

DIocese of NEW ULM
Offices of Religious Education & AFF
Youth & Young Ministry

Gatherings Reflections

Dear PCLs (DREs) and Youth Ministers,

May 5, 2016

From the Religious Education & Adult Faith Formation Office

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



LAITY'S CALL TO HOLINESS

by Bryan Reising

Vatican II Decree on the Laity

In the Vatican II Decree on the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*, the Council Fathers write affirming things regarding the laity and their involvement in the Church and world:

"In the Church there is a diversity of ministry but a oneness of mission. Christ conferred on the Apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling in His name and power. But the laity likewise share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own share in the mission of the whole people of God in the Church and in the world." (AA, 2)

So, by our own Baptism, we share in Christ's roles of priest, prophet, and king. We are involved with the Church's mission both within the Church, with some of us as lay professionals or lay ecclesial ministers, and of course, in the various structures of society and the world.

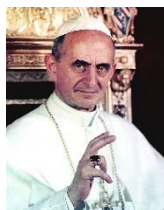


Saint John XIII

St. John XXIII, before the Second Vatican Council, affirmed the words of his predecessor, Pope Pius XII, while adding his own affirming words about the laity:

"Our predecessor Pius XII—and this redounds to his special credit and praise—exhorted the laity, with eloquent and abundant doctrine and repeated admonitions, willingly and zealously to enter the apostolic field and give their active cooperation to the ecclesiastical hierarchy, in the same way in which, since the times of the early Church and throughout the centuries, the faithful have cooperated with their bishops and their clergy, to enable them to carry out their tasks more easily and with greater efficacy, in religious and social fields. Our times require this effort, not less, nay, even more, since requirements of this kind have grown, and the greatly increased multitudes who are hungry for the spiritual food of true doctrine. Indeed, their circumstances have become more difficult and complex. And, wherever the Church fights her peaceful battles, she must be able to count on a complete organization, including not only the different grades of the hierarchy, but also the ranks of the laity proper. It is also necessary that her work of salvation be carried out equally by all." (Principes Pastorum, 28)

So we need the laity involved with their pastors in the work of catechetical ministry as well as other ministries so that pastors can be more effective.



Blessed Paul VI

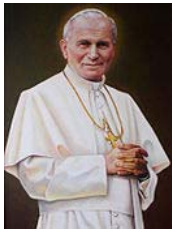
Blessed Paul VI shared these words regarding evangelization and the laity:

"We exhort the laity: Christian

families, youth, adults, all those who exercise a trade or profession, leaders, without forgetting the poor who are often rich in faith and hope--all lay people who are conscious of their evangelizing role in the service of their Church or in the midst of society and the world. We say to all of them: our evangelizing zeal must spring from true holiness of life, and, as the Second Vatican Council suggests, preaching must in its turn make the preacher grow in holiness, which is nourished by prayer and above all by love for the Eucharist.” (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 76)

So evangelization is not just the work of the clergy or religious, but it is also the work of the laity so that we can go and proclaim the news to all throughout the world.

Saint John Paul II



St. John Paul II has much to say about the laity, about laity who work in the Church and the great effect of laity who shine the light of the Gospel to the world. Here is what he says about laity who offer their expertise to the Church:

“The various ministries, offices, and roles that the lay faithful can legitimately fulfill in the liturgy, in the transmission of the faith, and in the pastoral structure of the Church, ought to be exercised *in conformity to their specific lay vocation.*” (Christifidelis Laici, 23)

In this document, *Christifidelis Laici* by St. John Paul II, he specifically teaches about the lay faithful. This is a document that should be read by lay catechetical leaders and youth ministers, among others.

Pope Benedict XVI



Pope Benedict XVI also added some valuable insights regarding the laity as well:

“Laypeople are not merely the clergy’s collaborators, but rather share in the responsibility of the Church’s ministry... [there needs to be a] change of mentality,” [especially regarding laypeople, shifting from] “considering themselves collaborators of the clergy to recognizing themselves truly as ‘co-responsible’ for the being and action of the Church, favoring the consolidation of a mature and committed laity.” (Church Membership and Pastoral Co-responsibility, a conference for the Diocese of Rome, May 2009)

Pope Benedict XVI goes beyond the notion that we are collaborators with clergy, which we are, but we are

also co-responsible for the Church’s ministry. We have a stake; we are called by God to participate in the Church’s mission.

