



Dear PCLs (DREs) and Youth Ministers,

December 3, 2015

**From the Religious Education &
Adult Faith Formation Office**

Bryan Reising

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<http://www.dnu.org/religious-education/>



**BLESSED ADVENT
TO EACH OF YOU AS YOU
PREPARE FOR THE LORD'S
COMING AND MERRY CHRISTMAS
AS YOU TAKE THE TIME
TO CELEBRATE THE INCARNATION
OF CHRIST WITH FAMILY,
FRIENDS, PARISHIONERS!**

**TASKS OF CATECHESIS:
PROMOTING THE KNOWLEDGE OF
THE MEANING OF LITURGY AND
THE SACRAMENTS**

by Bryan Reising

Christ is present in the liturgy and the sacraments. We encounter him and deepen our relationship with him. And we experience again and again the Paschal Mystery - the death, Resurrection, and Mission of Christ. And this Paschal Mystery really transcends all time and space. This is why we can experience this Paschal Mystery within the liturgy, within the sacraments, and especially with the Sacrament of the Eucharist.

Liturgy

The meaning of Liturgy, *leitourgia* in Greek, is a public work or duty. Within the context of Church, it is signs, symbols,

and sacred actions which form our public prayer and worship as God reveals and shares his life with us. The Catechism defines it as follows: "In its original meaning, a 'public work' or service done in the name of or on behalf of the people. Through the liturgy Christ our High Priest continues the work of our redemption through the Church's celebration of the Paschal Mystery by which he accomplished our salvation."

Sacraments of Initiation

The Sacraments of Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. The Second Vatican Council called for a renewal of the catechumenate which today, the Rite for Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) has been implemented worldwide.

This process begins with the pre-catechumenate or inquiry, where people who might have an interest in the Catholic faith start with these sessions to answer their questions about the Catholic Faith, listen to the central Gospel message - some for the very first time while others hearing it for the first time in a Catholic context, and an opportunity to discern together with the Catholic parish whether to take the next step through the Rite of Welcoming.

Then they enter the catechumenate as catechumens, those who are unbaptized, who are preparing to become Catholic. Here they learn about the rhythm of the liturgical year, the readings of the Sunday liturgy, and learn about the Catholic faith.

Then at the beginning of Lent they go through the Rite of Election and are called the elect. During Lent, the stage is called Purification and Enlightenment. Here they go through what is called scrutinizes, to shed light on their life this new way of being as a follower of Christ. Minor exorcisms happen to prepare them for the Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil. They also receive the gift of the Our Father and the Nicene Creed/Apostles' Creed during this stage.

At the Easter Vigil, the night before Easter Day, they are then initiated through all three Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Then the next stage for these neophytes, newly initiated, is called Mystagogy. During this period they learn about all the Sacraments, and the eventual goal is to belong to the parish in various ways and be involved in the life of the parish. And of course, they continue their catechetical formation throughout their lives.

Regarding Baptism. This is the first Sacrament one receives. The water that is used in this Sacrament is a great sign of our dying with Christ (entering the waters of Baptism), rising with Christ (coming forth out of the waters), and being sent on mission with the post-baptismal anointing signifying that they share in the roles of Christ as priest, prophet, and king.

Regarding Confirmation. This anointing is done so one receives the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Just as the apostles and other followers received the Gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, so does a person receive the same gift with this Sacrament. This is indeed a Sacrament of Initiation because of its close ties to Baptism, but also a Sacrament of Mission. Just as the apostles proclaimed the Good News of Christ because of receiving the Gift of the Holy Spirit, so now does those who are confirmed are called to go out and proclaim the Good News. They, of course, continue their catechetical formation, which happens throughout a person's life, and they are called to discern their gifts so that they are involved with apostolates within the Church and works of mercy, acts of charity, and justice in the world.

Regarding Eucharist. This Sacrament completes the Sacraments of Initiation. Unlike Baptism and Confirmation, this is a Sacrament that can be repeated. However, a person can always renew the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. At the Eucharist, known as the Mass, we receive the Sacred Scriptures and thus the presence of Christ to help us to be better followers of Christ. We also receive the real presence of Christ in the Body and Blood we receive. It nourishes our souls to be followers of Christ and nourishes our community of faith so that we are transformed into the Body of Christ.

