

Gatherings

DIOCESE
of NEW ULM
Offices of
Religious Education &
Youth Ministry

Reflections

Dear DREs and Youth Ministers

September 11, 2014

From the
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Planning on Faith this Fall

By Caitlin Bootsma
Consultant to the VIRTUS® Programs

If you are anything like me, fall signals another opportunity (like New Year's) to look afresh at routines, activities, and habits. Perhaps it is because there is a crisp breeze in the air and leaves changing colors; or that a whole new cycle of events and activities inevitably begins as August comes to a close. Regardless, it is time to break out the wall calendar, day planner, electronic scheduler, or Google calendar and start to plan and prioritize.

All sorts of events and activities make it onto our calendars. Work, school, exercise, Sunday Mass, and volunteer activities make up the framework of our days and weeks. What does not make the list immediately is prayer and spiritual practices. At first glance, this makes sense. After all, besides Mass or a religious education class we teach, we may not have a regularly scheduled spiritual activity. It is easier, we may say, to just commit to praying regularly whenever we can fit it in.

I know all too well, however, that when I do not plan for prayer to fit in my day, it often does not happen. And, naturally, when we are not rooted in prayer, we are not as prepared to care for others in our care. Of course, when someone is sick, we are having a rough day or something wonderful happens, we may remember to say, "Please

Lord, help me" or "Thank you, Jesus." What falls by the wayside, though, is recognizing Saints' Feast days, abstaining from meat or making some other penitential practice on Fridays, and remembering to dedicate time to God.

It may seem that we simply do not have time to fit these practices in. To some extent, this is true. Lay men and women in the world will not necessarily be able to commit to saying the Liturgy of the Hours seven times a day like some men and women religious! As a mother of small (read: rambunctious) children, daily Mass is not always plausible either. So, yes, the sorts of spiritual practices you adopt will depend somewhat on your vocation and particular circumstances.

Yet, we are all called to offer Christ the first fruits of our lives. Just like we should prioritize giving to the Church and those in need above our mocha lattes, we should value fitting our faith into our day above more superfluous activities.

What could the prioritization of faith this fall look like to you? The following are just a few ideas, which may or may not appeal to you. Feel free to add and adapt as necessary!



- Celebrating Feast days. Take out your parish calendar or consult an [online resource](#) that details Feast days by month. Mark down Holy Days of Obligation first, and then any other feasts that might have significance to your family or the kids to whom you minister. If you have your spouse's patron saint on the calendar ahead of time, for example, you might consider going to Mass as a family or having an extra dessert to celebrate on that day.
- Daily prayer. Consider your daily routine and what times you would particularly want to turn to God in prayer. Do you want to begin your day with a [Morning Offering](#)? Considering adding a reminder to pray to your alarm each morning. Want to say the Angelus? Set a calendar reminder at work so that it pops up on your computer each day at noon.

- Carve out time for visits to Church. You may be particularly blessed to have the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at your parish. Whether you do or do not, however, the Lord is always waiting for you in the tabernacle. Consider scheduling 15 minutes on your way to work to stop in and spend time with Jesus. Or, taking a portion of a religious education class once a month for your students to make a short visit.
- Confession. Depending on how often the Sacrament of Penance is offered, finding time for Confession can be tricky. Think about how often you would like to make it to Confession and put it on your calendar ahead of time. Remind those to whom you minister of the availability of the Sacrament and perhaps even schedule a time when you can all go together.
- The Rosary and other devotionals. Almost everyone has 15 minutes to occasionally turn to the Rosary and ask the Blessed Mother for her assistance. Or, perhaps, another devotion like the Divine Mercy chaplet is more helpful to you. Think about when you can find time to pray; you may surprise yourself! I have friends who pray the Rosary on their commute, on their daily runs and before bed.

Of course, our faith life is more than just an event on a calendar or an item on a to-do list. Yet, taking the time to plan for prayer is one more way that we can honor the Lord by making Him the center of our lives.

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Senior High Rally Sunday, October 26, 2014 1-7 pm

**New Ulm Event Center
301 20th Street S, New Ulm**
With Mike Sweeney, baseball celebrity, and a new Catholic band, THE THIRSTING. PR and registration information will be coming out soon.