Pope Francis

Pope Francis challenges the Church to offer more formation for the laity so that they can be more equipped to participate in the life, ministries, and mission of the Church:



“Lay people are, put simply, the vast majority of the people of God. The minority – ordained ministers – are at their service. There has been a growing awareness of the identity and mission of the laity in the Church. We can count on many lay persons, although still not nearly enough, who have a deeply-rooted sense of community and great fidelity to the tasks of charity, catechesis, and the celebration of the faith. At the same time, a clear awareness of this responsibility of the laity, grounded in their baptism and confirmation, does not appear in the same way in all places. In some cases, it is because lay persons have not been given the formation needed to take on important responsibilities. In others, it is because in their particular Churches room has not been made for them to speak and to act, due to an excessive clericalism which keeps them away from decision-making. Even if many are now involved in the lay ministries, this involvement is not reflected in a greater penetration of Christian values in the social, political, and economic sectors. It often remains tied to tasks within the Church, without a real commitment to applying the Gospel to the transformation of society. The formation of the laity and the evangelization of professional and intellectual life represent a significant pastoral challenge.” (Evangelii Gaudium, 102)

Because of its importance, we must provide formation for our catechetical leaders, for our youth ministers, for our adult faith formation directors, for our RCIA directors, and so on. And there are many opportunities through Catholic colleges and universities, through online opportunities, through formation opportunities sponsored by the diocese, and so on.

Lay Saints

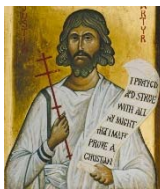
Yes, most of our canonized saints are either religious or clergy, but there are several saints who were lay, some married and some single, some were tertiary or third order or secular order associated with some religious order, some were not. But these people inspire us because they show us various paths of holiness while remaining lay.

Take for example, **Venerable Concepción Cabrera de Armida**, affectionately known as Conchita. From Mexico and living in the late 1800s and early 1900s, she was a wife and a mother of nine children. She became a widow at the age of 39 with her youngest child who was two years old at the time. She raised her children with struggles, yet with love. She started a lay apostolate, a religious order for women, an association for priests, and a religious order for men. Her writings, which has been approved by the Bishops of Mexico and the Vatican, numbers almost 60,000 handwritten pages. And she is in the process of beatification.



St. Justin Martyr

St. Justin Martyr was a lay theologian and Christian apologist in the early Church who was instrumental developing the catechumenate process and teaching Christianity within the realm of Scriptures and philosophy. He died because he proclaimed and taught the faith.



St. Catherine of Siena

St. Catherine (1347-1380) neither married nor became a woman religious. She was influenced by the spirituality of St. Dominic and so became a third order (secular or tertiary) Dominican. She did wear the habit of the Dominicans, yet was called by God to serve as a lay woman outside the convent walls. She advised priests, bishops, and even popes.



St. Juan Diego

St. Juan Diego (1474-1548) was a lay indigenous faithful Catholic who lived in Mexico (just north of Mexico City). He is said by sources to have been married and widowed. There is another source that claims he had a son, perhaps by another wife later in life.



Juan had several visions of the Blessed Virgin Mother which eventually produced an image of Mary on his tllma, his outer garment. This image has many symbols including a symbol for a deity, a four pedaled flower. This symbol is placed over the womb of Mary indicating that she is pregnant with this deity, namely Jesus. It was through her messages and the image of Our Lady that millions of indigenous people in Central America

came to believe and were baptized. Juan promoted this image and made sure a chapel was built in her honor. Today, the image is within the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, north of Mexico City.

St. Gianna Beretta Molla

St. Gianna (1922-1962) was a wife, a mother, and a pediatrician caring for children and their health. When she was pregnant with her fourth child, she was asked to have an abortion and hysterectomy because her life depended upon it. She refused and died while the child survived.



She was active with Catholic Action in Italy, a Catholic lay movement under the shepherding of bishops and the Church. She was dedicated to God, her Catholic faith, her husband, and her children.

