, earnings and expenses are managed separately from the parish and diocesan structures of the Catholic Church. Only six percent of the religious communities who provide information to the National Religious Retirement Office are adequately funded for retirement; 42 percent have 25 or fewer members. Many small communities struggle to care for elder members due to a lack of financial resources and personnel.

Today, religious past age 70 outnumber religious younger than age 70 by nearly three to one and

there are 24,005 religious past age 70 living in the United States. In 2022, the average annual cost for their care was roughly \$55,500 per person; skilled nursing care averaged \$82,700 per person. Since 2009, the annual cost to support senior women and men religious has exceeded \$1 billion.

Last year's Retirement Fund for Religious appeal demonstrated Catholics' tremendous generosity by raising \$27.6 million. These funds provided financial assistance for retirement needs for 297 U.S. religious communities.

Join Bishop Zielinski for an  
**ADVENT PRAYER SERVICE**

**Sunday, Dec. 17 at 1:00 p.m.  
Church of St. Peter, St. Peter**

*Bring Baby Jesus figure from your Nativity scene for the bishop to bless. "Swaddling clothes" also will be collected for babies in need.*

Sponsored by the DIOCESE OF NEW ULM - (507) 359-2966.