

Gatherings

DIOCESE
of
NEW ULM

Offices of
Religious Education
& Youth Ministry

Reflections

January 9, 2014

Dear DREs and Youth Ministers:

**From the
Office of Youth Ministry
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How to Avoid Confusion and Chaos in the Confession Line

A wise person once said, "The devil reigns in chaos and confusion." I've always found that to be true! While I may have chaotic or confusing moments, striving for order and harmony always leads me closer to God. And I cannot think of a better place for a little harmony and peace than the line for confession. Or as Youth Minister Sherry Plaetz from Wabasso said, "I can't stand it when kids misbehave in church!"

Her desire for order and harmony, as well as a positive preparation time for the sacrament, led her to create Learning Stations on the Way of the

Cross. When I heard about how effective this was, I asked her permission to share her ideas.

Sherry said, "I wasn't happy with the way Reconciliation was going. The students didn't seem to be very sincere and I also felt they lacked good preparation time before entering the confessional, even though we had a prayer service. That is why I tried to come up with a different way of doing things. Since the change, the priests have said that the kids seem so sincere and ready for the sacrament."

Strategic Planning

I break the kids up into groups of 8-10. These groups rotate between different stations that are led mostly by catechists. I plan for each station to take close to 10 minutes. I also have seasonally appropriate crossword puzzles or scrambled word papers for the students in case the discussion at one station isn't happening. This keeps the noise down while doing something constructive.

I do not take part in one of these stations as I make sure everything is running smoothly or remain attentive to see if a group needs to shorten their discussion.

Organization

So, to start, there is one group at each station with no one at Reconciliation. The group that starts with the Prayer Service Station will go to Reconciliation first. The Meditation Station precedes the Prayer Service and the rest I just set up in the basement of the church spread out as much as possible to keep distractions down.

I've included ideas that we used the last two Lenten seasons, if you'd like to see what we did for Advent, I would be happy to share that with you." -Ms. Sherry Plaetz, AFC DRE & YM
splaetz@wabassostannesschool.com

See next page for more

Thanks, Sherry!

If you are interested in trying this for yourself, Sherry attached the following documents with directions which will be posted at my diocesan page: www.dnu.org/word/youth.html.

- “I Thirst” Meditation
- Lenten Penance Service
- Stations of the Cross Handout
- Questions to accompany “In Christ Alone” YouTube video
- How Must We Forgive? Gospel Reading
- Scripture Passages to look up and read on the Passion of Jesus
- Seven Last Words Guided Meditation
- Seven Pillars of the Catholic Church by Matthew Kelly - Contemplation
- Activity for “Jimmy and the White Lie”
- Lyrics for Ray Boltz’s song, “The Hammer”
- “Radio” DVD activity

Mark your Calendars:

Exciting Opportunities to Gear Up for Lent during monthly upcoming Gatherings

- Our own in-house Tolkien aficionado, Aldean Hendrickson, will be presenting a lecture on “Tolkien’s Hidden Catholicism” followed by “Canon Law in the Life of the Church” on Monday, February 24, 2014 at St. Aloysius Jubilee Center in Olivia.
- Dr. Matthew Tsakanikas will present a lecture on “Repentance, Deliverance, and Healing” with a special connection on Deliverance Ministries during a Lenten Day of Reflection on Monday, March 17, 2014, at St. Aloysius Jubilee Center in Olivia. Plan to come and bring a friend!

Junior High Festival is May 4, not April 27, 2014.

It will be held in the public Junior High School in Marshall from 1-7 p.m. and Steve Angrisano is the keynote.

