



Spring/Summer 2011

St. Ann's News

Flooding hearts with a river of Grace



St. Ann's Indian Mission
Est. 1885
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Band of Chippewa since 1885.



Society of Our Lady
of the Most Holy Trinity



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The Pastor's Desk

By Fr. Mark, SOLT

Dear Friends of St. Ann's,

May the peace and joy of the Most Holy Trinity continue to be with you, your family, vocation and ministry! We finally reached spring -- this has been one of the coldest winters I've ever experienced in my life! I don't know if you realize this, but we are only

14 miles from the Canadian border. I grew up in southern California, and you never get used to this weather. I now know the meaning of "cabin fever." What I've found is that the people make the place. We are blessed with some amazing parishioners and volunteers who took the weather in stride.

One of the characteristics of our parishioners is the ability to joke with one another. I continually joke with them that we need to snowbird during the winter months to Florida, and they all agree.

I want to thank you for your support of our annual raffle. Joyce L. Decouteau was the grand prize winner. She was so excited to find this out that she could not sleep the night we called her. When she picked up the car on May 14th, still with a



Fr. Mark and Joyce L. Decouteau, Elder of the Turtle Mountain Tribe

dazed look in her eyes, she told us that she had never won anything in her life. On this raffle, we raised \$33,965 for St. Ann's, the five sister parishes, and St. Ann's School.

Summer camp has started. New volunteers have arrived to help with this. We've begun to get ready for our 126th Novena to Good St. Ann, ten days of prayer, for your and our intentions, scheduled to begin July 22.

May our Lord bless you with a new springtime in your lives and hearts. Thank you for allowing us to flood hearts with a river of grace!

May our Lord bless you a hundredfold!



SOLT Bothers in formation visiting St. Ann's during the month of June.

Our Principal's Vision For St. Ann's School

By Jill Zeitler and Mandi Geib,
Visiting Franciscan University
Volunteers

It was the 2010 advertisement in the St. Ann's parish bulletin that did it for Betty Laducer, current principal of St. Ann's School. The person would need to be a practicing Catholic and have adequate credentials to serve as principal. She had some reservations about offering her application, having only her degree in Elementary Education, but she felt that St. Ann's School needed her. So last summer, she took a leap of faith and applied for the job. In July of 2010 and with great joy, she accepted the position.

Betty had taught elementary school for 30 years, and now she said that she enjoyed the opportunity to work not only with students but also with teachers, volunteers, and parents. She explained that working with adults is a unique and enjoyable experience for her after working solely with children for so long. She said, "I like my job, and it keeps me busy." For Betty, busy means taking care of everything pertaining to the school, ranging from speaking with potential volunteers, assigning teachers to classes, general upkeep of the school, organizing curriculum, and serving the students and teachers--making sure they have everything necessary for the best possible teaching and learning experience.

In describing her greatest joys as principal, Betty spoke with passion about praying with the students in the morning before they go to their classes and attending school mass with the children throughout the week. The faith, particularly prayer, is a key element to running a Catholic school, she added, and she has a strong desire to provide a solid, Catholic education. She believes that a Catholic emphasis "helps give them a good foundation for life by helping them to make Godly decisions between right and wrong."



St. Ann's students in Chapel

Betty also cherishes the chance to bring God into all aspects of learning and of being able to speak freely about God in the classroom.

Betty discussed her future at St. Ann's as one that would involve a dedication to meeting students where they are in their education. For example, she explained that there are a number of academically accelerated students who attend the school and who are in need of educational challenges that she hopes to address. She acknowledged that there are students at various learning levels, which Betty described as a positive aspect about small schools such as St. Ann's in that "you can better meet individual student's needs."

She talked about her vision for St. Ann's School as wanting it to become

"a shining star in town," and she said that she prayed for it to be spoken about as "the place to go." Her concern extends to the teachers of St. Ann's, and she hopes that one day the educators will be able to stay long-term.

Academically speaking, Betty has high hopes for St. Ann's School. She wants to work on the strong educational foundation that the school already offers to create an even stronger curriculum that builds upon itself and that has a core that can be added to from year to year.

Betty plans, herself, to return to classes this summer to further increase her knowledge and to receive more credentials to boost her ability to serve as principal in the best possible manner.

Our Lady Of Guadalupe Convent

All I Ever Needed To Know, I Learned In P.E.

By Sister Maria Amata Aumell, SOLT
(P.E. teacher at St. Ann's Catholic School and member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Convent in Dunseith)

The Bible tells us to allow God to permeate every aspect of our daily life. It commands: "Pray without ceasing," (1 Thes 5:17) and "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48).

Yet, many of us fail to see God in our menial and mundane everyday chores and tasks. God is often left out or forgotten. In the case of the Public schools, He is even told to "Get Out!"

