

THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 31 No. 5 January 2017



Fr. Goggin reflects on Fr. Stanley Rother, the first US-born martyr

NEW ULM – On Dec. 2, 2016, Pope Francis recognized the martyrdom of Fr. Stanley Rother, a priest of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma. This makes him the first martyr born on U.S. soil and carries with it approval for beatification.

Fr. Stan served as an American missionary in Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala, and was murdered for his faith in 1981 during the country's long-running civil war. The Diocese of New Ulm's mission in San Lucas Tolimán, Guatemala, was not far from Santiago Atitlán.

Msgr. Greg Schaffer, who led the New Ulm mission until his death in 2012, and Fr. John Goggin, who still serves in San Lucas, knew Fr. Stan and were involved in the events following his death.

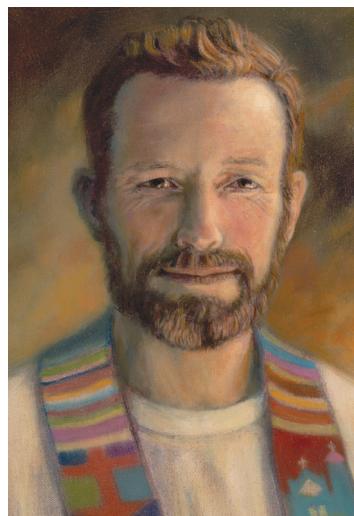
To find out more about his life and death, The Prairie Catholic's Dan Rossini interviewed Fr. Goggin by e-mail.

When did you first meet Fr. Stan and how well did you know him?

Fr. Stan arrived in Guatemala about six months after I arrived [in December 1967]. Mostly our meetings were when we got together for diocesan meetings.

How often did you have diocesan meetings? A few times per year?

I would guess now that they were four times a year. They were meetings for all religious personnel, sisters, brothers, clergy working in the diocese. And Holy Week Chrism Mass in the Cathedral or other special events. I remember riding with Fr. Stan



Fr. Stanley Rother

to one of those meetings and he was so happy that the Guatemalan sisters would soon be coming to his parish to help in pastoral ministry.

Describe Fr. Stan. What kinds of work did he do as a missionary?

First and foremost, he was a pastor of his parish – the parish of Santiago. St. James the Apostle is huge in numbers and a very participative people. The Oklahoma mission of Micatokla in the beginning had three or four priests, which eventually Fr. Stan and a Guatemalan confer were left to handle. Fr. Stan's farm experience got him interested in helping the people to habilitate land so they could grow some of their basic food crops such as corn and black beans.

What were his personal qualities?

Fr. Stan was quiet but I always felt very comfortable in his presence. Kind of a peaceful reserve. One could easily carry on a conversation but Fr. Stan would

not dominate. I would say that just by his bearing and ease, Fr. Stan inspired confidence in those around. Even though I would not know his spiritual life, he seemed to be a person at peace walking with the Lord.

Describe his relationship with his people.

He was very close to his people. He learned their language and respected their customs and walked very closely with his parishioners.

How far is it between the towns of San Lucas Tolimán and Santiago Atitlán?

In those times, 35 minutes by very sturdy Toyota pickup. Now the road has been asphalted and cuts travel time to about 25 minutes.

(Continued on page 7)

INSIDE

Pages 3
Catholic men's group launches

Page 5
Posadas: the same and different

Page 10
Common ground on immigration

Visit us online!
www.dnu.org

Planned Parenthood accused of serious abuses and possible criminal violations by Congressional panel

by Matt Hadro
Catholic News Agency

WASHINGTON – Abuses and possibly criminal violations are occurring in the fetal tissue trade between abortion clinics and tissue harvesters, concluded the special House panel investigating the matter on Jan. 4.

"It is my hope that our recommendations will result in some necessary changes within both the abortion and fetal tissue procurement industries," Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), chair of the House Select Investigative Panel, said upon release of the panel's final report.



A "Women Betrayed" rally protests against Planned Parenthood in an effort to defund the organization on July 28, 2015 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

(Photo by Addie Mena/Catholic News Agency)

"Our hope is that these changes will both protect women and their unborn children, as well as the integrity of scientific research," she said.

The investigative panel released its 471-page final report Jan. 4. This came weeks after Democrats on the panel released their 112-page report claiming that Planned Parenthood was not guilty of any wrongdoing and that the panel's investigations into the fetal tissue trade were hindering positive benefits from research conducted on fetal tissue.

In the summer of 2015, the investigative group Center for

(Continued on page 4)

Catholic schools week

by Bishop John M. LeVoir

This year, Catholic Schools Week is celebrated from Jan. 29 through Feb. 4. This is an important week for all Catholic schools and in particular for the Catholic schools in the Diocese of New Ulm.

The week highlights the importance of Catholic schools in assisting parents to hand on the Catholic faith to their children. Each of our Catholic grade schools and high schools will sponsor special events during the week.

The theme for National Catholic Schools Week 2017 is "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service." Each one of the terms in this theme is important.

Catholic schools are communities composed of families, students, teachers, staff, and administrators. Communities are integral to the handing on the Catholic faith and to the formation of a Catholic culture. Our Catholic faith is taught and learned with the help of the Catholic community, and it is also lived within the community at large.

Our schools are communities of faith. Catholic schools were

founded in our country for the purpose of handing on the Catholic faith to our children. Catholic schools have a long history in this country. In 1809, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton founded the Sisters of Charity in Emmitsburg, Md. The Sisters of Charity were the first sisters to teach in Catholic schools and they focused on education, children, and the poor.

Knowledge is imparted in Catholic schools. The basics are taught. Students educated in Catholic schools usually do very well after graduation in the work place, although I must admit that they could do better in the practice of their faith. We need to do a better job of helping our children and their families to practice the faith that they have learned in the Catholic school.

Essential to Catholic education is service. Just as Jesus came to serve and not to be served, so Catholics are called to be people of service. Recently, Pope Francis reminded us that this takes the form of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. During the Year of Mercy, Catholic schools found many ways to practice the works of mercy.

I will be celebrating Catholic Schools Week Masses at a number of our Catholic schools. For me, this is most enjoyable. I hope to see many from the community at Mass to celebrate our "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service."



Christmas gathering with the bishop

(Photo by Dan Rossini)

Seminarians of the Diocese of New Ulm gathered with Bishop LeVoir and Vocations Director Fr. Matthew Wiering for Mass and fellowship on Dec. 28 at the Pastoral Center in New Ulm. Pictured are Raymond Eberhard, Shawn Polman, Fr. Wiering, Tanner Thooft, Bishop LeVoir, John Hayes, Evan Huebl, Nathan Hansen, Joshua Bot, and Troy Timmerman. Missing is Samuel Rosemeier.

Seminarians

The week after Christmas, the seminarians from the Diocese of New Ulm gathered for several days of prayer, fellowship, and relaxation. The diocese has nine seminarians at present, three at The St. Paul Seminary and six at St. John Vianney Seminary.

I was able to meet individually with our seminarians. They are all very fine young men who have a love for Our Lord. Please continue to pray for our seminarians and to encourage

them. Pray that many more young men will answer God's call to the priesthood.

Prayers

As has been made public, the Diocese of New Ulm and some parishes within the diocese are facing a total of 101 lawsuits resulting from claims filed under the Minnesota Child Victims Act. As we work toward the fair resolution of these claims and toward healing, hope, and peace for victims and survivors of sexual abuse, please keep this

work in your prayers.

Also, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops is working to address international religious freedom with a special emphasis on the persecution of Christians and other religious minorities, particularly in Syria and Iraq. Those persecuted need our prayers and assistance more now than ever.

Bishop LeVoir's January 2017 calendar can be found at www.dnu.org/calendar/.

THE PRAIRIE CATHOLIC

The Prairie Catholic, the official newspaper for the Diocese of New Ulm since May 1972, is published monthly except July and August.

Publisher: Most Reverend John M. LeVoir
Editor in Chief: Dan Rossini
Editor: Christine Clancy

Submission deadline is the 10th of each month prior to publication.

Publication office: Diocesan Pastoral Center, 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073; phone: 507-359-2966, e-mail: dnu@dnu.org Web site: www.dnu.org

Postmaster: Send notice on Form 3579, "The Prairie Catholic," 1421 6th Street North, New Ulm, MN 56073-2071. Periodical postage paid at New Ulm and additional mailing offices. USPS 926-760.

Pallium Mass – a celebration of unity and trust

ST. PAUL – On Sunday, Dec. 18, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, invested Archbishop Bernard A. Hebda of St. Paul and Minneapolis with the pallium at a Mass at the Cathedral of St. Paul in St. Paul. Bishops from Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota attended. The dioceses of the three states form a province, with Archbishop Hebda serving as "metropolitan" or head of the principal see. A circular woolen band worn around the neck, the pallium signifies a special relationship between the archbishop and the pope, who confers his pastoral powers upon him for use in his province. Pictured are Bishop John M. LeVoir (right) and Bishop Michael J. Hoeppner of Crookston, Minn., in the opening procession.