So the Church needs us, the laity, to participate in the life of the Church, to serve the Church with gladness, to lead, to live holy lives, to be active witnesses of the Risen Lord in the world, in our everyday lives. Let us be inspired, let us be faithful disciples, and live out the faith as the lay faithful.



MOMENTS OF MERCY...

The Diocesan Church experienced a Day of Mercy on April 3 at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity. Perhaps this can inspire parishes, Area Faith Communities, and Catholic schools to do the same: to select a special Day of Mercy filled with opportunities to reach out to those in need, catechetical moments, and a Holy Hour with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Perhaps this summer's VBS can have elements of mercy! Perhaps your parish festival can have moments of mercy!

Share your ideas to inspire others in the diocese! Contact me, Bryan Reising, at breising@dnu.org.

UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Gathers for the Year

Monday, May 9 – Spring Fling - Max's Grill in Olivia Bishop LeVoir will present on *Merciful Like the Father and The Parish Catechetical Leader, the Youth Minister, and the Pastor*. Contact Cindy (507-233-5325 or cblickem@dnu.org) to RSVP by Friday morning, May 6.

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

July 30-Aug 1, 2016 New Ulm at Cathedral
Nov 19-21, 2016 Bird Island
Jan 14-16, 2017 Marshall
April 1-3, 2017 New Ulm
August 5-7, 2017 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! This is a great gift for your catechists!

Bryan Reising will be facilitating the course, Introduction to Practical Morality. He still has room for people to sign up for this course! Register soon!

**Cycle 4: May 22 – June 25, 2016
(Registration: Apr 6; Closes May 18)**

- [A Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry](#)
- [Autism in Faith Formation \(SN 4\)](#)
- [Bible Basics](#)
- [Catholic Beliefs](#)
- [Catholic Teaching on Chastity, Family Life, and Human Sexuality Education](#)
- [Church History 1](#)
- [Communication 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](#)
- [Faith and Human Development](#)
- [Faith Formation for Adults with Special Needs \(SN 5\)](#)
- [Foundations and Vision for Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 1\)](#)
- [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: Leadership](#)
- [Marianist Studies: William J. Ferree, SM: Social Justice](#)
- [Marianist Studies: Social Justice](#)
- [New Testament](#)
- [Old Testament](#)
- [Our Hearts Were Burning](#)
- [Pastoral Approach to Culture](#)
- [Poverty in the U.S. and Around the World](#)
- [Prayer and Worship with Adolescents](#)
- [RCIA](#)

- [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: Facilitating Wholistic Health Through the Lifespan](#)
- [Theological Reflection: Key to Connecting Faith and Life](#)
- [Vocation to Ministry](#)

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 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 course aims 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/>

Religious Education Safe Environment Compliance Reminders

Thinking ahead to the summer, it is important to make sure your volunteers for Vacation Bible School and Mission Trips have all the safe environment requirements completed. Make sure they signed the Safe Environment Policies A and B. Make sure they completed a background check. And make sure they are signed up to receive the initial VIRTUS training. Thank you for your cooperation in our efforts to keep our children and youth safe! Watch for an electronic document - VIRTUS integration registration project to be implemented this summer!

VIRTUS Trainings

Protecting God's Children for Adults

A complete list with the most updated information can be found on the diocesan Web site: https://www.virtusonline.org/virtus/reg_list2.cfm?theOrgID=25411&theme=0

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 and Youth Ministry; they also offer a Graduate Certificate in Canon Law)

St. Paul Seminary Graduate Program for Lay People: <http://www.stthomas.edu/spssod/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*, 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 \$75. This is only \$6.25 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 Word on Fire: The Mystery of God Who God Is and Why He Matters

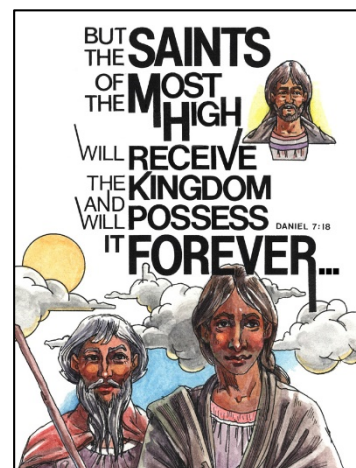
What do we really mean by "God?"