At St. Ann's school, God is the center of all of our learning. Was it not God Who created the vast universe so that we could discover it's secrets with math and science? God is present everywhere! Here in our little Catholic school, the more we focus on our subjects and classes, the more we are getting to know God – especially in P.E..

That's right! Physical Education is a fantastic way to learn about the playful Holy Spirit! Did you know that God likes to play?

"And the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters" (Gen 1:26).

See! The Holy Spirit is a surfer! In



Sister Amata with student during gym time. Call sister Amata for information about becoming a SOLT Sister at 701-244-2449.

Proverbs 8:30 the Spirit reveals: "I was his delight playing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men."

God loves playing with us! When we play, we imitate our Creator! In a structured time in P.E., we have the ability to learn many valuable lessons to live life well:

1. Follow rules - Rules are important and there are consequences and penalties for breaking them.
2. Every person counts – We recognize the importance and value of each and every person as we learn to share and work as a team.
3. Be all you can be - We are challenged to daily better ourselves and go beyond our former best in order to become more and raise our standards.
4. Our bodies are sacred – In P.E. we see the importance and worth of our bodies and make exercise a habit in order to keep healthy since we are temples of the Holy Spirit.
5. We are co-creators – We use our minds and share in the creativity of God as we invent and plan strategies to beat opponents.
6. Be joyful! – It is good to laugh and enjoy what we are doing. Did you know that only humans can laugh? When we laugh, we are like God in whose image and likeness we are made.
7. It's not a sin to win! – We strive to win, not for glory of a trophy, but for Jesus!
8. Prayer is fun! - We learn that "to play" can very well be the same thing as "to pray".

So the next time you pick up a basketball, a football, a soccer ball, or a frisbee, remember to invite the All Time MVP with a smile and a prayer. And always . . . win for Jesus!

Exploring A Religious Vocation

Lesley, an Aspirant

In 1999, I started to feel a deep longing to serve God and his people. At that time, I was very busy with college work and without time to think about this "calling." So, I decided to take a trip to France for discernment.

During my stay in France, I had time to reflect and realized that God was calling me to religious life. When I returned home to El Paso, Texas, I told my father about my call. My father strongly suggested that I first finish college, and since I was close to completing my studies anyway, I continued my education.

In May of 2002, I graduated and returned to El Paso to work for a while with the idea that I would start to look for a religious community. I sought a contemplative order, without age restrictions, that adored the Blessed Sacrament at least an hour every day, and whose members wore habits.

I looked everywhere for such a community. I attended vocational retreats and listened to sisters from different communities. In 2010, while reading *The Catholic Register*, I saw an ad for SOLT (The Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity) in which the sisters were wearing habits. I contacted them, and we talked many times via phone or e-mail.

I went on a four-day visit to Our Lady of Corpus Christi (Formation House) in Texas, and then afterward, I sent in my SOLT application. On January 30, 2011, I arrived in North Dakota. When I entered the convent, I saw the same ad that had attracted me. I then discovered that the sister in the photo that I had seen was Sister Mary Claire, one of the sisters at Our Lady of Guadalupe Convent, and I learned that the photo was taken on the day of her first profession.



St. Michael The Archangel

By Father Scott Brossart, SOLT

In February, Fr. Jeff Eppler was called to serve in Belize, Central America, and I took over pastoral responsibilities at St. Michael's. A going away pot-luck was held for Fr. Jeff at Queen of Peace in Belcourt. He was presented with a one-of-a-kind quilt by Denise Marcellais as well as a hand-made flute by Dan Jerome. Another event for Fr. Jeff happened at St. Michael the following week with a combined Mass and going-away party.

When I returned from vacation on February 25th, I helped host a free community concert in the gymnasium at St. Ann's. The concert featured Angel Dean, a premier Christian Rock musician, with whom I had corresponded for some time, as well as Lightswitch as the opening band. If you attended the concert and noticed that the Lightswitch musicians resembled one another, you were correct -- the four musicians are brothers.

Angel Dean's keyboard player, Jonathan Kuehling, plans to return to St. Ann's to help out with the music aspect of the Annual St. Ann's Summer Camp. He also hopes to offer a musical workshop for the community.

If you missed the February concert, you may have the opportunity to again see them. Both Angel Dean and Lightswitch have expressed an interest in returning to



Fr. Jeff at St. Ann's going away party receiving a Native American Star Blanket

Belcourt for another concert in the near future. It will be part of the end of the Junior High summer camp in late June of 2011, which will end on a family night with a free concert, open to the entire community. So be sure to put it on your calendar.