(Photo by Dave Hrbacek/The Catholic Spirit)

Catholic Watchmen group flourishes at St. Peter's

by Sam Patet
Prairie Catholic Correspondent

ST. PETER – Cody Winnett of St. Peter didn't know what to expect when he signed up to attend a Catholic men's conference in St. Paul last year. Only a Catholic for two years, Winnett, 35, had never attended one.

So when he stepped into the Anderson Fieldhouse at the University of St. Thomas with four companions from the Church of St. Peter, he couldn't believe what he saw: hundreds and hundreds of men – and all of them were Catholic.

"I was amazed," Winnett said. To see that many men in one place praying together, participating in the Mass, adoring the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and waiting in line for confession was powerful for him.

About 1,700 men attended the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis' annual men's conference, held last year on Feb. 27.

It wasn't just the sheer number of men that impressed Winnett. He also was struck by the message the conference presenters had for them. Bishop Andrew H. Cozzens, auxiliary bishop of the archdiocese, and Jeff Cavins,



Tony Grack leads the discussion at a meeting of The Catholic Watchmen at the Church of St. Peter in St. Peter on Dec. 12. The focus of the evening was on how to better imitate St. Joseph as head of the Holy Family. Grack is a deacon candidate for the Diocese of New Ulm. (Photo by Dan Rossini)

then-director of the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, challenged them to recommit themselves to the faith by becoming Catholic Watchmen.

New movement for men

Developed by the archdiocese, the Catholic Watchmen is a parish-based movement whose goal is to train men to protect, provide for, and lead their families in the faith. According to Enzo Randazzo, men's evangelization manager for the archdiocese, it's critical that the Church help men understand the spiritual battle being waged around them.

"Men need to band together and support each other in the same

way they would in a physical battle," Randazzo said. Only on the spiritual battlefield, they're helping one another maintain lives of prayer, lead virtuous lives, and remember that they're beloved sons of the Father, he said.

That's critical, as evidence is showing just how important men are to ensuring the faith is passed on to the next generation. In a January 2016 article for *The Catholic Spirit*, Cavins "point(ed) to a Swiss study that found that the best indicator of whether children will practice the faith is if their father practiced it and modeled it for them."

Core of the movement

Throughout the conference, Winnett and his companions couldn't stop talking about how great it would be to bring the movement to their parish. So by day's end, they had decided to propose the idea to their pastor, Fr. Todd Petersen. When he heard their proposal, he was behind it one hundred percent.

"It's really a grassroots thing, and that's in the end where it has to be," Fr. Petersen said. "It's up to the parishioners – the men – to really take hold of it and make it go."

At the core of the movement are seven spiritual disciplines – three daily, two weekly, and two monthly – that men are challenged to practice (see sidebar). "They represent something greater," Randazzo said, "which is better participation in the life of the Church, which itself teaches us how to better love Christ."

But what if a man doesn't know how to put one (or any) of these disciplines into practice? Will he have to try to do these things on his own?

Not at all. An important component of the movement is monthly parish gatherings. These meetings typically include adoration, confession, a meal, and a discussion on one of the seven disciplines. The goals of the gatherings are to evangelize and build fraternity.

Positive response at St. Peter's Organizers at the Church of St. Peter held their first Watchmen gathering last September. The meetings have drawn between 20 and 40 men each month, Winnett said, and have included men of all ages.

One aspect of the movement Winnett appreciates is how easy it is to implement. "They (the archdiocese) put the whole program together, so it's very easy to just follow their lead on what you need to do," he said. On its Web site, for example, the archdiocese has a slew of resources – including instructional videos on the spiritual disciplines – that parish organizers can use at the monthly gatherings.

That's likely one reason why the movement has garnered so much interest in less than a year. Randazzo said he's received requests for information from parishes in Arkansas, Texas, Pennsylvania, and even Saskatchewan in Canada.

The movement also includes

The Catholic Watchmen Seven Disciplines

Daily Practices

1. Pray with persistence and with devotion to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.
2. Encounter Jesus in Sacred Scripture.
3. Strive to be a spiritual father like St. Joseph.

Weekly Practices

4. Engage fully in every Sunday Mass.
5. Serve and be a witness to family and community.

Monthly Practices

6. Go to confession monthly.
7. Build fraternity and evangelize men in monthly parish gatherings.

a number of micro-initiatives that complement the monthly gatherings. One that's taken off at St. Peter's is the Midnight Watchmen. Every Friday night between 11 p.m. and midnight, about a dozen men gather to pray in front of the Blessed Sacrament at church. Fr. Petersen is always present to expose and repose the Blessed Sacrament.

"Having men come in and pray for their wives, their children, the Church, the parish, is just powerful," Fr. Petersen said.

"Being up when everyone else is sleeping and praying for them really means a lot," Winnett said. "They (his wife and children) know that I'm getting up and going to pray for them."

Winnett and Fr. Petersen hope more men will commit themselves to become Catholic Watchmen, both at St. Peter's and throughout the Diocese of New Ulm.

"It's really helped me stay focused, especially with the Friday nights (of) adoration," Winnett said. "It'd be great to have it spread throughout the whole diocese."

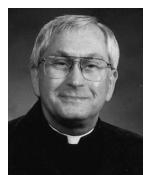
Editor's note: The archdiocesan Catholic Watchmen Web site can be found at <http://rediscover.archspm.org/the-catholic-watchmen/>. Sam Patet writes from Roseville, Minn.

Priestly milestones in 2017

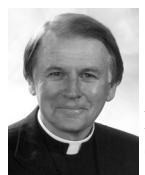
Thank you for your many years of dedicated and priestly service



55 Years
FR. JOHN BRUNNER
02/18/62



55 Years
FR. PAUL SCHUMACHER
02/18/62



50 Years
FR. JOHN BERGER
02/19/67



45 Years
FR. JAMES DEVORAK
08/27/72



45 Years
MSGR. EUGENE LOZINSKI
05/28/72



40 Years
FR. PHILIP SCHOTZKO
05/29/77



30 Years
MSGR. DOUGLAS GRAMS
06/13/87



No Tengas Miedo *Semana de las Escuelas Católicas*

por Obispo John M. LeVoir

Este año, la Semana de las Escuelas Católicas se celebra del 29 de Enero al 4 de Febrero. Esta es una semana muy importante para todas las Escuelas Católicas, pero en particular para las escuelas católicas de la Diócesis de New Ulm.

La importancia de la semana es de ayudar a los padres pasar la fe católica a sus hijos. Cada una de nuestras Escuelas Católicas patrocinarán eventos especiales durante la semana.

El tema de la Semana Nacional de las Escuelas Católicas 2017 es "Escuelas Católicas: Comunidades de Fe, Conocimiento y Servicio." Cada uno de estos términos es muy importante.

Las escuelas católicas son comunidades compuesta por familias, estudiantes, maestros, personal, y administradores. Las comunidades son parte integral de la entrega de la fe católica y de la formación de una cultura católica. Nuestra fe católica se aprende y se enseña con la ayuda de la comunidad católica y también se vive dentro de la comunidad en general.

Nuestras escuelas son comunidades de fe. Las escuelas católicas fueron fundadas en nuestro país con el propósito de pasar la fe católica a nuestros hijos. Las escuelas católicas tienen una larga historia en este país. En 1809, Santa Isabel Ann Seton fundó las Hermanas de la Caridad en Emmitsburg, Md.

Las Hermanas de la Caridad fueron las primeras hermanas en enseñar en las Escuelas Católicas y se enfocaron en la educación, los niños y en los pobres.

La formación se transmite en las Escuelas Católicas. Se enseña lo básico. Los que se han educado en las Escuelas Católicas suelen salir bien después de su graduación y en sus trabajos, aunque debo admitir que podrían hacerlo mejor en la práctica de su fe. Necesitamos hacer un mejor trabajo para ayudar a nuestros hijos y sus familias a practicar la fe que han aprendido en las Escuelas Católicas.

El servicio es lo esencial para la Educación Católica. Así como Jesús cuando vino a la tierra para servir y no para ser servido, así pues, los católicos son llamados a ser serviciales con nuestro prójimo. Recientemente, el Papa Francisco nos recordó que esto toma la forma de las obras espirituales y corporales de la Misericordia. Durante el Año de la Misericordia, las escuelas católicas encontraron distintas formas de practicar las obras de misericordia.

Durante la Semana de las Escuelas Católicas estaré celebrando las Misas en varias de nuestras Escuelas Católicas. Espero verlos en una de las Misas para celebrar nuestras "Escuelas Católicas: Comunidades de Fe, Conocimiento y Servicio."

Seminaristas

La semana después de Navidad,

los seminaristas de la Diócesis de New Ulm se reunieron por varios días para oración, compañerismo y descanso. La diócesis tiene actualmente nueve seminaristas, tres de ellos estudian en el Seminario de St. Paul y seis en el Seminario de St. John Vianney.

También tuve la oportunidad de reunirme con ellos individualmente. Ellos son buenos jóvenes que aman a nuestro Señor. Por favor, continúen orando por nuestros seminaristas. Oremos para que otros jóvenes respondan al llamado de Dios al sacerdocio.