Upcoming 2013-14 Dates for Parish Catechetical Leaders and Youth Ministers

2014 Mon, Jan 13	DRE/YM Gathering (Sadlier Religion) Larry Huiras will present on “Who Do You Say That I Am – a presentation of the human and divine natures of Christ Jesus”	9:30 gathering; meeting 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, Feb 24	DRE/YM Gathering Presenter: Aldean Hendrickson – presenting a lecture on “Tolkien’s Hidden Catholicism” followed by “Canon Law in the Life of the Church”	9:30 gathering; meeting 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, March 17	DRE/YM Gathering Presenter: Dr. Matthew Tsakanikas will present a lecture on “Repentance, Deliverance, and Healing” with a special connection on Deliverance Ministries during a Lenten Day of Reflection	9:30 gathering; meeting 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Sun, May 4	Jr High Festival Steve Angrisano, Keynote	1 – 7 pm	Marshall Junior High
Mon, April 28	DRE/YM Gathering - Curriculum Day	9:30 gathering; meeting 10 am – 3 pm	Pastoral Center, New Ulm
Mon, May 12	DRE/YM Gathering - Spring Fling	Noon-4:00 pm	TBA
July 20-24	Guys’ Discipleship Camp	6 pm Sun-Noon Thurs	Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye
July 27-31	Girls’ Discipleship Camp	6 pm Sun-Noon Thurs	Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye
Sun, Oct 26	Senior High Rally Baseball Celebrity Mike Sweeney!!!		

Check out Riverbend TEC! For more details and an application check out the Web site: <http://riverbendtec.org/>

Jan 18-20 New Ulm, Feb 15-17 Winsted, April 5-7 Bird Island, June 28-30 Winsted, Aug 2-4 New Ulm



From the
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Evangelii Gaudium!

The Joy of the Gospel, Part 2
 Pope Francis' New Apostolic Exhortation
 by Bryan Reising

We will continue to look at this important apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis.

The following are some excerpts, some gems I found in reading this document. Let us see how this apostolic exhortation can help our evangelizing efforts:

On culture, thought, science, and education:

“Proclaiming the Gospel message to different cultures also involves proclaiming it to professional, scientific, and academic circles. This means an encounter between faith, reason, and the sciences with a view to developing new approaches and arguments on the issue of credibility, a creative apologetics which would encourage greater openness to the Gospel on the part of all. When certain categories of reason and the sciences are taken up into the proclamation of the message, these categories then become tools of evangelization; water is changed into wine.

Whatever is taken up is not just redeemed, but becomes an instrument of the Spirit for enlightening and renewing the world.” (EG, 132)

On theology: “It is not enough that evangelizers be concerned to reach each person, or that the Gospel be proclaimed to the cultures as a whole. A theology – and not simply a pastoral theology – which is in dialogue with other sciences and human experiences is most important for our discernment on how best to bring the Gospel message to different cultural contexts and groups. The Church, in her commitment to evangelization, appreciates and encourages the charism of theologians and their scholarly efforts to advance dialogue with the world of cultures and sciences. I call on theologians to carry out this service as part of the Church’s saving mission. In doing so, however, they must always remember that the Church and theology exist to evangelize, and not be content with a desk-bound theology” (EG, 133)

On the homily: “The homily cannot be a form of entertainment like those presented by the media, yet it does need to give life and meaning to the celebration. It is a distinctive genre, since it is preaching situated within the framework of a liturgical celebration; hence it should be brief and avoid taking on the semblance of a speech or a lecture. A preacher may be able to hold the attention of his

listeners for a whole hour, but in this case his words become more important than the celebration of faith. If the homily goes on too long, it will affect two characteristic elements of the liturgical celebration: its balance and its rhythm. When preaching takes place within the context of the liturgy, it is part of the offering made to the Father and a mediation of the grace which Christ pours out during the celebration. This context demands that preaching should guide the assembly, and the preacher, to a life-changing communion with Christ in the Eucharist. This means that the words of the preacher must be measured, so that the Lord, more than his minister, will be the center of attention.” (EG, 138 and Pope Francis continues at length in preparing for homilies, getting to know prayerfully the Word to be preached, getting to know the people who are participating, and delivering homilies. It is in numbers 135-159)

On the kerygma (first proclamation of the Gospel):

