

Gatherings

DIOCESE
of **NEW ULM**
Offices of
Religious Education & AFF
Youth & Young Ministry

Reflections

Dear PCLs (DREs) and Youth Ministers,

September 3, 2015

From the Religious Education Office

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Catechetical Sunday

SAFEGUARDING THE DIGNITY OF EVERY HUMAN PERSON

by Bryan Reising

The foundation of Catholic Social Teaching is the Life and Dignity of the Human Person. The United States Bishops call this theme of Catholic Social Teaching foundational because it deals with human beings of all ages, of all cultures, of all races, of all languages, of all abilities. And this theme, as one of the seven themes of Catholic Social Teachings touches all the other themes as well.

And for this year's Catechetical Sunday, it is fitting that "Safeguarding the Dignity of the Human Person," is the theme for this year. In a day and age, where we see on news outlets every day, the disregard and the destruction of human life, we need a theme such this. When we also hear on the news that bullying and cyber-bullying are on the rise, we need a theme such as this to teach children, youth, and adults the importance of safeguarding the dignity of every human person.

As we honor our catechists this year (and catechists include parents, godparents, grandparents, priests, religious, and the countless catechists in our diocese serving children, youth and adults), let us lift up also the people they serve so that they understand this message of safeguarding all human life.

The following are some ideas to honor our catechists in our parishes on Catechetical Sunday, September 20:

- Have a special commissioning prayer for the catechists, acknowledging them during each Mass on that Sunday.
- Have a special coffee and donuts or breakfast in their honor (perhaps have a suggested donation to help fund catechetical formation in the parish)
- Give a special gift to catechists, like the reflection book and/or pin that NCCL has for sale (see how to get these at the end of the article).

Here are some links that can be helpful regarding Catechetical Sunday:

The USCCB has this general page regarding Catechetical Sunday:
<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/index.cfm>

The USCCB also has this resource page with further links. These include a theological article; an in-service for catechists looking at the dignity of the human person; resources for catechists, for families, for parishes; a commissioning service during Mass; and so on: <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/human-dignity/index.cfm>

And as I mentioned before, NCCL has a reflection book and pin for sale:
<http://nccl.org/page-1336898>.



UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Faith Formation Day

Saturday, September 26, 2015

for catechists, PCLs, any interested adults

9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (8 a.m. early bird Mass)

St. Catherine, Redwood Falls

Presenter:

Fr. Otto Betler, OSB

Theme:

The Catholic Faith and Religious Orders: Their Contributions to the Faith



Please see flyer for further information including learning sessions, a Hispanic Ministry track, and registration. And to register right away, contact Cindy Blickem at cblickem@dnu.org

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, August 31 – Diocesan Pastoral Center
*Karla Cross presented on Safe Environment
New Diocese Website presentation
TEC presentation*

Monday, October 19 - Olivia
Sr Candace Fier will present

Monday, November 16 – Olivia

Monday, December 6 – Olivia

2016

Monday, January 11 – Olivia

Monday, February 8 – Olivia

Monday, March 14 – Olivia

Monday, April 11 – Curriculum Day, New Ulm

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

Riverbend TEC

Together Encountering Christ retreats for adults and youth:

- October 31 - November 2, 2015 in Bird Island at St. Mary's Catholic Church
- 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.

Foundations

We will again start Foundations in September 2015. It will be at the new Diocesan Pastoral Center in New Ulm.

Foundations is the diocesan program of basic training in perfective catechesis and theology for paid and volunteer parish staff who are involved in lay ministry.

Potential participants include: volunteer catechists, youth ministers, catechetical leaders of parishes and AFCs, school teachers, small Christian community leaders, head of the domestic churches (moms, dads, guardians), and any personnel (front desk greeters, secretaries, and so on) interested in being a part of the new evangelization.

The group meets one Saturday a month for eight months. The curriculum was developed in cooperation with the Bishop of New Ulm's Office of the New Evangelization and the Office of Adult & Faith Formation. **Even better, Bishop LeVoir teaches one of the Saturday sessions.**

The following are the dates:

2015

1. Sat, Sept 19 - Introduction to Catholic Philosophy (Dr. Kevin Rickert)
2. Sat, Oct 17 - Salvation History I (Dan Wambeke, MTH)
3. Sat, Nov 7 - Salvation History II (Dan Wambeke, MTH)
4. Sat, Dec 5 - Introduction to Catholic Theology (TBA)

2016

5. Sat, Jan 23 - Theology of Sacraments (Bryan Reising, MA)
6. Sat, Feb 27 - Theology of the Catholic Church (Bishop John M. LeVoir)
7. Sat, March 19 - Morality and Social Teaching (Sr. Candace Fier)
8. Sat, April 16 - Lay Ministry and Spirituality (Bryan Reising, MA)

To sign up, contact Paulette Kral for further information registration at pkral@dnu.org.

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 – 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.