Oración

como esta información ya se ha hecho pública, la Diócesis de New Ulm y varias parroquias dentro de la diócesis enfrenta un total de 101 demandas judiciales a causa de demandas presentadas bajo la Ley de Víctimas de Niños de Minnesota. A medida que trabajamos hacia una resolución justa y sanación, esperanza y paz por las víctimas y los sobrevivientes de abuso sexual. Por favor sigan orando por todo este proceso.

Además, la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos está trabajando para abordar la libertad religiosa internacional con un énfasis especial en la persecución de cristianos y otras minorías religiosas, particularmente en Siria e Irak. Ahora más que nunca oren por aquellos que son perseguidos. Ellos necesitan de nuestras oraciones y asistencia.

Planned Parenthood admits to not following procedures

(Continued from page 1)

Medical Progress released a series of undercover interviews conducted with high-ranking Planned Parenthood officials and current and former members of tissue procurement companies.

The videos showed Planned Parenthood officials discussing clinics' roles in the transfer of fetal tissue of aborted babies to tissue companies for reimbursement.

Fetal tissue may be used for purposes like medical research, but in abortions it must be obtained with the consent of the mother and may not be transferred for "valuable consideration," but only for "reasonable" compensation for costs like operating and transfer.

The House launched investigations into the situation to see if laws had been broken by tissue companies or abortion clinics. In October, the House voted to bring about the Select Investigative Panel to look into the matter further. Rep. Blackburn was picked to chair the panel.

The report summarized various findings of the panel over the last year, from investigations and testimony in the fetal tissue trade, that resulted in the panel making over a dozen criminal and regulatory referrals.

Consent forms to use the remains of the aborted child for research were allegedly not obtained from mothers by abortion clinics.

One of the panel's hearings "revealed substantial concern about the consent process for the donation of human fetal tissue used by abortion clinics and tissue procurement businesses (TPBs)," the report stated. "Evidence revealed that self-interested staff, whose pay depends on the numbers of specimens donated, were assigned to obtain consent from patients."

Violations of privacy were also found by the panel to have allegedly occurred in transactions between abortion clinics and tissue procurement companies.

The possibly illegal exchanges of a patient's health information between abortion clinics and the

tissue procurement company StemExpress violated the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), the report said, and the panel referred the matter to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Also, the University of New Mexico established a relationship with a nearby abortion clinic that could have violated federal and state laws, the panel alleged.

The clinic, Southwestern Women's Options, was said to provide fetal tissue to the university for research as students and fellows performed abortions at the clinic. Clinic abortionists were reportedly given "volunteer faculty" status at the university where they benefited from things like insurance coverage and access to school facilities, yet did not have to teach classes.

This was "giving their relationship the components of an exchange of fetal tissue for valuable consideration," the report stated.

Also, "the close relationship" enabled various alleged abuses to occur, like "allegations of shoddy clinical practices, including failure to utilize a consent form for fetal tissue donation and improperly combining consent for tissue donation with consent for the underlying abortion procedure," the report noted.

Other abuses the panel alleged had to do with clinics and tissue harvesters illegally profiting from the sale of fetal tissue. In one case, a Planned Parenthood clinic and the tissue procurement company claimed the same expenses in tissue transactions, although only one party seemingly would be able to claim the operating costs so as not to illegally profit from the transaction.

Planned Parenthood for America officials also admitted to not following the organization's own internal procedures on fetal tissue transactions, and on abortionists affirming they had not illegally altered the abortion procedure for harvesters to more easily obtain intact tissue.

Fatima, Spain & Lourdes
100 Year Anniversary of Our Lady of Fatima

Bishop John M. LeVoir
Catholic Diocese of New Ulm, MN

September 11-21, 2017

www.dnu.org/pilgrimage/

Posadas celebration respects tradition, need for change

by Greg Troska
Prairie Catholic Correspondent

GLENCOE – Frigid weather and busy schedules didn't keep the Hispanic community in the eastern part of the Diocese of New Ulm from celebrating Posadas, the traditional Mexican commemoration of Mary and Joseph's search for accommodations the night Jesus was born.

"Posadas" is a Spanish word meaning inn or lodgings. In this case it refers to those places where Mary and Joseph tried to find a place to stay in Bethlehem. It is traditionally celebrated as a novena, from Dec. 16 through Christmas Eve.

Along with the Feasts of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego, Posadas ranks among the most important celebrations for Hispanic Catholics during the Advent season.

This year, like every year, St. Pius X parish in Glencoe hosted a Posadas celebration the evening of Dec. 23. Participants gathered in the Sarto room of the school. Pastor Fr. Tony Stubeda, a fluent Spanish speaker and former director of Hispanic Ministry for the diocese, began by leading the Posadas prayers.

About mid-way through these prayers, there was a procession with statues of Mary and Joseph that briefly went outside. The

group then said the Rosary in Spanish. At the end, a meal of beef stew, rancho beans, and Spanish rice was served.

Fr. Stubeda helped organize the event and cook the meal. He said that Posadas is not part of the Church's liturgy, but "a popular devotion that people develop on their own." He explained the tradition and how it's been adapted for colder climes.

"Originally, in Mexico, a warm climate, they would go house to house and sing to ask to be let in," he said. "The people inside would say 'no'" and the group would go to the next house. They "would get 'no' at every house and finally, at the last house, you are let in."

When Mexican immigrants came to live in Minnesota, they brought the Posadas with them. But due to our harsh winters, it had to adjust to survive, said Fr. Stubeda. Now the celebration takes place mostly indoors.

St. Pius X parishioner Anna Marie Reiter has been helping to organize the event and prepare the meal for over 20 years. She noted how the celebration has changed. "In the past women did not work outside the home; now women are working," she said. "They do not have that freedom to get ready for the Posadas."

When she first started attending Posadas, it was primarily in people's homes. "In the beginning



Several participants in the Posadas at St. Pius X in Glencoe brave the winter cold for a few prayers outside the school as part of a procession with statues of Joseph and Mary. Posadas is a Mexican tradition on the nine days before Christmas commemorating Joseph and Mary's search for a place to stay on the night Jesus was born.
(Photo by Greg Troska)

I remember going to somebody's house and there were lots of people there. I wouldn't be surprised that we had 30 or more people. All of the families, the children, the babies, adults, everyone," she said.

Fr. Stubeda said that Posadas have been celebrated in Glencoe for close to 30 years. In the early years, they would get eight families to host the event on different nights of the novena and have one night at the parish.

Then, "as our community got

bigger and bigger, it spread out to nearby communities," he said.

As it was expanding, responsibility for the nightly celebrations gravitated to the community level. "It got expensive for one family to put on the entire meal, so they did not want to do it," Fr. Stubeda said. "We could have just coffee and cookies, but it was thought that would take away from the celebration, so we did not want to do that."

Now different communities take responsibility for a different day

in the nine-day celebration. In addition to Glencoe, Posadas were held this year in Gaylord, Arlington, Green Isle, Lester Prairie, and Hutchinson. In Hutchinson, participants gathered in homes rather than at the church or school.

Elvia Peña, coordinator of Hispanic Ministry at St. Pius X, helps to develop the schedule by talking to local Hispanics. "I find out if they want to do it, then what dates and locations are available, and what they want to do."

Responsibility for the meal depends on the area, she said. Many times, there are two or three women who cook the meal. "I encourage it be done on a potluck basis where everyone brings something to share. Maybe a piñata," she said.

Participation varies from year to year and venue to venue. One year Glencoe had 70 people. The average is between 20 and 30. This year 27 people came to St. Pius X.

Peña said that Anglos do participate, but usually only when they are invited by a Latino friend. "They have a friend who asks what that is and then invite them," she said. "Of course everybody is welcome."

Editor's note: Greg Troska is a member of St. Pius X Parish in Glencoe.

Embrace Ministry helps families heal after miscarriage

by Katie Braulick

SLEEPY EYE – Parents who lose a child before birth or shortly after often mourn the inability to physically embrace that child.

Statistics tell us that about 15 percent of known pregnancies end in miscarriage, meaning that many of us have experienced this loss and grief.

The Catholic Council of Women at the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye is now embracing these families with the caring support of a community that understands.

Embrace Ministry is a ministry of walking with these families on their journey, whether they have lost a baby many years ago or very recently. Through it, the

CCW offers companionship, small memorial crosses, books, guidance, and resources for helping parents and siblings to cope.

For something that is so common, the experience of those grieving their baby lost to miscarriage can be very isolating. The Church offers us the assurance that "every human life, from the moment of conception until death, is sacred because the human person has been willed for its own sake in the image and likeness of the living and holy God" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2319).

This means that even though this life was short, we can be assured of God's love for this little one.

There are so many questions

during the time of miscarriage: Why is this happening? Where can I go for support and answers? Can we have a funeral or memorial service? Should we name the baby? How do we talk to friends and family who have lost a baby?

Embrace Ministry wants to help families to find answers. The Church encourages us to have a funeral and burial or a memorial service. Acknowledging the baby's life no matter how short affirms the dignity of that life and assists us in our healing as well. The Church even has a special liturgical blessing for parents after a miscarriage.