Of course, in our diocese, children receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the first half of 2nd grade and the Sacrament of the Eucharist in the latter half of 2nd Grade.

Sacraments of Healing

Because of sin, our souls, our minds, and our bodies are in need of healing. So we have the Sacraments of Healing, namely the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is such a gift to our lives because we are sinners in need of God's forgiveness and love otherwise known as mercy. And yet, at the same time, God calls us to turn toward him and his ways of love

for us. It is indeed a Sacrament of Conversion! It is encouraged to frequent this Sacrament to help us on our journey of faith.

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick today is not just a Sacrament for those who are dying, but it is also those who are sick, who are preparing for surgery or treatment, who have other ailments of the mind or body, or those who are injured and in need of comfort and peace. And in some cases, Christ continues to heal wholly through this Sacrament.

Sacraments of Communion and Mission

The Sacrament of Matrimony is a very special Sacrament of the union between a man and a woman as husband and wife. The love they share with each other is a love that reflects how Christ loves the Church as well as the Holy Trinity loves each other: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and how that love spills over to all creation, especially all humans. In the same way the love of a husband and wife spills over in a variety of ways. First, there is openness to having children, either through procreation or adoption,

and raising them in the faith. There are also other opportunities for that love to spill over to those who are in need: the unborn and their mothers, those without a home or shelter, those in need of food, those in need of medical care. This special relationship brings forth these responsibilities as well as great care and witness to the world the faith they have in God. This relationship continues until the death of one of the spouses.

Because there is sinfulness and brokenness, not all marriages do survive, and that is where the Church and the People of God come to help these spouses with healing as well as with the children, if there are children involved.

This is why it is important to pray for our married couples and our families. It is important that parishes and Area Faith Communities give couples and families the support they need to grow in holiness centering their relationship and families in Christ.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders is another Sacrament of Communion and Mission. It is for those who have a calling from God to serve the Church in a special way. As deacons, they are there to serve the poor, serve those in need, and serve in particular ways at the Eucharist and with other Sacraments. Priests are called to preside at the Eucharist, serve as pastors of parishes, to preach, to teach the faith, to give absolution to sinners, to lead missionary and pastoral efforts at the parish or Area Faith Community they are assigned. They are indeed extensions of their Bishop. Bishops are called to serve the Church by leading their dioceses as the local ordinary or even assisting an ordinary with a larger diocese or archdiocese by being an Auxiliary Bishop. They are called to preach and teach, and lead efforts of evangelization and



catechesis in their diocese. In addition to teaching, they are called to govern and sanctify the people of their diocese.

Liturgy of the Hours

The Liturgy of the Hours is the official prayer of the Church, meaning all those who are baptized. Yes, we see that those in monasteries and abbeys pray the Liturgy of the Hours. We find that men and women religious, those in the consecrated life, pray this prayer. We find that deacons, priests, and bishops pray this prayer daily. But even the lay faithful can pray this prayer – as families, as small Christian communities, as parish ministry groups, as friends. This prayer consists of an opening prayer, songs or hymns, recitation of psalms and canticles, a reading, petitions, an Our Father, and a closing prayer. And they are lined up seasonally. Like right now, the prayers are focused within the season of Advent. To learn more about the Liturgy of the Hours, there is various Web sites that can help you pray this, like <http://divineoffice.org/#sthash.O8CxujvG.dpbs>, <http://divine-office.com/> - which has apps for mobile devices, or <http://www.ebreviary.com/> - which has a subscription service.

Adoration

Several parishes in our diocese offer Eucharistic Adoration. This is where the Eucharist is exposed for adoration and worship. This can be done in a church or even a special chapel within the church.

Sacramentals

Sacramentals are not the same thing as Sacraments, but they are objects, things, and actions that help aid our prayers and our living out the faith. They also help prepare for the sacraments. Examples of sacramentals include the rosary, the Stations of the Cross, exorcisms, ashes, genuflection, novenas, Mary, statues and art, holy water, and candles.