In the words of my predecessor, Fr. Jeff, "Our awesome God is alive and well at St. Michael the Archangel" and St. Ann's Indian Mission.

Players in Progress (PIPs)

By Jill Zesut, Volunteer -- Teacher

Imagine this--It's the first Wednesday afternoon in September. The St. Ann's gymnasium is full of students. The chatter of the group instantly ceases as a loud screech comes from Coach Brien's whistle. Warm-ups begin and the only sounds heard are the squeak of sneakers on the freshly waxed gym floor and the rhythmic bouncing of green and silver basketballs deftly maneuvered in and out of the hands of proficient children. PIPs practice has begun for the year.

Okay, now wake up from your dream. If PIPs was that easy, I'd already be able to beat LeBron James in a little one-on-one. This is a little more realistic--It's the first Wednesday afternoon in September. The St. Ann's gymnasium is full of students. Kids are running around,



The coaches corral the students into the center of the room and practice begins with a prayer. Before everyone can start running around again, Coach Brien starts the team on the ball handling routine. A Kindergartener starts crying. He has gotten frustrated and wants to give up. Miss Bergin sits beside him and encourages him to keep trying. He sits for another minute, but then picks

up his ball and heads back to the court.

PIPs is hard work. It involves serious hand/eye coordination that only comes from lots of practice. However, with the help of coaches, families, and friends, our PIPsters learn

that if they don't give up and if they keep trying, they can do things they never thought they could. It has been amazing to see just how much the students improved in a few short months of practices and performances. PIPs not only helps kids develop technical basketball skills, but it helps build their confidence. I am grateful for having been a part of the program this year!



Belcourt's First Consecrated Widow For Solt

By Father Shane McKee, SOLT

Saturday March 5 was a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving as Sharyn Blue commended herself to the Most Holy Trinity as a Consecrated Widow, the first local vocation to our SOLT community since we began serving here 15 years ago. Sharyn, a member of the Gros Ventre Tribe out of Montana, who was surrounded by her children and grandchildren (and Buzzy from his place with Our Lord) on her day of commitment, is a true servant of intercessory prayer. United with the holiest of widows, Mary Our Blessed Mother, Sharyn will continue to offer her spiritual works to obtain graces for Our Lady's Society and for the salvation of souls.



Sharyn Blue with SOLT Religious

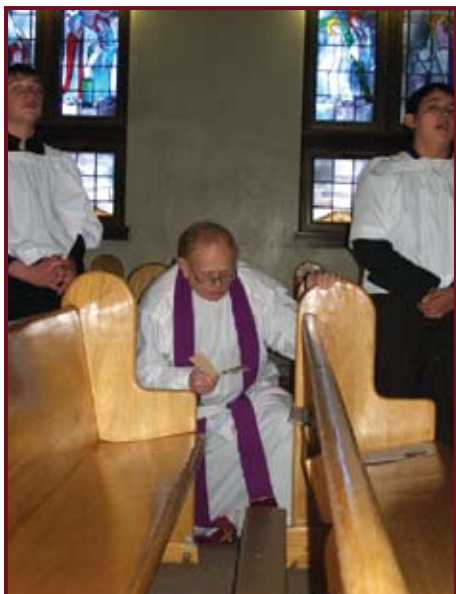
Little Miracles *Photos by Jeanette Johnson*



St. Ann's School teacher, Jill Z., enjoying the weather.



One of St. Ann's Kindergarten students during nap-time.



Fr. Bob at Stations of the Cross with St. Ann's School Servers.



An adorer in the Chapel.

St. Anthony's Parish

By Father Shane McKee, SOLT

As the new administrator for St. Anthony's, I wanted to bring my passion for the liturgy and its call for "noble simplicity" to enhance the overall worship experience. New vestments were purchased with the aid of the Black and Indian Fund. (The 1960's polyester chasubles are ready for the grave!) The rusted-through thurible (incenser) was replaced; a new candle lighter was donated. A faithful parishioner, Les Thomas, had the thurible and boat stand sanded and the wobbly ornamental cross re-soldered. Also, I painted the confessional to make it more inviting; I hope to paint the cry room too. We have many improvement projects to plan for, especially fundraising for renovations to the roof above the hall. For our Lenten almsgiving, we are taking up a collection each week to benefit the St. Gianna Maternity Home. And we have six first-year students and five second-year students for sacramental preparation. Thank you for supporting us!