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 also you'll discover how to share them with others – especially those who no longer believe. This film and study program are now ready to be ordered:

<http://mysteryofgod.wordonfire.org/>

Parish Catechesis Question

Research your favorite lay saint. Share why this saint inspires you.





From the Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office

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<http://www.dnu.org/youth/>

THE ART OF PROMOTION - PART III: DON'T WORRY ABOUT NUMBERS

So we've established that personal invitation is crucial when it comes to promotion.

Before going on, though, let's also establish that youth ministry is not about events. It's easy to fall into the "youth ministry for youth ministry's sake" trap, which consists of promoting and hosting youth ministry events for the sake of promoting and hosting youth ministry events. Our main concern as someone who works with youth is that they follow Christ. Part of that mission is that we develop relationships with youth *and their parents* (that's another topic for another day, though very important).

So, if personal invitation is important, as well as an established relationship, it is easiest to invite a young person whom you know well to go to a particular event. Why? Because you think he would benefit from going and you want him to grow in his relationship with Christ.

"But I really only know one kid that I would feel comfortable asking to go to an event."

Great! Ask him (or her)! Don't worry about numbers. Yes, we want as many souls to be saved as possible, but you have to start somewhere. After all, God started the human race with one person, and look: that one person asked another to join him! Okay, terrible analogy, but you get the point. It only takes one youth who goes to a particular

event, enjoys it (and by it, I mean enjoys being Catholic because of it), and invites all of his friends. Often times in youth ministry, we get so caught up in numbers. Indeed, some events thrive on numbers, but when it comes down to it, it only takes one soul to set the world ablaze. The Saints have proved this to us time and time again.

A good strategy would be to set an attainable goal based on past years. For instance, historically if no one has signed up for discipleship camp, say "I want at least one person to sign up for discipleship camp." I use that example because that is precisely what happened last year. One youth came alone to a discipleship camp, knew no one, and now has friends from around the diocese and is inviting local friends to come to camp. It only takes one.

But remember, we don't do youth ministry because we need to feel important or relevant, or our programs to feel meaningful, but because we actually think something is going to change youth for the better. Jesus is the reason.

Diocesan Youth Council

If you know youth who are interested in growing in their faith and serving the diocese, encourage them to apply for the Diocesan Youth Council! There are 20 available spots (regardless of region) this year. Applications are due by June 3 and can be found online at <https://www.dnu.org/diocesan-youth-council>.

Discipleship Camps 2016

Young Women's: July 24-28

Young Men's: August 1-5

Schoenstatt-on-the-Lake, Sleepy Eye

Online payment and registration is now available! Encourage youth to register! This year should be a great camp!

NET Team

Keep in mind if you want the NET Team to come to your parish this fall. They will be available for **nine** retreat days, October 23-November 2. Open dates are: Tues, Oct 25; Tues, Nov 1. See dnu.org Youth & Young Adult Ministry Office for application form. www.dnu.org/net-retreats

2016-17 Dates for Parish Catechetical Leaders (DREs) and Youth Ministers

Mon, May 9	PCL/Youth Minister Spring Fling – Bishop LeVoir	Noon – 4 pm	Max's Grill, Olivia
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
Mon, Aug 29	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Sat, Sept 24	Faith Formation Day	8 am early bird Mass; 9-2:30	Leifeld Hall & Cathedral High School, New Ulm
Mon, Oct 10	PCL/Youth Minister Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Sun, Oct 23	Sr High Youth Rally	TBA	TBA
Mon, Nov 7	PCL/Youth Minister Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, Dec 12	PCL/Youth Minister Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, Jan 9	PCL/Youth Minister Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, Feb 13	PCL/Youth Minister Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Mon, March 6	PCL/Youth Minister Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Thurs, March 23	Bishop Lucker Lecture – Helen Alvaré	7 pm	St. Catherine, Redwood Falls
Mon, Apr 3	PCL/Youth Minister Gathering – Curriculum Day	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	Catholic Pastoral Center, New Ulm
Sun, Apr 23	Jr High Rally	TBA	TBA
Mon, May 8	PCL/Youth Minister Spring Fling	Noon-4 pm	TBA

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

July 30-Aug 1, 2016 New Ulm Jan 14-16, 2017 Marshall August 5-7, 2017 Winsted
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