“...we have rediscovered the fundamental role of the first announcement or kerygma, which needs to be the centre of all evangelizing activity and all efforts at Church renewal. The kerygma is trinitarian. The fire of the Spirit is given in the form of tongues and leads us to believe in Jesus Christ who, by his death and resurrection, reveals and communicates to us the Father’s infinite mercy. On the lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over: ‘Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to

ke-ryg-ma noun

www.merriam-webster.com

Definition: the apostolic proclamation of salvation through Jesus Christ

Origin: Greek *kērygma*, from *kēryssein* to proclaim, from *kēryx* herald **First Known Use in English:** 1889



enlighten, strengthen and free you.” This first proclamation is called “first” not because it exists at the beginning and can then be forgotten or replaced by other more important things. It is first in a qualitative sense because it is the principal proclamation, the one which we must hear again and again in different ways, the one which we must announce one way or another throughout the process of catechesis, at every level and moment. For this reason too, “the priest – like every other member of the Church – ought to grow in awareness that he himself is continually in need of being evangelized” (EG, 164)

On the kerygma as the foundation to catechesis:

“We must not think that in catechesis the kerygma gives way to a supposedly more “solid” formation. Nothing is more solid, profound, secure, meaningful, and wisdom-filled than that initial proclamation. All Christian formation consists of entering more deeply into the kerygma, which is reflected in and constantly illumines, the work of catechesis, thereby enabling us to understand more fully the significance of every subject which the latter treats. It is the message capable of responding to the desire for the infinite which abides in every human heart. The centrality of the kerygma calls for stressing those elements which are most needed today: it has to express God’s saving love which precedes any moral and religious

obligation on our part; it should not impose the truth but appeal to freedom; it should be marked by joy, encouragement, liveliness, and a harmonious balance which will not reduce preaching to a few doctrines which are at times more philosophical than evangelical. All this demands on the part of the evangelizer certain attitudes which foster openness to the message: approachability, readiness for dialogue, patience, a warmth and welcome which is non-judgmental.” (EG, 165)

On catechesis and mystagogic initiation:

“Another aspect of catechesis which has developed in recent decades is mystagogic initiation. This basically has to do with two things: a progressive experience of formation involving the entire community and a renewed appreciation of the liturgical signs of Christian initiation.” (EG, 166)

On catechesis and beauty: “Every form of catechesis would do well to attend to the ‘way of beauty’ (via pulchritudinis). Proclaiming Christ means showing that to believe in and to follow him is not only something right and true, but also something beautiful, capable of filling life with new splendor and profound joy, even in the midst of difficulties. Every expression of true beauty can thus be acknowledged as a path leading to an encounter with the Lord Jesus...Each particular Church should encourage the use of the arts in evangelization, building on the treasures of the past but also drawing upon the wide variety of contemporary expressions so as to transmit the faith in a new ‘language of parables.’ We must be bold enough to discover new signs and new symbols, new flesh to embody and communicate the word, and different forms of beauty which are valued in different cultural settings, including those unconventional modes of beauty which may mean little to the evangelizers, yet prove particularly attractive for others.” (EG, 167)



On personal accompaniment in processes of

growth: “In a culture paradoxically suffering from anonymity and at the same time obsessed with the details of other people’s lives, shamelessly given over to morbid curiosity, the Church must look more closely and sympathetically at others whenever necessary. In our world, ordained ministers and other pastoral workers can make present the fragrance of Christ’s closeness and his personal gaze. The Church will have to initiate everyone – priests, religious, and laity – into this ‘art of accompaniment’ which teaches us to remove our sandals before the sacred ground of the other (cf. Ex 3:5). The pace of this accompany-ment must be steady and reassuring, reflecting our closeness and our compassionate gaze which also heals, liberates, and encourages growth in the Christian life.” (EG, 169)