Diocesan Youth Council 2014-15

Name	Region	Grade	Parish
Teresa Howard	1	11th	New Ulm, St. Mary
Alex Schotzko	1	12th	New Ulm, St. Mary
Carl Anderson	2	12th	Morgan, St. Michael
Samuel Goedtkke	2	11th	Springfield, St. Raphael
Mary Beisler	3	11th	Minneota, St. Edward
Monica Timmerman	3	11th	Marshall, Holy Redeemer
Simon Johnson	4	12th	Murdock, Sacred Heart
Samuel Rosemeier	4	11th	Murdock, Sacred Heart
Kennedy Pelzel	5	12th	Fairfax, All Saints AFC
Angie Kiecker	5	10th	Fairfax, St. Andrew
Claire Peterson	6	11th	Darwin, St. John
6 - OPEN			
Irene Anderson	At Large	11th	Morgan, St. Michael
Claudia Rabaey	At Large	10th	St. Edward, Minneota
Paul Johnson	At Large	10th	Murdock, Sacred Heart
Margaret McHugh	1	Adu Adv	Diocese of New Ulm
Sharon Illikman	1	Adu Adv	New Ulm, St. Mary
John Verly	3	Adu Adv	Marshall, Holy Redeemer

2014-15 Dates for Parish Catechetical Leaders and Youth Ministers

Sun, Sept 21	Catechetical Sunday	Theme: Teaching about God's Gift of Forgiveness	
Fri, Sept 26	Faith Formation Day – Lori Dalhoff (school focus)	8:45-2:45 (8:00 coffee & rolls)	New Ulm Area Catholic Schools
Sat, Sept 27	Faith Formation Day – Lori Dalhoff (catechists & catechetical leaders) SEE ATTACHED FLYER	9-2:30 (8 am Early Bird Mass)	St. Catherine, Redwood Falls
Sun, Oct 19-Thurs Oct 30	NET Team in diocese for parish retreats		
Mon, Oct 20	DRE/YM Gathering	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Sun, Oct 26	Sr High Rally - Baseball Celebrity Mike Sweeney	1:00-7:00 p.m.	Event Center, New Ulm 301 20th St. S
Mon, Nov 10	DRE/YM Gathering	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, Dec 1	DRE/YM Gathering	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, Jan 12	DRE/YM Gathering	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, Feb 9	DRE/YM Gathering	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, March 16	DRE/YM Gathering	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 3 pm	Jubilee Center, Olivia
Mon, April 13	DRE/YM Gathering	9:30 gather; mtg 10 am – 3 pm	Pastoral Center, New Ulm
Mon, May 11	DRE/YM Gathering - Spring Fling	Noon-4:00 pm (11:30 gather)	TBA
Check out Riverbend TEC! For more details and an application check out the Web site: http://riverbendtec.org/			
Oct 11-13, 2014 – Bird Island Jan 17-19, 2015 – New Ulm March 21-23, 2015 – Bird Island June 27-29, 2015 – Winsted			

From the Religious Education Office

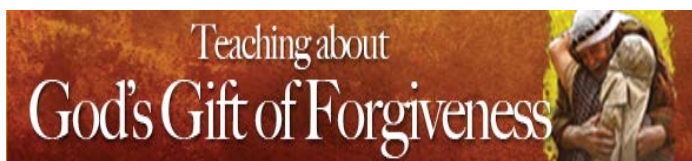


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Catechetical Sunday Teaching About God's Gift of Forgiveness

by Bryan Reising



The theme for Catechetical Sunday 2014 is
Teaching About God's Gift of Forgiveness.

Forgiveness is one of the great hallmarks of Christianity. Let's look at the Our Father or Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." We ask for God's forgiveness when we sin, but we are challenged to forgive others in the same way. So a good question to ponder: Do we want God to forgive us as we forgive others? Some of those who sinned against us have perhaps hurt us deeply emotionally, physically, and even spiritually. And no matter how hard it is to forgive, we are called to forgive and God will help us every step of the way.