How to Promote the Meaning of Liturgy and the Sacraments

This definitely is a part of our catechetical formation, from the RCIA to children and youth preparing for Sacraments, to incorporating the liturgy and the Sacraments in the lesson plans for each year of basic catechesis to advanced catechesis in adult faith formation.

To learn more about the knowledge of the meaning of Liturgy and the Sacraments, you can refer to the second pillar of the Catechism, check out resources from Bishop Robert Barron's Word on Fire, take advantage of online courses through University of Dayton's Virtual Learning Community of Faith Formation (VLCFF), learn about NIKA – more online courses on the Liturgy and Sacraments as well as many other resources.



Moments of Mercy

Throughout this Jubilee Year of Mercy, there will be a series called Moments of Mercy. Please share your stories of how students, parishioners were involved with works of mercy, or tell a story of compassion or forgiveness by one of your families or parishioners. Send these to Bryan Reising, breising@dnv.org and he will select a different “Moment of Mercy” story each month in the Gatherings Reflections. These can be inspiring stories. Thank you!

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Gathers for the Year

9:30 gather; 10 a.m. start – 3 p.m....St. Aloysius Jubilee Center in Olivia - 302 S 10th St. (unless otherwise noted)

2015

Monday, December 6 – Olivia – We will continue the Parish Catechetical Leader Formation Manual.

2016

Monday, January 11 – Olivia – Sr. Myriam Rose Schaffer, Director of Worship will present

“**Liturgical Catechesis**” “Mass is boring.” Why? How could it be boring to receive the gift of infinite love poured out on the cross, offered in the very Body and Blood of Christ, who lifts up every aspect of my life to the Father and transforms it with his own divine life? Because most people do not know that this is what happens at Mass! This is not the fault of the Mass itself. The Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasizes that the primary place to teach on the meaning of the Mass is outside of the Mass. This presentation will offer you suggestions and tools to help those of every age enter into the deepest, richest meaning of the liturgy. Mass will never be boring again, once we understand what it truly is.

Monday, February 8 – Olivia

Monday, March 14 – Olivia

Monday, April 11 – Curriculum Day, New Ulm

Monday, May 9 – TBA – *Bishop LeVoir will present*

Advent Day of Reflection

This year's Advent Day of Reflection will be in Minneota at the Church of St. Edward. It will be Sunday afternoon, December 6 at 2 pm. Anyone throughout the diocese can come to this special service. Even groups of students or families can come to participate. Bring your baby Jesus from your Nativity crèche to have it blessed by Bishop John LeVoir. Also bring gifts of baby clothes and layettes to be given to the mission of San Lucas in Guatemala and local charities. Also First Choice Pregnancy Service will take monetary donations. Please be generous!

Riverbend TEC ... Together Encountering Christ retreats for adults and youth:

- January 16-18, 2016 in Winsted at Holy Trinity Catholic Church
- March 5-7, 2016 in New Ulm at Cathedral
- July 30 - August 1, 2016 in New Ulm at Cathedral

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

Parish Visits

Bryan Reising will be on the road again this catechetical year starting in September of 2015 for some parish visits (twice a month). He will visit on the day of your Faith Formation. This will run through May of 2016.

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, that would be 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 as a 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. He will have an assessment tool to benefit your catechetical ministry. Discuss with your pastor or pastoral administrator a good time to arrange a visit. 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.

Scheduled Parish Visits:

September 23 – Holy Cross AFC, New Ulm
October 14 – Christ the King AFC, Tyler, Ivanhoe
October 28 – St. Joseph in Lamberton
December 6 – St. John in Appleton (Micronesian community); Holy Redeemer in Marshall (Hispanic community)
December 9 – St. Peter in Canby
January 13 – St. Edward in Minneota

I have openings for more future visits!

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! This is a great gift for your catechists!

By the way, Bryan will be facilitating a course on the RCIA. This is for RCIA coordinators and their team members. Sign up now!