Upcoming Parish Visits:

September 9 – St. Aloysius, Olivia

September 23 – Holy Cross AFC, New Ulm

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!

**Cycle 7: October 25 – November 28, 2015
(Registration: Sept. 9; Closes Oct. 21)**

[A Vision for Catholic Youth Ministry](#)

[Autism in Faith Formation](#)

[Bible Basics](#)

[Catechetical Methodologies: Archdiocese for Military](#)

[Services Only](#)

[Catholic Beliefs](#)

[Catholic Teaching on Chastity, Family Life, and Human](#)

[Sexuality Education](#)

[Church History 2](#)

[Communication and Community](#)

[Conscience](#)

[Creative Methodologies: ADHD in Parish Life - Pastoral](#)

[Implications](#)

[Designing a Parish Catechetical Plan](#)

[Disabilities in Parish Life: An Overview](#)

[Ecclesiology: Beginnings of the Church](#)

[Ecclesiology: Pilgrim Church](#)

[Ecumenism and Parish Life](#)

[Evangelization and Discipleship](#)

[Faith and Human Development](#)

[Galatians](#)

[Images of Jesus](#)

[Introduction to Catechesis](#) GREAT for catechists & catechetical leaders!

[Introduction to Liturgy](#)

[Introduction to Paul's Life and Letters](#)

[Introduction to Practical Morality](#)

[Introduction to Prayer](#)

[Introduction to Scripture](#)

[Leadership in Ministry](#)

[Leadership Roles and Skills for Adult Learning and Faith Formation \(AFL 5\)](#)

[Many Faces of Adult Learners \(AFL 3\)](#)

[Marianist Studies: Prayer](#)

[Marianist Studies: Social Justice](#)

[Mary in Scripture and Tradition](#)

[New Testament](#)

[Old Testament](#)

[On Bended Knee](#)

[Our Hearts Were Burning](#) GREAT for Adult Faith Formation Leaders!

[Parish and Social Action](#)

[Praying with Children](#)

[Principles for Addressing Diversity Issues in Youth Ministry](#)

[Sacraments](#)

[Survey of Catholic Doctrine](#)

[The Parish Nurse as Counsellor and Spiritual Companion](#)

[The Second Vatican Council: An Overview](#)

[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 507-359-2966; breising@dnu.org.

Scholarships are available: Web site for the Hilary and Elizabeth Mohr Catechist Fund for scholarships:

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

Office for Religious Education, Diocese of New Ulm:

<http://www.dnu.org/word/reducation.html>

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 ECFE 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 stages. 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

DUE DATES APPROACHING

- ***If you have not already done so, please send your catechists lists by September 16, 2015. Remember to e-mail in any additional names to Sherry as individuals step forward to volunteer any unfilled needs.***
- ***Send home the Opt-out information to parents the first weeks of class and schedule your Safe Environment training for children and youth for October or no later than November 10, 2015.***

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 prior to serving.

Please double-check with your local SEC to make sure everyone in your programs is fully up-to-date. 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. A pending account or "activity watch" grouping are the indications that allow you to know the basic requirements are not yet met.

The LSEC does not need to sort through other columns unless these labels are used to define the status of the user account or the grouping. Complete information is available on the newly launched and updated diocesan Web site.

Annual volunteer training has been posted. You may want to use a catechist training opportunity to have a tablet or two (iPad or other) for all those returning 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. **All returning volunteers (anyone trained prior to 8/24) have annual training that is expected to be completed by September 24 or the individual is not in compliance and is not allowed to be unsupervised with minors.**

Thank you for your cooperation in fulfilling diocesan requirements to keep our children and youth safe!

VIRTUS Trainings

...Protecting God's Children for Adults

- Thursday, September 10, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Church of St. Mary in Bird Island
- Tuesday, September 15, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Holy Trinity High School in Winsted
- Wednesday, September 16, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Church of St. Raphael in Springfield (church basement)
- Tuesday, September 22, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Church of the Holy Redeemer in Marshall
- Monday, September 28, 6:30-9:30 p.m., Church of St. Mary in Willmar
- Saturday, October 3, 9:00 a.m.-Noon, Church of St. Anastasia in Hutchinson

A complete list with the most updated information can be found on the Diocesan Web site.

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 VLCCF (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:

<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 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.

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, Fr. 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 are scheduled to debut in Fall 2015. Be the first to know when it's available by signing up here at <http://mysteryofgod.wordonfire.org/>

Parish Catechesis Question

Share some of your ideas on how you commission and show your appreciation to your catechists.

How do you help parents to partner with your catechists in passing on the faith to our young people.