Embrace Ministry is especially important to me because of my own family's experience of loss. I can see the many ways that our

baby Tommy has blessed our family even though his time with us was short.

As our family walks the journey of grief, we are confident that we will be reunited in heaven and we look forward to the day our family will be together. But for now we appreciate the intercessor we have in heaven, and we thank God for the way Tommy blesses our family and teaches us about eternal life.

No one should have to go through this experience alone. As a community we can support and uplift one another and help our suffering members to heal with hope.

If you are interested in starting a similar ministry at your parish, more information is available

by following a link on the diocesan Family Life Web page (www.dnu.org/familylife/). Another great resource is www.catholicmiscarriagesupport.com.

Editor's note: For more information on Embrace Ministry at Sleepy Eye – St. Mary's, contact Katie Braulick at 507-327-4367; katiebraulick@gmail.com.

DIocese of New Ulm
**Catholic Charities
Counseling Services**
is here to **help** you
or a loved one.

Call toll-free 866-670-5163;
e-mail pkral@dnu.org.

Fr. Stanley Rother: The first US-born martyr

by Catholic News Agency

OKLAHOMA CITY, Okla. – Pope Francis has recognized the martyrdom of Fr. Stanley Rother, a priest of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City who served in Guatemala, making him the first martyr to have been born in the United States.

“Servant of God Fr. Stanley Rother has been approved for beatification!” Archbishop Paul Coakley of Oklahoma City announced on Facebook Dec. 2. “He is the first US born martyr and priest to receive this official recognition from the Vatican! And of course the first from Oklahoma!”

Pope Francis had met with Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for the Causes of Saints, Dec. 1, approving decrees for several causes of canonization.

Fr. Rother was from the unassuming town of Okarche, Okla., where the parish, school, and farm were the pillars of community life. He went to the same school his whole life and lived with his family until he left

for seminary.

Surrounded by good priests and a vibrant parish life, Stanley felt God calling him to the priesthood from a young age. But despite a strong calling, Stanley would struggle in the seminary, failing several classes and even out of one seminary before graduating from Mount St. Mary’s seminary in Maryland.

Hearing of Stanley’s struggles, Sister Clarissa Tenbrick, his fifth grade teacher, wrote him to offer encouragement, reminding him that the patron of all priests, St. John Vianney, also struggled in seminary.

“Both of them were simple men who knew they had a call to the priesthood and then had somebody empower them so that they could complete their studies and be priests,” Maria Scaperlanda, author of “The Shepherd Who Didn’t Run,” a biography of the martyr, told CNA.

“And they brought a goodness, simplicity, and generous heart with them in (everything) they did.”

When Stanley was still in



Fr. Stanley Rother

seminary, St. John XXIII asked the Churches of North America to send assistance and establish missions in Central America. Soon after, the dioceses of Oklahoma City and Tulsa established a mission in Santiago Atitlan in Guatemala, a poor rural community of mostly indigenous people.

A few years after he was ordained, Fr. Stanley accepted an invitation to join the mission team, where he would spend the next 13 years of his life.

When he arrived to the mission, the Tz’utujil Mayan Indians in the village had no native equivalent

for Stanley, so they took to calling him Padre Francisco, after his baptismal name of Francis.

The work ethic Fr. Stanley learned on his family’s farm would serve him well in this new place. As a mission priest, he was called on not just to say Mass, but to fix the broken truck or work the fields. He built a farmers’ co-op, a school, a hospital, and the first Catholic radio station, which was used for catechesis to the even more remote villages.

“What I think is tremendous is how God doesn’t waste any details,” Scaperlanda said. “That same love for the land and the small town where everybody helps each other, all those things that he learned in Okarche is exactly what he needed when he arrived in Santiago.”

The beloved Padre Francisco was also known for his kindness, selflessness, joy, and attentive presence among his parishioners. Dozens of pictures show giggling children running after Padre Francisco and grabbing his hands, Scaperlanda said.

“It was Fr. Stanley’s natural

disposition to share the labor with them, to break bread with them, and celebrate life with them, that made the community in Guatemala say of Fr. Stanley, ‘He was our priest,’” she said.

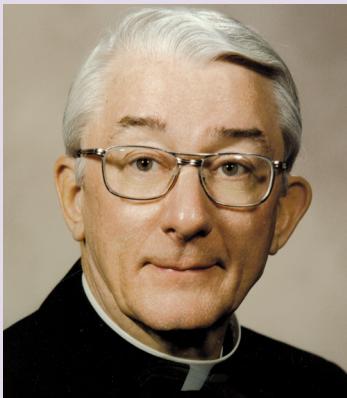
Over the years, the violence of the Guatemalan civil war inched closer to the once-peaceful village. Disappearances, killings, and danger soon became a part of daily life, but Fr. Stanley remained steadfast and supportive of his people.

In 1980-1981, the violence escalated to an almost unbearable point. Fr. Stanley was constantly seeing friends and parishioners abducted or killed. In a letter to Oklahoma Catholics during what would be his last Christmas, the priest relayed to the people back home the dangers his mission parish faced daily.

“The reality is that we are in danger. But we don’t know when or what form the government will use to further repress the Church Given the situation, I am not ready to leave here just yet

(Continued on page 11)

Bishop Lucker reflects on Fr. Rother’s witness upon his death



by Bishop Raymond A. Lucker

Editor’s note: Following is Bishop Raymond A. Lucker’s pastoral letter that appeared in the August 1981 edition of the Newsletter, then the official newspaper of the Diocese of New Ulm. Bishop Lucker served as the second bishop of New Ulm, 1975-2000.

I was deeply moved – yes, even shaken – by the death of Fr. Stanley Rother, who was murdered by three assassins in his rectory at Santiago Atitlan, Guatemala.

He was a hardworking, dedicated priest who gave his life in serving the impoverished and oppressed

people of his village.

Along with hundreds of other bishops, priests, sisters, lay missionaries, catechists, and other leaders in Latin America, he was put to death in the service of the Gospel.

Only a few months ago, the bishops of Guatemala, speaking of the murder of nine other priests and numerous catechists, declared, “These acts of violence cannot be isolated acts or casual events, but rather ... a very carefully studied plan exists to intimidate the Church and silence its prophetic voice.”

Fr. Stan’s voice was stilled on the night of July 28.

Fr. Greg Schaffer and Fr. John Goggin were called from our parish in San Lucas, only a dozen or so miles away. Fr. Greg stayed with the body until it was brought to Oklahoma for burial. Fr. Goggin accompanied the body to this country and gave us a first-hand report of the great love between Fr. Rother and his people.

Fr. Stan was regarded with so much love and affection that he was made one of the elders of the community. Naturally, the people wanted him to be buried in Santiago. They understood, however, the wishes of his own family that he be buried in Oklahoma. In the sanctuary of the Church in Santiago the people buried his heart, other vital organs and the cloths with which they soaked up his blood.

I used to think that the age of martyrs was over. Not so. There are martyrs in every period of Church history. A martyr is one who dies for his or her faith. The word martyr means a witness. Martyrs take a stand. They show by their lives what they believe.

There are people all over the world who are willing to undergo prison, torture, and death in following Christ. Christians in Lithuania and other countries behind the Iron Curtain continue to be systematically persecuted. All over Latin America Christians are being murdered precisely because they have taken an option for the poor and have recognized

that working for justice is a constitutive part of the Christian message. Their dying is in imitation of the death of Christ.

On the feast of a martyr, we read this Gospel passage: “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies it produces much fruit” (Jn 12:24). This same text was used at the wake of Fr. Rother. At services in Guatemala City, Bishop Eduardo Fuentes called the priest a martyr, “for he came back to the parish in spite of threats to his life out of love and service to these people.”

Fr. Stan had received a death threat in January and left the country. He returned, believing that the threat had subsided. Only a few days before his tragic death, at the annual fiesta in honor of St. James, patron of the town, Fr. Stan and neighboring priests witnessed a hundred marriages, baptized two or three hundred children, and ministered to hundreds of other people who came to the fiesta.

The martyrs of Latin America today remind us of our

responsibility to witness to our own faith in our families and communities. I believe that underlying much of the persecution of the Church in Latin America is greed for money and power. We have to come to see that so many of us are affected by a greed for material things, somehow thinking that that is where we will find our satisfaction and happiness.

Fr. Stan’s death reminds us also of the need for continual support for our brothers and sisters in Guatemala. Because of the violence in that country, there are even more orphans, widows, and starving people crying out for help. Our mission continues to provide Christian education, the celebration of the sacraments, and loving care. It is still a haven of peace and a beacon of hope. As we pray for the repose of the soul of Fr. Stanley Rother, let us also pray for peace and justice in that country.

God bless you all.



Fr. Stan loved his people, gave his life for them

(Continued from page 1)

What is the relationship between the two mission parishes?

Mostly on a diocesan level. We were both parishes staffed by American missionaries from different American dioceses. In the early years, we made use of the health care programs that volunteers with the Oklahoma mission provided.

Describe the climate of conflict in which Fr. Rother was martyred.