Cycle 1: January 10 - February 13, 2016

(Registration: Opens Oct 29, 2015; Closes Jan 6)

- [A Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry](#)
 - [Advanced Catholic Social Teaching](#)
 - [Autism in Faith Formation \(SN 4\)](#)
 - [Bible Basics](#)
 - [Catholic Beliefs](#)
 - [Catholic Teaching on Chastity, Family Life, and Human Sexuality Education](#)
 - [Church History 1](#)
 - [Collaboration and Community](#)
 - [Conscience](#)
 - [Creative Methodologies: ADHD in Parish Life - Pastoral Implications \(SN 3\)](#)
 - [Disabilities in Parish Life: An Overview \(SN 1\)](#)
 - [Ecclesiology: Beginnings of the Church](#)
 - [Ecclesiology: Reframing Church](#)
 - [Facilitating Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 4\)](#)
 - [Faith and Human Development](#)
 - [Fundamentals in Deaf Faith Formation Methodologies \(SN 2\)](#)
 - [Galatians](#)
 - [Images of Jesus](#)
 - [Introduction to Catechesis](#)
 - [Introduction to Christian Morality](#)
 - [Introduction to Liturgy](#)
 - [Introduction to Practical Morality](#)
 - [Introduction to Prayer](#)
 - [Introduction to Scripture](#)
 - [Introduction to the Sacraments of Initiation](#)
 - [Marianist Studies: Community](#)
 - [Marianist Studies: William J. Ferree, SM: Social Justice](#)
 - [Marianist Studies: Mary, Holy Possibility](#)
 - [New Testament](#)
 - [Old Testament](#)
 - [Our Hearts Were Burning](#)
 - [Pastoral Approach to Culture](#)
 - [RCIA](#)
 - [Sacrament of Marriage: A Holy Calling](#)
 - [Sacraments](#)
 - [Spirituality in Adult Learning and 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](#)
 - [The Parish Nurse: Facilitating Wholistic Health Through the Lifespan](#)
 - [Theological Reflection: Key to Connecting Faith and Life](#)
 - [Vocation, Spirituality and Discipleship of Catechists](#)
- For new students to register for VLCFF:**
<http://vlc.udayton.edu/profile/agreement.php>

For returning VLCFF students to register for another course: <http://vlc.udayton.edu/register/>
VLCFF has certificates for catechists, for ministry leadership, for youth ministry, for adult faith formation, and social justice. Encourage your catechists to get the Certificate for Catechesis. If some of you want a closed course on a particular course, please contact Bryan Reising.

For further information and discussion of further ideas, call 507-233-5324; breising@dnu.org.
Cost for the 3-Week Seminar is \$40 and the five-week course is \$50. Certificates are \$20.

Scholarships are available: Web site for the Hilary and Elizabeth Mohr Catechist Fund for scholarships:
<http://static1.squarespace.com/static/55844033e4b0b4466f11c152/t/55db2f84e4b05c60e8774f35/1440427908543/MohrScholarship-CatechistFormationFund-ApplicationFo>
Office for Religious Education, Diocese of New Ulm:
<http://www.dnu.org/religious-education/>

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.

NIKA - another online learning opportunity for those in the Diocese of New Ulm



NIKA Catholic Catechetical Institute (NCCI) exists to make Jesus the Christ better known and better loved. It offers faith-filled college level continuing education for non-traditional students and adults who are seeking to deepen their faith life. The courses aim primarily at personal faith formation (intellectual and spiritual) and secondarily

are helpful to those seeking classroom applications. Faith formation is the primary emphasis because the faith-filled person will be more effective in communicating faith and making Christian disciples than the unconvinced technician who has not developed a consistent prayer life: “A theologian is one who prays...” Enjoy continuing education from the convenience of your home. Free online presentations for continuing education as well as mini-courses have begun. For further information...
<http://www.nikacatholic.com/>

Early Catholic Family Life (ECFL)

Please be reminded the Diocese of New Ulm has learning materials available to check out to area faith communities offering the Early Catholic Family Life program. Early Catholic Family Life (ECFL) is a wonderful program for parents with children 0-5 years old. ECFL is a structured seven session two-hour class patterned

after the highly successful and popular Minnesota ECFL program (Early Childhood Family Education). ECFL consists of a parent-child interaction component, a parent discussion time, and children’s learning and play time. This program emphasizes the importance of putting faith at the center of family life at the earliest ages. It is an opportunity to discuss faith education with Catholic parents and an opportunity for parents and preschools to have fun learning more about God together. If you do not have parish staff trained to lead the program but want to learn more call one of our offices. To arrange for the checking out of the lesson material bins please contact Cindy Blickem at cblickem@dnu.org

Religious Education Safe Environment Compliance Reminders

Thank you for sending in the children’s lesson reports! And, many of you are sending in your make-up session information. Offer one make-up opportunity as soon as possible and get your make-up report in no later than February 1, 2016.