A favorite parable of mine is *The Parable of the Forgiving Father and the Prodigal Son* which teaches how God forgives us, how God truly loves us! We need this story for our times today, where we read and see in the news too much hatred and bitterness, too much violence, and too much animosity. This story and many like it needs to be told to a wide audience to inspire us to forgive like God forgives.

Movies about Forgiveness

The Tale of Despereaux, an award winning book in 2004 made into motion picture in 2008, is yet another story about forgiveness. The USCCB called it a movie that can be "recommended for all." It is a tale of bravery and forgiveness. Here is the trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AO-QD17IVXM>

Another play and movie, *Les Misérables*, has a scene where Valjean frees Javert, he forgives him instead of taking revenge upon him. Here is the scene:

<http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/les-miserables->

[2012/freeing-javert](#). There are several other instances of forgiveness throughout this play and movie as well.

Stories of Forgiveness

Then there is the story of an Orthodox family from Bosnia during the war in the 1990s. An enemy heavily armed came into their home raped the mother, shot the husband and the uncle, and left the home only to be shot by a sniper. Still alive, the mother dragged his body into the house and through her grieving and sobbing, bandaged his wounds. When he came to, he asked the women incredulously, "Why?" She said, "I am a follower of the One who teaches forgiveness."

This is how Christ forgives, even our enemies. Of course the ultimate story of forgiveness. Jesus forgave from the cross all those responsible for his passion and death. Moreover, Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection transcend time and space; so it was an act of love and forgiveness for us, today.

We need to teach, "I forgive you!"

When my children were younger my son, Andrew, and his best friend, Alek, were playing at a nearby playground. I was working on replacing some worn boards on our front porch that day. Andrew and Alek came back from the playground and Alek was crying. Andrew explained that a boy beat up Alek. So I went to the playground and saw the older boy there and I confronted him. He wore a St. Michael sweatshirt. Since he was Catholic, I used this opportunity to let him know that his action was against our faith and explained to him why (at his age-appropriate level). Then I went back to our house. Fifteen minutes later, he came back to apologize to Alek. Alek responded, "That's okay." Now I realize that this is the American way to say, "I forgive you." However, in my mind, it sends a confusing message. "That's okay" could mean "I give you permission to sin against me again." Yet, it really is not okay. So I taught Alek to say to him, "I forgive you." He did. And to this day, he has never forgotten that lesson.



Forgiveness does not mean the sinner gets off scot free. There needs to be justice, there needs to be reparation for the damage done, and there needs to be reconciliation. Sometimes that does not happen, but when it does, justice and peace are the fruits.

And of course, Penance and Reconciliation is the Sacrament of Forgiveness! Encourage your catechists, parents, students, and all adults to frequent this sacrament to receive God's grace and forgiveness!



To learn more about forgiveness, go to the following links:

USCCB article and resources:

[http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/)

[teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/)

NCCL Reflection Booklet and pin for catechists:

<https://nccl.wildapricot.org/page-1336898>



As We Start the New Year

Remember Catechetical Sunday is September 21, 2014

Be sure to honor those who catechize in your parish and Area Faith Communities during the liturgies that weekend with a blessing prayer of commissioning. These people of honor are your catechists for preschool children, elementary children, children in middle school, and youth in high school. Don't forget the teachers who teach religion in our Catholic schools and home school parents who teach the faith. Also, remember those who are catechists for our adults: the pastor, the RCIA team, the facilitator of a small Christian community or Bible study. Remember too that all parents are catechists every day by actions and words.

Perhaps have a special breakfast, meal, or coffee and donuts in their honor. Present to them a gift to show your appreciation: a pin, the reflection booklet from NCCL, a scholarship to Faith Formation Days or an online course through University of Dayton's VLCFF, online courses through our New Evangelization Office, a subscription to *Catechist Magazine* or *Creative Catechist Magazine*.

Let's continue to share God's forgiveness to all we encounter in life! And may our Father forgive us as we forgive others!