On the word of God: “Not only the homily has to be nourished by the word of God. All evangelization is based on that word, listened to, meditated upon, lived, celebrated, and witnessed to. The sacred Scriptures are the very source of evangelization. Consequently, we need to be constantly trained in hearing the word. The Church does not

evangelize unless she constantly lets herself be evangelized. It is indispensable that the word of God ‘be ever more fully at the heart of every ecclesial activity.’ God’s word, listened to and celebrated, above all in the Eucharist, nourishes and inwardly strengthens Christians, enabling them to offer an authentic witness to the Gospel in daily life.” (EG, 174)

“The study of the sacred Scriptures must be a door opened to every believer. It is essential that the revealed word radically enrich our catechesis and all our efforts to pass on the faith. Evangelization demands familiarity with God’s word, which calls for dioceses, parishes, and Catholic associations to provide for a serious, ongoing study of the Bible, while encouraging its prayerful individual and communal reading.” (EG, 175)

In February, I will continue sharing about this apostolic exhortation filled with rich and wonderful insights regarding the new evangelization. To read the entire document, go to: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium_en.pdf

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Upcoming Gather

Mon., Jan. 13 ~ 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
beginning at 9:30 for coffee, light breakfast and gathering at the Jubilee Center, St. Aloysius Church, Olivia

It will be sponsored by Sadlier. Larry Huiras will present on “Who Do You Say That I Am.” It is a presentation of the human and divine natures of Christ Jesus. Please RSVP to Cindy Blickem (cblcikem@dnu.org or 507-233- 5325) by Friday morning, January 3.

Future Gatherers

- 9:30 gather; 10 a.m.-3 p.m.**
St. Aloysius Jubilee Center, Olivia - 302 S 10th St.
- Mon, Feb 24 Aldean Hendrickson, presenting a lecture on “Tolkien’s Hidden Catholicism” followed by “Canon Law in the Life of the Church”
 - Mon, March 17 Dr. Matthew Tsakanikas will present a lecture on “Repentance, Deliverance, and Healing” with a special connection on Deliverance Ministries during a Lenten Day of Reflection
 - Mon, April 28 Curriculum Day--sponsored by the diocese (Pastoral Center, New Ulm)
 - Mon, May 12 Spring Fling (location and time TBA)

“Salvation History: Realizing the Domestic Church” ~ Half-Day Bible Study/Retreat

Focus: Parents and other Lay Ministers of the Diocese of New Ulm

Purpose: Bible training and familiarity with *Lumen gentium* #10-12; hand-on faith
Date: Saturday or Sunday of parish’s choosing (schedule can be adjusted) →

Presented by: Dr. Matthew Tsakanikas, a visiting assistant professor with Benedictine College, teaches for Saint Meinrad Seminary Diaconate Formation Program, and is Director of the New Evangelization Office for the Diocese of New Ulm.

Contact Paulette Kral pkral@dnu.org to set the above day of reflection (or a modified schedule), or call (507) 359-2966.

Requires joint organization, promotion, and set-up by leaders of the sponsoring parish. Promotion needs at least three Sunday announcements, three parish bulletin runs, and opportunity for pre-registration.

Parish Visits

Bryan will be on the road starting in September for some parish visits (twice a month). He will visit on the day of your Faith Formation. This will run through May of 2014.

Please contact him to figure out a date that will work for you or he may contact you for that visit as he lines up his schedule. He will not get to all places during the catechetical year, but he would like to get to all regions and most area faith communities.

Keep in mind, that Bryan recognizes that this is a very busy day for you. So don't feel you have to give him special treatment. If you have time to meet with him that afternoon, great, but don't feel obligated. He can always meet with you on another day or through a phone call. The main idea for this is to look at what is happening that can benefit other parishes and area faith communities.

What will happen with these visits? The following are some possibilities: an observation of your faith formation during the time of instruction, perhaps an in-service with your catechists, or even a catechetical presentation – guest catechist for adults, youth, or children. Keep in mind that this is not an audit, but a visit to observe and be of service.