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

Sat, Sept 26	Faith Formation day – PCLs, youth ministers, catechists	9-2:30 (8 am early bird Mass)	St. Catherine, Redwood Falls
Wed, Oct 7	Children's Holy Field Trip	10:30 am	Cathedral, New Ulm
Mon, Oct 19	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Sun, Oct 25	Senior High School Rally – Leah Darrow, Keynote	1:00-7:30 pm	Marshall Middle School, Marshall
Mon, Nov 16	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Nov 18-22	NCYC – National Catholic Youth Conference		Indianapolis, Indiana
Sun, Dec 6	Advent Prayer Service with Bishop LeVoir	2 pm	St. Edward, Minneota
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	TBA	TBA
Mon, April 11	PCL/YM Gathering	9:30 gather, mtg 10 am – 2:30 pm	St. Aloysius, Olivia
Sun, April 24	Junior High Festival	TBA	TBA
Mon, May 9	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>

June 27-29, 2015 - Winsted

Jan 16-18, 2016 - Winsted

July 31 - Aug 2, 2016 - New Ulm

Oct 31 - Nov 2, 2015 - Bird Island

March 5-7, 2016 - New Ulm





From the Youth & Young Ministry Office

Kevin Losleben

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SPEAKING THE LANGUAGE OF THE PEOPLE: MISSIONARIES IN A NEW WORLD

Welcome back! Just for a refresher, in the Youth and Young Adult Ministry section of *Gatherings/Reflections*, we've been learning about Fr. Matteo Ricci and his work in 16th Century China. Remember that the people of China during this time valued intellectual thought and were very skeptical of Christian missionaries. Therefore, the Jesuits decided to take a more subtle approach: act more like "tourists" than like missionaries. They got to know the Chinese people, seeking to understand not only their culture, but also the people themselves. The Chinese began to trust the missionaries and form real relationships. Relationships that led them in the right direction: heaven.

This is the basis of youth ministry: to lead souls to heaven. How do we do that? It's very simple, really: we lead them to Jesus Christ. How do we lead them to Jesus Christ? Step aside and let the Master do his work.

John 3:30

St. John the Baptist had it right when he said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." Here's a man who gained



such a following that people started to think he was the messiah! They listened to him preach. They were baptized by him. They lived as he lived. By all means, the man was popular.

This can happen with our various apostolates with youth: we gain a following. That's discipleship. It's how we evangelize. But if it doesn't lead the ones being discipled to Jesus, it's really just a cult following.

This is the danger of youth groups: they can sometimes lose focus. Even when centered around liturgical celebrations – are youth attracted to the music, to the feeling they get at Mass, or to a great homily? Are they attracted to the relationships they form with friends at youth group, but not particularly interested in forming a lasting relationship with Jesus?

A Fine Line

While all of these things are not bad in and of themselves (in fact, they go hand in hand with having a relationship with Christ), they can easily detract from the purpose of

discipleship if we don't keep a close watch on them. There's a fine line between discipleship and just being a tourist trying to make friends in a foreign land. If the Jesuits in China had simply been the wise-men they were esteemed to be and not used that status to lead souls to Christ, they wouldn't have been missionaries. Likewise, if we who lead youth do not ultimately connect them to Jesus and his Church, to what end are we evangelizing?

A Work in Progress

I realize things are getting a little heavy, so let me end on a positive note. Remember that no one is a Saint until they die (I promise it gets more positive). In other words, don't stress over those who come to youth group but are obviously in it for the wrong reasons. Everyone is a work in progress, and that includes the youth we evangelize. The point is that they come seeking something – like the Chinese who entered the home of the Jesuit missionaries – and the most we can do is to present them Jesus Christ. Beyond that, we are not required to do much more.

"Unstoppable" 2015 Sr High Youth Rally

Promotional materials to be released soon!

Date: October 25, 2015, 1:00-7:30 p.m.
Location: Marshall Middle School – Marshall, MN
Featuring: Mass with Bishop LeVoir; Leah Darrow (keynote, girls' breakout); Fr. Matt Wiering (guys' breakout); the traveling NET Team; Fr. Aaron Johannek and Kevin Losleben (MCs); and last, but not least, Jesus!

Welcome, New DYC Members!

	Parish	Grade
Nicole Howard	New Ulm – St. Mary	11
Anna Knowles	New Ulm – St. Mary	11
Emily Schotzko	New Ulm – St. Mary	11
Brynn McKeown	Seaforth – St. Mary	11
Hannah Schmitz	Springfield – St. Raphael	12
Sameh Hedlin	Marshall – Holy Redeemer	11
Rosemary Rosemeier	DeGraff – St. Bridget	10
Alexandra Rud	Clara City – St. Clara	10
Megan Tollefson	Murdock – Sacred Heart	10

National Catholic Youth Conference November 19-21, 2015

- The final deposit of \$200 for each participant was due September 1. All forms will be due by September 15 as we need to make sure we get everything ready by the September 30 deadline.
- Make sure all chaperones are in compliance with our diocesan safe environment office – we need to inform NFCYM that all are compliant by November 1. If everything is not in place, the adult cannot go.
- October 1-31 is a late registration period – the fee does go up \$40 per person.
- If someone cannot go, and there is a substitution, this would be an additional \$20 after September 30.