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Faith Formation Days

Lori Dahlhoff, Executive Director of NCEA's Religious Education Division will present on

God Is Always There First! Sharing the Good News in Our Times and Places

- **Friday, Sept. 26:** *focus on Catholic schools*
New Ulm Area Catholic Schools
514 N Washington Street, New Ulm, MN
8:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. (8 a.m. Coffee & Rolls)
- **Saturday, Sept. 27:** *focus on catechists and catechetical leaders* - Hispanic workshops will be offered on Saturday
Church of St. Catherine
900 E Flynn Street, Redwood Falls, MN
9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. (8 a.m. Early Bird Mass)

Please see the attached flyer for further information on workshops and to register!

October 20, 2014 Gather

9:30 gather; meeting 10 am – 3 pm

Presenter: Bishop John LeVoir
Theme: Theology of the Body
Location: Jubilee Center, St. Aloysius, Olivia
Please RSVP to Cindy Blickem (cblickem@dnu.org or 507-233-5325) by Friday morning, October 17.

Gathers for the 2014-15 Catechetical Year

9:30 gather; meeting 10 am – 3 pm

Mon, Nov 10 – Jubilee Center, St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, Dec 1 – Jubilee Center, St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, Jan 12 – Jubilee Center, St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, Feb 9 – Jubilee Center, St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, March 16 – Jubilee Center, St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, April 13 – Curriculum Day, New Ulm
Mon, May 11 – TBA

Parish Visits

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

So far he has lined up visits with:

- Renville – September
- Milroy and Tracy – Oct (pilgrimage to New Ulm)
- Litchfield - October
- Morgan – November
- Christ the King AFC (Tyler, Lake Benton, Ivanhoe, Wilno) - January

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:

Oct 11-13, 2014 – Bird Island
Jan 17-19, 2015 – New Ulm
March 21-23, 2015 – Bird Island
June 27-29, 2015 – Winsted

To sign up, contact: riverbendtec@gmail.com to receive an application.



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 7: October 26 – November 29, 2014
(Registration: Opens Sept 10; Closes Oct 22)

- [A Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry](#)
- [Bible Basics](#)
- [Catechetical Methodologies: Archdiocese for Military Services Only](#)
- [Catholic Beliefs](#)
- [Catholic Teaching on Chastity, Family Life, and Human Sexuality Education](#)
- [Church History 2](#)
- [Designing a Parish Catechetical Plan](#)
- [Ecclesiology: Beginnings of the Church](#)
- [Evangelization and Discipleship](#)
- [Facilitating Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 4\)](#)
- [Faith and Human Development](#)
- [Images of Jesus](#)
- [Introduction to Catechesis](#)
- [Introduction to Christian Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Paul's Life and Letters](#)
- [Introduction to Practical Morality](#)
- [Introduction to Prayer](#)
- [Introduction to Scripture](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Prayer](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Social Justice](#)
- [New Testament](#)
- [Old Testament](#)
- [Our Hearts Were Burning](#)
- [Parish and Social Action](#)
- [Pastoral Approach to Culture](#)
- [Prayer and Worship with Adolescents](#)
- [Principles for Addressing Diversity Issues in Youth Ministry](#)
- [RCIA](#)
- [Sacrament of Marriage: A Holy Calling](#)
- [Sacraments](#)
- [Spirituality in Adult Learning & Faith Formation \(AFL 6\)](#)
- [Study of The Joy of the Gospel \(Evangelii Gaudium\)](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Doctrine](#)
- [Survey of Catholic Social Teaching](#)
- [The Parish Nurse as Counselor and Spiritual Companion](#)
- [Vocation, Spirituality and Discipleship of Catechists](#)



World Meeting of Families

This event will take place in Philadelphia from September 22-27, 2015. It is expected that the Pope will participate in this event. The following link will give you further information as you plan ahead:

<http://www.worldmeeting2015.org/>. Also see the attachments for further information, registration, a resource for families, and lesson plans for catechists teaching children and youth.

Those of You Who Participated in FOUNDATIONS but not the 2nd year

We Invite You!