Dates planned:

January:	Manannah and Redwood Falls
February:	Tracy
March:	Open
April:	Watkins
May:	Open

Contact Bryan Reising to arrange a date and time. breising@dnu.org or call the Office for Religious Education and Adult Faith Formation, 507-233-5324.

Catechetical Planning

For those who are catechetical leaders, Bryan Reising can provide a closed course on "Designing a Parish Catechetical Plan." Other catechetical leaders who have taken this three-week seminar found it very helpful in looking at all aspects of planning for catechesis for their AFC or parish. Please contact Bryan at breising@dnu.org if you are interested.

Riverbend TEC

Together Encountering Christ retreats for adults and

youth:	January 18-20	New Ulm
	February 15-17	Winsted
	April 5-7	Bird Island
	June 28-30	Winsted
	August 2-4	New Ulm

Bishop Lucker Lecture

Monday, March 10, 2014 - 7 p.m.

at the Church of St. Catherine in Redwood Falls

Our presenter will be *Dr. Barbara Elliott*, president and founder of the Center for Cultural Renewal in Houston, Texas. She is a college professor, former International television correspondent for PBS in Europe, and former Deputy Special Assistant to President Reagan, Office of Public Liaison (responsible for economic briefings for business leaders), and much more.

Her topic will be:

"White-Hot Faith Transforming the Culture"

What kind of faith topples empires and frees captives? Radically changes the lives of former drug addicts, homeless people, and prisoners? Ignites a new vision for the creative arts rooted in eternal verities? Transforms the way businesses are run? Restores fragmented communities by linking the "down and outers" to the "up and outers?" Only the white-hot power of the Holy Spirit is capable of transforming a culture from top to bottom to make it genuinely good. Come to hear when profound change has swept through the culture with God's power unleashed, and learn where white-hot faith is at work today. Dr. Barbara J. Elliott draws on her experience in The White House, as a correspondent in Europe as the Berlin Wall fell, serving in the inner-cities of America, and in teaching the historical and theological roots of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful, to bring an inspiring vision of cultural transformation.

University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF)

Be a part of these online learning opportunities!

They have certificates for Catechesis, Youth Ministry, Leadership, Adult Faith Formation, Marianist Studies, and Social Justice!

Cycle 2: March 2 – April 5, 2014

(Registration: Opens January 14; Closes February 26)

- [Bible Basics](#)
- [Catechetical Methodologies: Archdiocese for Military Services Only](#)
- [Catholic Beliefs](#)
- [Church History 2](#)
- [Designing and Implementing Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 7\)](#)
- [Ecclesiology: Pilgrim Church](#)
- [Evangelization and Discipleship](#)
- [Faith and Human Development](#)
- [Galatians](#)
- [History of Catholic Social Action](#)
- [Images of Jesus](#)
- [Introduction to Catechesis](#)
- [Introduction to Christian Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Practical Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Prayer](#)
- [Introduction to Scripture](#)
- [Leadership in Ministry](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Founders](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Prayer](#)
- [Mary in Scripture and Tradition](#)
- [New Testament](#)
- [Old Testament](#)

- [Parish as a Learning Community \(AFL 2\)](#)
- [Pastoral Approach to Culture](#)
- [Praying With Children](#)
- [Principles for Addressing Diversity Issues in Youth Ministry](#)
- [Relational Ministry with Youth](#)
- [Sacrament of Marriage: A Holy Calling](#)
- [Sacraments](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Doctrine](#)
- [The Parish Nurse: Facilitating Wholistic Health Through the Lifespan](#)

Religious Education Safe Environment Compliance Reminders

The deadline to return the Opt-Out forms to the diocese, along with the form noting children attending, and absent was November 12. The deadline to turn in the form from any make-up sessions is March 1, 2014.