The military dictator allowed many types of massacres and killings. The philosophy seemed to be to kill the pastor and scatter the flock. Many, many community leaders were “disappeared” or killed simply because they were community leaders.

What did it feel like for the people to be living in the conflict at the time of Fr. Stan’s death? Was the atmosphere dominated by fear, sadness, anger, revenge?

I guess you could say all of the above. Everyone was very much concerned that there were “ears” – eyes and ears of the military. So with everything one spoke, one had to be care how it could be interpreted.

Every pueblo had “military commissioners” who kept lists of those they considered guerilla sympathizers. When a statement needed to be made to intimidate the population, some of those on the “lists” would disappear forever or be found dead along the roadside. Fear was everywhere.

Of course sadness upon the death of friends and family. No doubt a lot of anger and I suppose in the younger people, a desire for revenge. People who had to work their fields on the sides of the mountain were always suspected of helping the guerillas.

Men from Santiago Atitlán who up to those times used their typical native dress, when they went to Guatemala City, changed into western-type clothes so as not to be singled out as suspicious people.

There were constant roadside army stops for buses and vehicles where they took time to check everyone’s registration papers. What was really going on was that the army had a captured guerilla clothed in army uniform

back out of sight, who was obliged to identify any guerillas on the buses.

The Sunday soccer games where like honey for the army to conscript forcibly young men into the military service – simply taking the young men by force and putting them on the truck to be taken to the local army base.

All the fear was also accompanied by extortion. Someone would threaten to denounce another for no reason other than to get money to not denounce.

Was it different in the early 1980s than earlier periods of the civil war, which started in 1960?

In the earlier years, the conflict was more in the eastern part of the country and in Guatemala City and more student and university students were singled out as activists.

Were the Mayan people served by the missions involved in the conflict?

I presume so, being that more than 80 percent of the population was Mayan. In the beginning it seemed to be more student and popular groups, by as the massacres became so drastic, many local Mayan people had nowhere to turn and also traumatized as they saw their families, relatives, and neighbors massacred indescribably. Also, the economic extreme poverty would make some take an option for revolution as they could see no other way out.

How did the civil conflict affect the work of the missions?

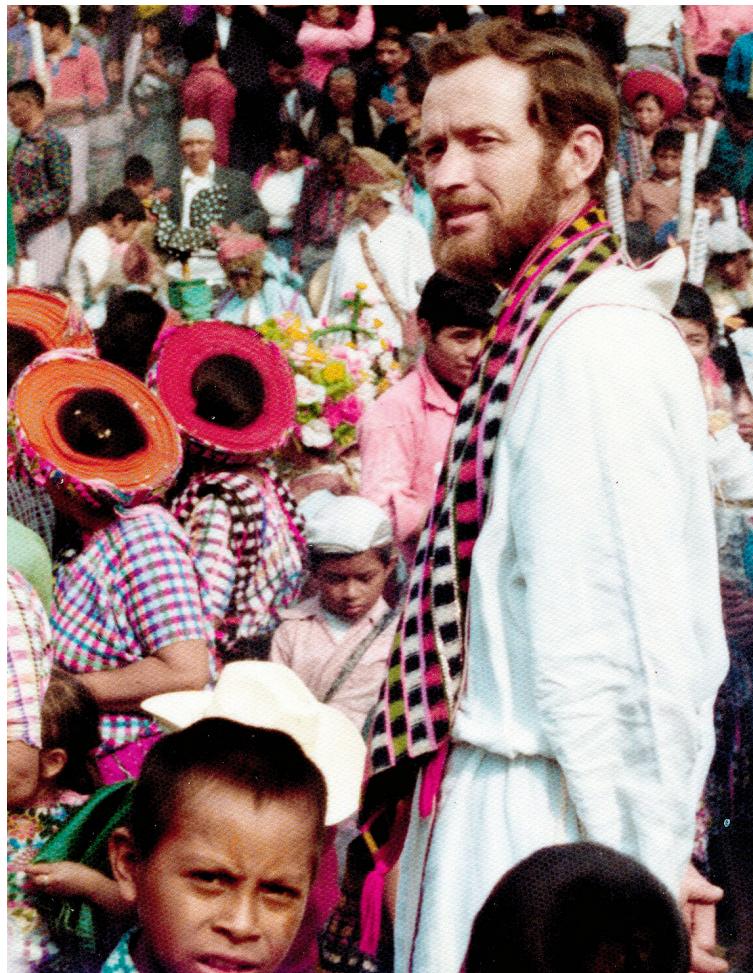
We had to be very careful about how we would preach social justice in that kind of environment. Some priests spoke out very forcefully. We as foreigners could be expelled or, more likely, the security forces would kill anyone associated with us. That was my greatest fear, for the people not so much as for ourselves.

Why was Fr. Stan targeted?

For being a spiritual leader of his people, trusted and loved by his people because of his commitment to the Lord and the Lord’s people.

Why do you think his assassins viewed Fr. Stan and the Church as enemies?

Because of the social teachings of Jesus. Someone like Stan who embodied these teachings



(Photo courtesy of The Sooner Catholic/Archdiocese of Oklahoma City)

Fr. Stanley Rother ministers among his people in Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala, in this undated file photo.

had to be considered a threat. The simple deed of considering and treating people as equals, enjoying the same dignity as human beings in the image of God and more so as Christians, is certainly a threat to the status quo that treated the people as slaves for more than 400 years.

Did Msgr. Greg receive threats similar to the ones that Fr. Stan received?

Quite possibly Fr. Greg received threats, but he would not have wanted us to worry.

Did you?

No.

How did you learn that Fr. Stan had been killed?

Fr. Greg came to my house with sisters that had come from Santiago to inform us of the tragedy about 5 a.m. on [July 28, 1981.]

Were you surprised?

Of course, even though Fr. Stan had been the object of threats. I hoped that it would never come true.

What did you do?

Fr. Greg went to Santiago Atitlán with the sisters to be with the people. He asked me to inform

Very sad, but I was so impressed with the Church in Oklahoma and the great spiritual strength of Fr. Stan’s family and his rural community.

Were you interviewed as part of the inquiry that led to the recognition of Fr. Rother’s martyrdom?

Yes.

What did you say?

I simply answered the questions the best I could. Naturally I felt very positive about Fr. Stan’s qualities to be declared a saint.

Do you remember any specific questions and how you responded? Or was this confidential?

I presume the questions were confidential, but I simply do not remember anything special from the interview, which was done with the formalities the Church requires. I simply responded with what I felt was the truth.

What were your thoughts when you heard that Pope Francis had approved Fr. Stan’s cause for canonization?

It’s wonderful. I never could expect this to happen in my lifetime. I only wish Fr. Greg were here to be with us. Fr. Greg probably asked the Holy Spirit help speed the cause of Fr. Stan.

Is there anything that you would like to add?

I had the great privilege with Fr. Greg to serve these communities as sacramental ministers (and Fr. Greg as pastor) for three years after the martyrdom of Fr. Stan. With such profound faith, tested by so much violence, in the midst of extreme poverty, Fr. Stan’s flock continued to look to the Church for strength.

Do you struggle with unforgiveness or repeated sin?
Does fear or anxiety keep you from living a full life?
Do you need deliverance from anger, resentment, depression, shame?
Do you struggle with an addiction to pornography, alcoholism, gambling, or drugs?
Have you ever been involved in occult or New Age practices?

The Diocese of New Ulm has a prayer team specifically trained to help you find healing in areas of your life where you have been wounded and lead you to experience spiritual freedom using the Unbound model of prayer.

The **Unbound Ministry** prayer team offers a compassionate, non-judgmental environment for healing and respects participants’ confidentiality. The ministry is dedicated to this prayer model, which has enabled many people to experience spiritual freedom and the abundant life promised by Jesus.

VISIT WWW.DNU.ORG/HEALING-MINISTRY/ OR CALL (507) 233-5310.

Evangelization: How can we share the Gospel with others?

by Deacon Mike McKeown

We've all heard homilies where we are encouraged to be a witness, evangelize, preach the Gospel, or share the Gospel. These words may sound good, but do they have any real, practical application in our daily lives? Are we really expected to go around talking to people about Jesus?

Most people would say, "No, thank you!" And yet, that is what Jesus calls us to do – to share the Gospel message that he's real; he's alive; he suffered, died, and rose again for the forgiveness of our sins; that he wants to live in our hearts and have a relationship with us. He wants to spend eternity with us! What a wonderful message!

So if we really want to respond to Jesus' command to be his witness, how do we do it? There are different ways to witness. One is by the way we live our life. You may have heard the quote commonly attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, "Preach the Gospel wherever you go and, when necessary, use words."

When we treat people with love and compassion, we are witnesses to the faith that we profess. The problem is, we don't always exemplify the love of Christ in how we deal with people and situations. Witnessing by our example is very important, but sometimes it's used as a copout because we don't want to witness with our words!

We all have that fear of offending people, partly because we may have experienced someone who tried to "witness" without the love of Christ and partly because our society reinforces the message that sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ is a judgmental, disrespectful thing to do.