Together in Mission (formerly Together in Communion) will be at Holy Redeemer Parish in their Roncalli Room on the following Saturdays next Catechetical Year:

- Sept. 20, 2014 - Catholic Faith Tradition "Vatican II and Breathing with Both Lungs of the Church" Dr. Matthew Tsakanikas, Director, Office of the New Evangelization, DNU
- Oct. 18, 2014 - Philosophy and Theology "Scholasticism Without the Armor: Saint Thomas for the 21st Century" Prof. Kevin Rickert, Saint Mary's University
- Nov. 22, 2014 - Biblical Anthropology "On Man and Woman: Genesis and the Theology of the Body" Most Rev. John M. LeVoir, Bishop of New Ulm
- Dec. 6, 2014 - Sacraments "Christian Liturgy: The Wedding Feast of the Lamb in the Book of Revelation" Dr. Matthew Tsakanikas, Director, Office of the New Evangelization, DNU
- Jan. 24, 2015 - Moral Theology I "Call to Holiness and Principles of *Veritatis Splendor*" Sr. Candace Fier, ISSM, Director, Office of Marriage and Family, DNU
- Feb. 21, 2015 - Moral Theology II "Catholic Social Teaching and the Dignity of Labor" Deacon Tim Dolan, Director, Office of Social Concerns, DNU
- Mar. 21, 2015 - Prayer and Spirituality "Church Doctors of Spirituality and Our Mission in Christ (Priest, Prophet, and King)" Sr. Myriam Rose, ACJ, Director, Office of Worship, DNU
- Apr. 18, 2015 - Mission and Ministry "The Parish and Systematic Integral New Evangelization" Bryan Reising, M.A., Director, Office of Adult Faith Formation, DNU

Unifying text for the course includes Fr. Richard Hogan's and Bishop LeVoir's *Covenant of Love*

To register, contact Paulette Kral at pkral@dnu.org or 507-359-2966.

Religious Education Safe Environment Compliance Reminders

All Catechists Lists from each parish are due by Tuesday, September 16, 2014. If you do not have all the grades covered by then, send what you have and then send the names of the catechists who are filling those grades as soon as possible. Please report the name, grade(s) taught, and e-mail address. (A form was sent to each parish to verify, change, delete, and/or add –return that corrected/updated form to Margy). Thank you!

Any DRE, youth minister, catechist, adult, 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. This includes VBS volunteers and chaperones for summer events:



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.

Provide Safe Environment training for children and youth during October or the first week of November at the latest. These lessons need to be taught at the beginning of the catechetical year, rather than later, to ensure our children and youth have the tools they need to be safe. Remember we are doing Lessons 1 and 2 this year. These reports are due back to the diocesan Safe Environment Office by November 11, 2014.

The Opt Out Form is to be provided to parents before the children's training. If parents wish to opt their child out they are to return the Opt Out Form before the lessons take place. If a child is opted out, the parent receives a copy of the lesson plans to be able to cover the material with their child at home.

Remember to use only diocesan opt out and reporting forms.

Online training 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. And thank you for keeping our children and youth safe!

VIRTUS Trainings

...Protecting God's Children for Adults

- Sun, Sept 14 at 6 p.m. – Ch of St. Michael, Madison
- Mon, Sept 15 at 6:30 p.m. – Holy Trinity HS, Winsted
- Mon, Sept 15 at 6:30 p.m. – Ch of the Holy Redeemer, Marshall
- Mon, Sept 15 at 6:30 p.m. – Ch of St. John, Ortonville
- Tues, Sept 16 at 6:30 p.m. – Ch of St. Michael, Morgan
- Wed, Sept 17 at 6 p.m. – Ch of the Holy Rosary, North Mankato
- Thurs, Sept 25 at 6:30 p.m. – Ch of St. Mary, Bird Island
- Mon, Sept 29 at 6:30 p.m. – Ch of St. Philip, Litchfield
- Sat, Oct 4 at 9 a.m. – Ch of St. Anastasia, Hutchinson
- Mon, Oct 6 at 6:30 p.m. – Ch of St. Peter, St. Peter

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 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.

Parish Catechesis Question

How do you incorporate forgiveness



in your lesson plans?

How do you encourage people to
partake in the Sacrament of Reconciliation?