An Opt Out Form is provided to the parent/guardian before your training in the fall along with a copy of the Overview and *Teaching Touching Safety Quick Reference Guide*. In signing the Opt Out form, the parent/guardian is agreeing to train their own child. Use the Opt Out form provided by the diocese. Do not change the content of the form. Any Opt Out forms signed by the parent/guardian are turned in to you before the training in the fall. After your initial training takes place, Opt Out forms are not provided to the parent/guardian. Catechetical Leaders (DREs) and catechists can access the *Guide for Parents* in English or Spanish by login on to their VIRTUS account, go to the Educators tab, then to Lesson Plans, Step 2: Click here to read or print *Teaching Touching Safety*.

If you have any changes with your Catechists Lists (new catechists), please send Cindy those changes: name, grade(s) taught, and e-mail address. Thank you!

Any DRE, youth minister, catechist, adults helping with youth ministry, or anyone who may be in a ministry with minors is required to be in total compliance with safe environment requirements:

The four areas of compliance [a condition of employment or volunteer service] are:

- 1) Have a background check before beginning employment or volunteer service.
- 2) Sign forms A & B of the 2007 diocesan sexual misconduct policy before beginning employment or volunteer service.
- 3) Attend a VIRTUS training session before beginning employment or volunteer service. If there is a serious reason that prevents attendance prior to employment or volunteer service, a grace period of 60 days is allowed, but this only pertains to long term ministries lasting a school or catechetical year.
- 4) Each individual is to complete online training as assigned. Regarding the online training, it is to be completed within 30 days of being posted to the VIRTUS account. Communicate with your volunteers to complete the online training as soon as possible. It takes approximately 10 minutes (or less) to do the training and answer the question at the end.

Remember to abide by all the deadlines for Safe Environment. Thank you!

And thank you for keeping our children and youth safe!

VIRTUS Trainings

...Protecting God's Children for Adults

Monday, February 10, 2014, at 6:30 p.m. – Holy Redeemer Catholic School, Marshall

More training may be scheduled soon.

Mohr Catechist Formation Fund

A Gift for You, Catechists, Youth Team Members, Teachers of the Religion

This scholarship fund is a great gift for your catechists, teachers, youth ministry team, and many of you! You can receive scholarships for Faith Formation Day and other catechist formation opportunities, opportunities outside the diocese, online courses through the University of Dayton's VLCFF (Virtual Learning Community of Faith Formation), and even some college courses on faith formation. Please submit your applications soon! An application is on our Web site:

<http://www.dnu.org/word/documents/MohrScholarship-CatechistFormationFund-Application.pdf>

Interested in a Bachelors or Masters in Theology, Religious Education, Pastoral Ministry, Parish Administration, or Canon Law?

- **St. Mary's University of Minnesota:** <http://www.smumn.edu/undergraduate-home/areas-ofstudy/theology/theology>. (They offer BA in Theology, Religious Education, Pastoral and Youth Ministry; they also offer a Graduate Certificate in Canon Law)
- **St. Paul Seminary Graduate Program for Lay People:** www.saintpaulseminary.org (this includes an optional online distance learning degree Their degrees include an MA in Theology, Pastoral Ministry, and Religious Education).

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) Membership

Join NCCL and receive *CL (Catechetical Leader) Magazine*, CL Weekly from Lee Nagel every Monday, discounts on resources, and information on the national conference and regional workshops! The cost of an individual membership to NCCL is only \$60.00. This is only \$5.00 a month. *Use the Mohr Scholarship Fund for this opportunity!* For further information about membership, check out the Web site: www.nccl.org.

Conference speakers include Sherry Weddell, author of *Forming Intentional Disciples* and Tom Corcoran, co-author of *Rebuilt* – about a parish going from maintenance to mission.

For information on the national conference (St. Louis, MO: May 18-22, 2014), go to www.nccl.us. *Perhaps a group of parish catechetical leaders can go on a road trip! Let me know if you are interested!*

Parish Catechesis Question

After reading Pope Francis' new apostolic exhortation, what does he say regarding evangelization and catechesis?