So, again, how do we witness effectively? In the third chapter of the Book of Acts, St. Peter gives us a perfect model of how to witness with the love of Christ. We should all use this as a model in our personal lives.

To give you a little background into what is happening in Acts 3, Peter and John are filled with the Holy Spirit and are going up to the Temple to pray. Peter sees a man who has been lame since birth and he heals him in the

name of Jesus.

The Jewish people who witnessed this start to rejoice and ask questions. And Peter says, "Why are you so surprised, as if we did this on our own power?" Now everyone's attention fixed on Peter and he realizes that this is his opportunity to be a witness. And Peter's address is beautiful!

Find common ground

The first thing Peter does in addressing the people is to find common ground. "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus" By calling to mind their common heritage, Peter is saying, "Hey, I'm one of you! I'm a Jew! The law and the prophets are important to me!"

Admonish with charity

The next part is the hard part – admonishment – but Peter does it so well. To admonish means to correct someone. In the Christian context, admonishment (or fraternal correction) is not to be done in a spirit of judgment or condemnation, but always out of love for the person being corrected. And it has to be truthful.

Listen to Peter's words: "God has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and denied in Pilate's presence when he decided to release him. You denied the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you, the author of life you put to death"

Peter doesn't sugar coat anything; he lays out exactly what they have done. This is a very tough thing to do and it's where most people draw the line. But the Church reminds us that admonishing the sinner is a spiritual work of mercy; it's found many places in Scripture and it's our Christian responsibility. In fact, St. Augustine tells us that we do worse by keeping silent than the person does by sinning.

Share the power of Christ

After Peter admonishes them for putting their savior to death, he shares the power of Christ. "But God raised him from the dead; of this we are witnesses." In other words, "Your crime is not the end of the story! Jesus overcame sin and death." But I'm sure at this point they're feeling terrible about



"St. Peter Preaching" is one of the paintings by Masolino da Panicale shown in the Brancacci Chapel in the Church of Santa Maria del Carmine in Florence, Italy. Deacon Mike McKeown explains how Peter's address to the crowd in the third book of Acts is an outstanding model of evangelization.

(Public domain/Wikimedia Commons)

what they've done.

Show compassion and understanding

When Peter sees that his words have cut them to the heart, he changes his tone and shows the compassion and understanding that should characterize every witness to the Gospel: "Now, I know, brothers that you acted out of ignorance, just as your leaders did"

Peter doesn't condemn them for their crime. He acknowledges that if they had known the truth, they never would have killed Jesus. He's saying, in effect, "You've done a terrible thing, but deep down you're not evil people – you were acting out of ignorance."

This calls to mind the words of Jesus as he hung on the cross, "Father, forgive them for they don't know what they do." And Peter lets them know that this was all part of God's plan from the beginning. "But God has thus brought to fulfillment what he had announced beforehand through the mouth of the prophets that his Christ would suffer." He's

confession can be a life-changing experience.

Peter's address is such a beautiful example of how to be an effective witness: Find common ground, admonish with charity, share the power of Christ, show compassion and understanding, and invite them to experience God's mercy.

Peter was an effective witness to the power and love of Jesus because he knew what it was like to need redemption. When Peter denied Jesus, he thought that all was lost; there was no changing what he had done. You can just imagine the load of guilt he was carrying around after the death of Jesus.

But when Peter experienced the Risen Christ, Jesus forgave and restored Peter and gave him the commission to be the shepherd of his people.

So do you think Peter knew what he was talking about when he addressed the Jews? Do you think he knew exactly what it was like to be in their shoes – guilty, without hope, thinking that they'd destroyed God's plan for their life?

Peter wasn't an effective witness because he was so perfect. He was an effective witness because he knew what it was like to be forgiven and transformed by the power and love of Jesus Christ. God calls all of us to be his witnesses. Not because we're better than other people, but because we know what it's like to fail and be forgiven. Hopefully every one of us has experienced the love and mercy of God in our lives. That's what qualifies us to be his witnesses.

Editor's note: Deacon Mike McKeown is director of Development and Healing Ministry for the Diocese of New Ulm.

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Jan. 18-25, 2017

Gather with Bishop John M. LeVoir for the annual
CHRISTIAN UNITY PRAYER SERVICE
Sunday, Jan. 15 at 2 p.m.
Church of St. Boniface in Stewart.



"Reconciliation – the love of Christ compels us"

Council of Catholic Women can help women better themselves in the New Year

by Ronda Mathiowetz
DCCW President

Here's wishing each and every one of you a very blessed New Year.

I've never been one to follow through on a New Year's resolution. Why set myself up for failure? Failure, however, is not the point of a New Year's resolution; making one's life better is.

Making our life better takes many things, like committing to the change we believe will improve us, and then asking for help when we feel we just can't do it on our own.

If your New Year's resolution includes improving your commitment to and relationship with God, the Council of Catholic Women is a great place to find support, encouragement, and education as we strive to improve ourselves in the coming year.

The New Ulm Region Council of Catholic Women boards are currently planning their Spring Gatherings. These are wonderful times to join with other women to learn about interesting topics, share a light meal with some conversation to catch up on old and new times, and maybe even have a laugh or two.

The most important part of these

events is receiving the Eucharist, the most precious Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Dates occur in March and early April. More information about these events will be published in the February issue of *The Prairie Catholic*.

Please save the date of Saturday, April 29, 2017, for the 58th annual New Ulm Diocesan Council of Catholic Women Convention at the Church of St. Mary in Sleepy Eye. The convention theme this year is "Proclaim the word of God."

Catholics called to witness, pray for life

by Kathleen Goedtke
DCCW Reverence Life Chair

I have been pro-life my whole life. Last year, however, I decided to take a step deeper into my conviction that life is a precious gift from God. Although our family has been involved in the 40 Days for Life Campaign before, we decided to join the prayer vigil outside of Planned Parenthood in Mankato each Friday during the campaign.

Each week we prayed Rosaries and chaplets as we watched young women and men go into the clinic. Each week I felt my heart begin to ache more deeply at the reality I was witnessing.

The last day of the vigil came. My children and I were alone praying as a young woman made her way to the door. We said our usual words of encouragement, to which she turned to us and yelled, "Don't you people realize that this facility is here to help women so that they don't need to have an abortion?"

She then went in. I stood there a bit taken aback. We continued to pray. We were still there when she came out. As she went across the sidewalk toward her car, we called out to her again. This time she came over to us, crossing the hedge line that we were ordered to stay behind.

I was surprised, but felt peace as she confronted me. She said, "I don't understand you people. Don't you understand that this

facility is here to help women so they don't need to have abortions? They provide free contraception. My boyfriend and I have been coming here for years to get contraceptives."

I said a quick prayer to the Holy Spirit as I gathered my thoughts. My first words were a response to her use of the pill. I gently said, "Something I don't think you may realize is that the pill actually can cause an abortion without you even knowing it." This is due to the fact that if a woman conceives while on the pill, which does happen, it can prevent the embryo from implantation in the uterus. The developing child is spontaneously aborted.

She responded emotionless that it wouldn't matter then if she didn't know. She continued to accuse us of shaming women by standing out there and said that women should be able to explore their sexuality without being told what to do.

Feeling compassion for her, I said, "But God wants so much more for you. He has something better for you. There is a better way." She stood there nodding her head slowly up and down. I don't know why. I don't know if it was because there was some thread of truth that touched her heart that day, or if she was in total disagreement of what I was sharing with her.

Although we spoke longer I can't remember any more of our encounter. Shortly after she left

though, I cried, thinking of all the words I should have said. My 15-year-old son Joseph said to me, "Mom, I was praying for you. You have to believe that you said exactly what she needed to hear."

I had experienced a small taste of the spiritual battle for souls in our country and the life of the unborn. This battle is near each of us. It could be the man or woman in the pew next to you. It could be a person at work. It could be the person God places in your path. Will you be bold and take the courageous step to speak love and mercy and truth to them? We need to act. We need to step out of our comfort zone and strive to make a difference.

I came to realize in a deeper way the horror of abortion and the culture of death. Everything I had been doing for life was good. Prayer is good, powerful, and necessary, but we also need to engage in the battle with witness and action. Pray for courage and compassion to engage in conversation with those who are lost and believe the lies of the Father of Lies, Satan.

The next 40 Days for Life Campaign is during Lent, from March 1 to April 9, 2017. Take the opportunity to get involved. I encourage parish CCW groups and all parishioners to become more active with 40 Days for Life. It will transform your soul and possibly help save the soul of someone else. For more information, go to 40daysforlife.com/Mankato.

The source and summit of the life of the Church

by Fr. Aaron Johanneck

We continue this month exploring the nature of the Sacred Liturgy, that is, the sacraments, the Liturgy of the Hours, and other prayers and blessings of the Church all centered on the Holy Eucharist.

In November we discussed the liturgy as the prayer, praise, sacrifice, and offering of Christ to the Father. Last month we looked at the liturgy as a foretaste of and real participation in the heavenly liturgy, which is the perfect and eternal worship

of the angels and saints gathered around the throne of God. These two aspects of the liturgy are described in the Second Vatican Council's "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy" or "*Sacrosanctum Concilium*."