It is imperative that you meet with your local safe environment coordinator (LSEC) to review VIRTUS active rosters. If you have not already done so, you must make this a priority. It is critical to confirm all of your catechists are registered and active in VIRTUS. They should not be in the classrooms if they have not met all of the requirements by now. We should not find catechists on the fall list you submitted that have not met all of the requirements. This must always be a priority for you as a leader of children’s programs. You must work with your LSEC.

Any catechetical leader, 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 prior to serving. Your LSEC should be able to run a parish master list for your convenience as needed. If not have the LSEC contact the diocesan office. Detailed information on Safe Environment components is available on the diocesan Web site.

Annual volunteer training has been posted on 8/24/15. These should have been completed by 9/24/ 15. We have 162 volunteers throughout the diocese that have not completed their online training; they are not in compliance and are not allowed to be unsupervised with minors. Your LSEC has the names of these individuals. For those not in compliance, you may want to have them come to the parish early on the night of religious education, have a tablet or two (iPad or other) available for all those volunteers with your program that have not yet completed the online training. It can be done on the larger screen smart phones quite easily as well.

Thank you for your cooperation in our efforts to keep our children and youth safe!

VIRTUS Trainings - Protecting God's Children for Adults

A complete list with the most updated information can be found on the diocesan Web site—just click on the large red button on the Safe Environment home page.

Mohr Catechist Formation Fund...

A Gift for You, Your Catechists, Your Youth Team Members, Your Teachers of 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 VLCCFF (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://static1.squarespace.com/static/55844033e4b0b4466f11c152/t/55db2f84e4b05c60e8774f35/1440427908543/MohrScholarship-CatechistFormationFund-ApplicationFo>

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/areasofstudy/theology/theology>. (They offer BA in Theology, Religious Education, Pastoral Ministry, and Youth Ministry; they also offer a Graduate Certificate in Canon Law)
St. Paul Seminary Graduate Program for Lay People:
<http://www.stthomas.edu/spsod/graduate/degree/mare/>
 (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 - This Is for All Catechetical Leaders

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 regional membership to NCCL is only \$65.00. This is only \$5.42 a month. Use the Mohr Scholarship Fund for this opportunity! For further information about membership, check out the Web site: www.nccl.org.

**Adult Faith Formation
The Letters**

A Movie about the Life of Mother Teresa

This is a movie about Mother Teresa of Kolkata, India. It opens in theaters on Friday, December 4. Here is a trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m0zDwMQ9Oak>

Word on Fire: The Mystery of God - Who God Is and Why He Matters

What do we really mean by "God?"
 Atheism is on the rise. Skeptical thinkers like Richard Dawkins, Christopher Hitchens, and Sam Harris vigorously attack belief in God as irrational or, even worse, dangerous. The so-called New Atheism has attracted millions of young people thanks to bestselling books such as The God Delusion and God Is Not Great. How should Christians respond? How can we turn the tide of secularism and draw people back to God? In this new six-part film series and study program, Bishop Robert Barron reaches into our rich intellectual tradition to teach us how. Using the insights of St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, Pope Benedict XVI, he uncovers a clear yet sophisticated understanding of what we mean by "God." Who is God? And why does he matter? Watch this series and you'll not only learn the answers yourself, but you'll discover how to share them with others – especially those who no longer believe. This film and study program is now ready to be ordered: <http://mysteryofgod.wordonfiler.org>

Parish Catechesis Question

Regarding the knowledge of the meaning of the liturgy and the sacraments in your own life and promoting it in your parish -- what does your parish or AFC offer you and your catechists to experience and be formed by the liturgy, by the sacraments? How do you invite your students and their parents to the sacraments?