A third way in which the nature of the Sacred Liturgy is described in this document (and in a few of the other Council documents as well) is as the source and summit of the life of the Church. The Fathers of the Council put it this way: "The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font [or source] from which all her power flows" (SC, no. 10).

In describing the liturgy as the summit, the peak, or the height toward which all of the activity of the Church is directed, "*Sacrosanctum Concilium*" continues, "For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's supper" (no. 10).

This is the height toward which all of the work of the Church is directed: to lead all to the worship and adoration of God in a manner that is possible only in the Church's liturgy, particularly in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, where we are brought as close to heavenly worship as is earthly possible.

The Fathers describe the liturgy as the source or font by stating,

"The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with 'the paschal sacraments,' to be 'one in holiness'... the renewal in the Eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and man draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire" (no. 10, citing various prayers of the Mass).

The liturgy is the source of the grace and strength that allows all of us to carry out the work of the Church. This work includes not only formal

ministry, but also the everyday evangelizing and witnessing which, by virtue of our Baptism, all Catholics are called to do in our families, at work, and in all of our spheres of influence. The liturgy increases the love of God within us and conforms us to Christ so that we can carry Him into the world.

Finally the Fathers state, "From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a font, grace is poured forth upon us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their end, is achieved in the most efficacious possible way" (no. 10).

So we see that there is a sort of "sacramental cycle." Through our participation in the liturgy we receive the grace to go about our work as Christians, all of which is directed to the glory of God and to his worship and praise. These, of course, are best carried out in the Sacred Liturgy, the source and summit of the Christian life.

Editor's note: Fr. Aaron Johanneck is director of Worship for the Diocese of New Ulm.



Desire to grow in your appreciation of the Mass?

www.dnu.org/video-resources/

Immigration debate needs constructive engagement



FAITH IN THE PUBLIC ARENA

by Jason Adkins

The debate over immigration policy is inevitably heating up as we prepare for Donald Trump's inauguration as president. Undoubtedly, an early priority of his presidency will be to increase border security and re-examine President Obama's immigration enforcement policies.

Unfortunately, because of the over-the-top way in which these matters were discussed during the campaign, including remarks by the president-elect and others, many undocumented persons and their children (who may be citizens) live in fear that their families will be torn apart by what lies ahead.

But instead of ratcheting up fear-inducing rhetoric to oppose the pernicious elements of Trump's pledges (which some pro-immigration advocates are doing in statements that seem more

anti-Trump than pro-immigrant), advocates for immigrants, including the Church, should follow a path of constructive engagement.

Recognizing that political dynamics are not favorable for comprehensive immigration reform, we should seek to build common ground rooted in first principles, and focus on the need to both keep families together and protect childhood arrivals (the "dreamers").

First principles

Donald Trump is not wrong that a country without borders is no longer a country. Nor is there anything wrong with deporting migrants who represent a threat to the safety and security of the American people.

As Pope John XXIII noted in his encyclical "*Pacem in Terris*," the Church recognizes the right of sovereign nations to control their borders for the common good of their citizens, which includes not only their physical safety but also their economic well-being.

But the right of nations to control their borders is not absolute.

Nations also have an obligation to the universal common good, and thus should seek to accommodate migrants to the greatest extent possible, particularly those escaping violence, persecution, and extreme poverty.

Similarly, upholding the right of migrants and refugees to come to the United States does not mean that they are without responsibilities to their new nation or residence. Building the common good requires a sense of solidarity among citizens, and when newcomers behave as though they are entitled to the benefits of their new land but do not share in the responsibilities to ensure those blessings continue, it undermines civic friendship.

Lost opportunity

As a reflection of these principles, in 2013 the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops supported a comprehensive reform that (1) created a 13-year pathway to citizenship for undocumented persons, which includes the payment of thousands of dollars in fines and fees; (2) disqualified those with criminal records from citizenship; (3) mandated both English and

civics education for prospective citizens; and (4) increased border security by billions of dollars.

This was a good compromise bill that should have been passed. Unfortunately, that opportunity was squandered and now we are faced with an uncertain future regarding how the Trump Administration will prioritize the enforcement of our nation's immigration laws against undocumented persons.

Human rights test

Will President-elect Trump leave in place "deferred action" programs for childhood arrivals and their parents and choose to focus instead on those who threaten public safety? Or will the government indiscriminately deport those caught in a new dragnet?

If the latter, then Christians and all those of goodwill should raise their voice in protest – not by shouting, nor by engaging in sloppy advocacy that sounds like the United States should become a cosmopolitan nation of open borders and global citizens, embracing a relativistic ideal of cultural diversity. These

approaches are not helpful or persuasive.

Instead, we should follow the lead of Archbishop Jose Gomez of Los Angeles and view the immigration debate in specifically American terms. The immigration debate is a test of who we are as a nation – a human rights test.

Does America welcome those who share its ideals of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, regardless of their place of origin? Will America remain a beacon of hope for those who are poor and oppressed, and come out of this controversy stronger? Or will we cynically deport those lured here by a promise of a new life after we have extracted cheap labor from them?

The bottom line is that to protect our immigrant brothers and sisters in these times, we should sound less like open borders absolutists or alarmists, and more like Catholics.

Editor's note: Jason Adkins is executive director of the Minnesota Catholic Conference.

National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week to be observed Jan. 23–29

by Tom Keaveny

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Institute of Health's observance of National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week. This year's observance will be from Jan. 23 to Jan. 29. The theme is "Drugs: Shatter the Myths."

The *compelling* goal for this national week of observation is to increase awareness of the very serious and sometimes fatal consequences of alcohol and drug use and abuse, especially among teens. We are encouraged to visit the Web site <https://teens.drugabuse.gov> and look at the facts.

Even better, we are invited to download the public-domain information on the site and "share the facts" or sponsor an event to "bring the facts" to a group we care about. We never know when any amount of effort or shared information might be instrumental in preventing an overdose or an

unfortunate and unnecessary loss of life.

Here are just a few of the facts we should learn, especially if we are in denial or if we buy into the myths of drug and alcohol use and abuse:

1. Is marijuana addictive? Yes, one in 11 people who use marijuana will become addicted to cannabis. If you smoke marijuana a lot in your teens, you could lose IQ points that you might never get back.
2. Why do people smoke and chew when tobacco is known to cause cancer? Two primary reasons: (1) Nicotine is known to be an extremely addictive drug; and (2) the tobacco industry continues to put out enticing ads and make masterful (albeit sometimes illegal) product placements. And most people who smoke started before they were 18.
3. Drinking and driving is an equation that results in a proportionately high number of tragic endings. Each year more

than 4,300 people under the age of 21 die of drinking-related deaths. One third or more of these are traffic fatalities. Many thousands more are permanently injured as a result of drinking and driving.

4. Methamphetamines (meth) reduce one's salivary functions, causing irreparable tooth loss and decay. Similarly, meth users are haunted by imaginary "crank bugs" often leading to itching and scratching, infectious sores, and, eventually, permanent scars.

5. Abuse of prescription stimulants such as Ritalin and Adderall can cause serious health problems, including panic attacks, seizures, and heart attacks. Illegal use and overdose of prescription drugs have mushroomed to become the leading cause of sudden death due to drug and alcohol abuse across all age sectors.

These are but a few of the "myth-busting" facts associated with the illicit use and abuse of drugs and alcohol.

If you are concerned about the patterns of use (or potential abuse) that you or a loved one is challenged with, please contact Catholic Charities at 866-670-5163. You will be referred to a counselor to discuss intervention strategies or treatment alternatives.

Editor's note: Tom Keaveny is director of Catholic Charities and Pastoral Planning for the Diocese of New Ulm.

MARCH FOR LIFE 2017
Jan. 22 at 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol in St. Paul

Visit www.dnu.org/diocesan-events/ for transportation opportunities.

Upcoming events

Riverbend TEC (Together Encountering Christ) will host a retreat Jan. 14-16 in Marshall. TEC is a three-day retreat experience that focuses on the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. For more information, call 320-523-1271, or e-mail riverbendtec@gmail.com.

World Day for Consecrated Life Celebration will be Saturday, Jan. 21 at 5:30 p.m. at the Church of St. Raphael, Springfield. Mass will be celebrated by Bishop John M. LeVoir.

The annual state March for Life, organized by Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life (MCCL), will be Sunday, Jan. 22 at 2 p.m. on the south State Capitol steps. The March will commemorate 44 years since the U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision to legalize abortion. Join Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm and thousands of others to speak out against abortion and rally together to help change laws and save lives. For further information

or in case of inclement weather, visit the MCCL Web site, www.mccl.org/mccl-march-for-life.html. For transportation options, visit the diocese's Web site at www.dnu.org/diocesan-events/.

Cor Jesu will be held on Saturday, Feb. 11, from 7:15 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. at the Church of St. Andrew, Granite Falls. Cor Jesu (pronounced "core yay-zoo"), is an evening of adoration, contemporary praise music, and fellowship. All ages are welcome. Visit www.dnu.org/cor-jesu for more information.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend will be held Feb. 17-19 at Shalom Hill near Windom and April 21-23 in Hutchinson. World Wide Marriage Encounter is a weekend experience for couples who want to make their good marriage even better. For more information, visit www.wwme.org or contact Craig and Barb Wetter, southern Minnesota area leaders, 507-227-2330 or 507-829-8869; e-mail sec8somnarea@gmail.com.