2015 - 2016 Dates for Parish Catechetical Leaders (DREs) and Youth Ministers

Sun, Dec 6	Advent Prayer Service with Bishop LeVoi	2 pm	St. Edward, Minnesota
Mon, Dec 7	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, Jan 11	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, Feb 8	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, March 7	Bishop Lucker Lecture	7 pm	St. Catherine, Redwood Falls
Mon, March 14	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Thurs, March 17	Chrism Mass	7-8:30 pm	St. Mary, Sleepy Eye
Mon, April 11	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Sun, April 24	Junior High Festival	1-7 pm	Dassel Cokato High School
Mon, May 9	PCL/Youth Minister Spring Fling	Noon – 4 pm	TBA
July 24-28	Young Women's Discipleship Camp	Sun 6 pm – Thurs noon	Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye
Aug 1-5	Young Men's Discipleship Camp	Mon 11 am – Fri 6 pm	Schoenstatt on the Lake, Sleepy Eye

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

Jan 16-18, 2016 - Winsted

March 5-7, 2016 - New Ulm

July 31 - Aug 2, 2016 - New Ulm

From the Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office

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TIS THE SEASON! ADVENT!

'Tis the season! I noticed even before Thanksgiving that Menards' put up their Christmas-land section. Advertisements start popping up here and there "preparing" us for Christmas (or at least, preparing us to buy things from them *for* Christmas). It's become cliché among us Catholics to complain about how early the great consumer-push for Christmas starts each year. Indeed, it does seem to get earlier and earlier.

So, I'd like to take this time to give some attention to that wonderful liturgical season called "Advent." Remember Advent? I know, I almost forgot about it, too.

Many of us have Advent wreaths, some do the countdown-to-Christmas Advent calendar, or perhaps we add some spiritual preparation to our prayer routine. All of these things are good and help to keep us focused on what – or perhaps *who* – is about to come: Jesus (at Christmas). Advent's "feel" is one of solemn anticipation. The Church communicates this primarily through its liturgy: the use of violet vestments, the omitting of the Gloria, moderate use of floral decorations around the altar and moderate use of the organ.

This is what we see at Mass. But, also part of the liturgy of the Church, the Divine Office sets the mood for the Coming

of Christ. Particularly, starting December 17 and ending on the 23, during Vespers (Evening Prayer) we see the use of the "O Antiphons." They get their name from the use of "O" to begin each antiphon: O Wisdom of our God Most High, O Leader of the House of Israel, O Root of Jesse's stem, O Key of David, O Radiant Dawn, O King of all nations, O Emmanuel. Each antiphon addresses Jesus in a different title.

That last "O" might cue you in to where you know these antiphons from: O Come, O Come Emmanuel. Read the text for that song and you have the "O Antiphons" conveniently packaged into one hymn! The words are not exactly the same, but they convey the same message.

Another interesting tidbit about these wonderful nuggets of Advent: they teach us something about the spirit of Advent. Looking at the first letter in the titles of Jesus in Latin – *Sapientia* (Wisdom), *Adonai* (Lord), *Radix* (Root), *Clavis* (Key), *Oriens* (Dawn), *Rex* (King), *Emmanuel* (Emmanuel) – and working backward, we can spell *ERO CRAS*. Pretty cool, huh?



Not really. What is cool, though, is splitting these letters up into the phrase "ero cras." English translation from Latin:

"I WILL BE (THERE) TOMORROW."

World Youth Day 2016 Krakow, Poland

PRICE REDUCTION: The cost of the trip has now been reduced to \$3,599! Sign up now!

Join the Diocese of New Ulm and Bishop LeVoir on their pilgrimage to Krakow, Poland, to visit Pope Francis. Items on the itinerary include a visit to Pope St. John Paul II's hometown, childhood vacation destination, Auschwitz, Jasna Gora monastery in the mountains, and many other exciting spots.

This trip is particularly designed for young adults, so if you know of any young adults please recommend to them to come to World Youth Day 2016. More information can be found at dnu.org/youth/.