Generosity for San Lucas



A woman in San Lucas Tolliman, Guatemala, stands next to her new stove, which she received through the work of the San Lucas Mission. Recipients of these simple concrete, closed-fuel appliances experience significant improvements in their quality of life, not only due to their fuel-efficiency, but because they eliminate the smoke and hazards of open-pit fires in the home. On Nov. 27, 2016, Bishop John M. LeVoir of the Diocese of New Ulm and a board member of the non-profit Friends of San Lucas, celebrated Mass at the Church of St. John Neumann in Eagan, Minn., and received a check from the parish for \$39,332. The Stove Project has been working to provide stoves to the families of San Lucas and surrounding communities since 1994. The generous funds from St. John Neumann will be used to construct 197 new stoves.

(Contributed photo)

Pope prays for peace around the world on Christmas Day

by Hannah Brockhaus
Catholic News Agency

VATICAN CITY – In his traditional “Urbi et Orbi” blessing Christmas Day, Pope Francis prayed that the Child Jesus, also called the Prince of Peace, would bring a real and lasting peace to everyone suffering from violence and conflict around the world.

The power of the Christ Child “is the power of service, which inaugurates in our world the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of justice and peace.”

“For this reason, the birth of Jesus was accompanied by the angels’ song as they proclaimed: ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased!’” Pope Francis said Dec. 25.

“Today this message goes out to the ends of the earth to reach all peoples, especially those scarred by war and harsh conflicts that seem stronger than the yearning for peace.”

Speaking to pilgrims from a

balcony in St. Peter’s Basilica, the pope prayed by name for areas of the world which are affected by violence, including Syria, countries that make up the Holy Land, various parts of Africa, Myanmar, Colombia, and Eastern Ukraine.

Around 40,000 people were present for the blessing and message, the Vatican reports.

In his message, Pope Francis also prayed for all those affected by terrorism, especially those who have lost loved ones, and for those who carry out acts of terrorism, praying that “those who have sown fear and death into the hearts of so many countries and cities” may also experience peace.

To all those who are abandoned and excluded he prayed for peace, “not merely the word, but a real and concrete peace.”

And for children, the Pope prayed that “on this special day on which God became a child, above all those deprived of the joys of childhood because of hunger, wars or the selfishness

of adults,” would experience the peace of Christ as well.

The power of the Child Jesus, he said, is not a worldly power, based on strength or on wealth, but on “the power of love.”

“It is the power which gives new birth, pardons faults, reconciles enemies, and transforms evil into good,” he said. “It is the power of God.”

“‘For to us a child is born, to us a son is given:’ he is the ‘Prince of peace.’ Let us welcome him!” the pope continued.

Pope Francis then led the usual Sunday Angelus, concluding with the “Urbi et Orbi” blessing and a final greeting and “Merry Christmas!” to everyone present in the Square physically and through radio and television around the world.

Editor’s note: The full text of Pope Francis’ “Urbi et Orbi” message can be found at <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/on-christmas-day-pope-francis-prays-for-peace-around-the-world-90081/>.

Fr. Rother would not abandon his people

(Continued from page 6)

“But if it is my destiny that I should give my life here, then so be it I don’t want to desert these people, and that is what will be said, even after all these years. There is still a lot of good that can be done under the circumstances.”

He ended the letter with what would become his signature quote: “The shepherd cannot run at the first sign of danger. Pray for us that we may be a sign of the love of Christ for our people, that our presence among them will fortify them to endure these sufferings in preparation for the coming of the Kingdom.”

In January 1981, in immediate danger and his name on a death list, Fr. Stanley did return to Oklahoma for a few months. But as Easter approached, he wanted to spend Holy Week with his people in Guatemala.

“Fr. Stanley could not abandon his people,” Scaperlanda said. “He made a point of returning

to his Guatemala parish in time to celebrate Holy Week with his parishioners that year – and ultimately was killed for living out his Catholic faith.”

The morning of July 28, 1981, three Ladinos, the non-indigenous men who had been fighting the native people and rural poor of Guatemala since the 1960s, broke into Fr. Rother’s rectory. They wished to disappear him, but he refused. Not wanting to endanger the others at the parish mission, he struggled but did not call for help. Fifteen minutes and two gunshots later, Fr. Stanley was dead and the men fled the mission grounds.

Scaperlanda, who has worked on Fr. Stanley’s cause for canonization, said the priest is a great witness and example: “He fed the hungry, sheltered the homeless, visited the sick, comforted the afflicted, bore wrongs patiently, buried the dead – all of it.”

His life is also a great example of ordinary people being called to do

extraordinary things for God, she said.

“What impacted me the most about Fr. Stanley’s life was how ordinary it was!” she said. “I love how simply Oklahoma City’s Archbishop Paul Coakley states it: ‘We need the witness of holy men and women who remind us that we are all called to holiness – and that holy men and women come from ordinary places like Okarche, Oklahoma,’” she said.

“Although the details are different, I believe the call is the same – and the challenge is also the same. Like Fr. Stanley, each of us is called to say ‘yes’ to God with our whole heart. We are all asked to see the Other standing before us as a child of God, to treat them with respect and a generous heart,” she added.

“We are called to holiness – whether we live in Okarche, Oklahoma, or New York City or Guatemala City.”



THE DRA RIE CATHOLIC

Pastoral news from across the Diocese of New Ulm

Minnesota's Most Rural Diocese Diocese of New Ulm Vol. 31 No. 5 January 2017



(Photo courtesy of L'Osservatore Romano)

Prayerful plea for peace

Pope Francis gives his "Urbi et Orbi" blessing in St. Peter's Square on Christmas Day 2016. In his traditional message "urbi et orbi" ("to the city and to the world"), the pope prayed that the Child Jesus, who is also the Prince of Peace, would bring a real and lasting peace to those suffering from violence and conflict around the world. He prayed specifically for areas of the world which are affected by violence, including Syria, countries that make up the Holy Land, various parts of Africa, Myanmar, Colombia, and Eastern Ukraine.

For more on the pope's Christmas message, see page 11.

catholic trends

VATICAN CITY (CNA/EWTN News) – Pope Francis lamented the many children who suffer from war, slavery, and various forms of abuse, including within the Church, in a letter sent to bishops around the world for the feast of the Holy Innocents.

The Church not only hears the "cries of pain" of her children who suffer from war, slavery, and malnutrition, he said, but she also weeps "because she recognizes the sins of some of her members: the sufferings, the experiences and the pain of minors who were abused sexually by priests."

"It is a sin that shames us. Persons responsible for the protection of

those children destroyed their dignity. We regret this deeply and we beg forgiveness."

Pope Francis condemned the sin "of failing to help," of "covering up and denial" and the sin of "the abuse of power" that happened in many cases.

In celebrating the Feast of the Holy Innocents, Pope Francis asked his brother bishops to renew "our complete commitment to ensuring that these atrocities will no longer take place in our midst."

"Let us find the courage needed to take all necessary measures and to protect in every way the lives of

our children, so that such crimes may never be repeated. In this area, let us adhere, clearly and faithfully, to zero tolerance."

The pope has often promoted a "zero tolerance" policy on abuse since his election, and has met with victims of clerical sex abuse and their relatives on several occasions.

WASHINGTON – Dioceses across the United States participated in three emergency appeals in 2016, donating over \$7 million for support in response to natural disasters.

"The generosity of Catholics across the country to these appeals is a beautiful act of solidarity and mercy," said Archbishop Thomas J. Rodi of Mobile, Ala., chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on National Collections.

"Those affected by these disasters found themselves suddenly in situations of dire need, and, as a community of faith, we have been able to provide some measure of relief and hope."

In January 2016, the 2015-2016 Calamities Collection was created in response to storms that hit the

South and Midwest regions of our country during Advent 2015 and in anticipation of additional natural disasters in 2016. To date, this collection has raised \$3.2 million.

In August 2016, the 2016 Louisiana Floods Collection was created in response to the extraordinary flooding occurring in southern Louisiana. To date, this collection has raised \$3.8 million.

In October 2016, the Hurricane Matthew Collection was created

in response to the disastrous category 4 hurricane that struck large portions of the southeastern coast of the United States and countries in the Caribbean, especially Haiti. To date, approximately \$326,000 has been raised with more funds anticipated soon.

Emergency collection appeals are called for by the president of the USCCB. For more information on these emergency appeals or other national collections, visit www.usccb.org/nationalcollections or call 202-541-3400.

THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 2017 • SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

Our state faces real challenges. Catholics are called to respond.

PROTECT LIFE & HUMAN DIGNITY

Join Minnesota's bishops, dynamic Church leaders, and 1,000+ Catholics from across the state for a day of inspiration and advocacy at our State Capitol.

Catholic voices count. Learn more and register at CatholicsAtTheCapitol.org or call 651.227.8777.