Pax Domini, Fr. Shane



Possible Grant For St. Ann's School From The Catholic Daughters



Chaplain Father McKee with Student

By Judah Henderson, Volunteer

The Catholic Daughters State Convention was held May 6th through 8th at the Minot State Convention Center for the election of the 2011 officers and voting for the State Project. Time is spent at Holy Mass everyday, saying the Rosary and praying. The Convention is held every two years. A highlight this year was Marie Roberge, Catholic Daughter from Rolette, ND submitted a proposal to the state convention on behalf of St. Ann's Native American School in Belcourt. The State Project is a grant that is awarded by the Catholic Daughters to the project in the most deserving court. There are 22 courts in the state of North Dakota and St. Ann's is known as St. Faustina's Court, #2400. Each court gives approximately \$250 to the State Project winner. The successful proposal is awarded a grant up to \$5500. Longtime member of the Catholic Daughters, Marie Roberge states, "If you try, you might win. With the grace of the Holy Spirit, we're asking for his help. We can't do it on our own. Blessed Mother is our symbol; she can ask her son to help us in the project." As it turns out, the St. Ann's proposal did not win the contest but we will try again in two years. Marie enlisted the help of the Development Office to produce a fact sheet and a display board with photos of St. Ann's School.

If you are interested in helping little St. Ann's Native American Elementary School call Doc at 701-477-5601 x33

Snowball Missionaries

By Kevin Ashbrook, Youth Minister

My first experience with St. Ann's came three years ago when I visited St. Ann's with Franciscan University of Steubenville's North Dakota mission team. I did this mission trip three times before coming up to be youth minister. When this year's team came here, I was able to see things from the other side, and to really appreciate just how much they were able to accomplish in one short week.

Right from the start, the mission team brought a sense of joy and excitement to St. Ann's. I was struck by how, despite the diverse personalities of the group, all 16 of them worked together so well, united in mutual love and the willingness to serve. On Sunday, we learned about the local culture and went door-to-door in order to invite people to all the events we had at St. Ann's that week. This was a truly blessed experience as we got to interact with the community and to engage in what we called "snowball ministry" with the kids.

Monday night we had our largest Coffeehouse to date. Local youth and Steubenville students both showcased their talents, their humor, and shared ways in which the Lord had touched their lives. It was a night of fun which demonstrated to me the unity of the Body of Christ in the way a group of complete strangers was able to interact with the kids as brothers and sisters.

Throughout the week, the mission team performed a



Snowball Missionaries from University of Steubenville in our JP II Youth Center

wide variety of jobs. Some taught, both at St. Ann's and in the high school in Dunseith. Some painted the music room and the kitchen in the school, while others prepared Queen of Peace for the Cursillo that weekend. Some helped our maintenance people in the process of converting our modulars into guest houses. A group of us went to the retirement home to meet some of the residents there, and one of the Steubenville students ended up singing some Johnny Cash with them.

It was an incredible week, one that was filled with grace and which energized the whole mission. We were blessed to go down to Steubenville for their career fair a few days later, and we hope that will lead to many more Franciscan alumni bringing their gifts and talents to St. Ann's in the future.

A Work Of Heart And Soul Ch-Rose Wilkie

By Jill Zitler and Mandi Geib,
Visiting Franciscan University
Student Volunteers

If you've ever called St. Ann's, you have undoubtedly spoken to our friendly receptionist and secretary, Rose Wilkie, who we call "Rosie." In the following paragraphs we hope to give you a more personal snapshot of the voice on the other end of the phone.

Rosie views with Godly affection each person brought into contact with her through her various activities. She does everything to the best of her ability to help them and to meet their needs, even if that just means listening to them for a few minutes. Her primary duties include answering the phone, fielding questions, greeting visitors, creating schedules, keeping sacramental records, aiding in the religious education program. The business of the parish office, she said, has kept her on her toes.

Speaking of her behind-the-scenes assistance, Rosie said, "whenever there are meals or fundraisers, I help, usually making bangs/fry bread for Indian Tacos and La Gaulette. I always help Youth Ministry and the school with their Indian Taco sales and breakfast fundraisers. I'm famous for my La Gaulette (like a biscuit dough, but shaped into an oval and baked)-I use my mother's recipe. Working Cursillos, I've always been in the kitchen."

The youngest of nine children, Rosie came from a Catholic family, where her mother played a significant role in raising her in the faith by teaching her prayers when she learned to talk and seeing that she attended mass and received the Sacraments. Rosie had a strong desire to attend St. Ann's School from a young age, and in the sixth grade that dream came true.

At a young age, Rosie lost her father. Her mother then took upon herself the



Rose Wilkie at work

responsibilities for raising the family. Rosie attributes her service at St. Ann to her mother's continual influence and example throughout her life. Her mother is 92-years-old and living in a nursing home.

After the loss of a close family member, Rosie found herself in search of a job and something "greater" in her life. Through many providential turn of events, she discovered her calling as the secretary at St. Ann's Parish, where she has been for the past ten years. The path on which God has led Rosie has allowed her to see a new side of life. As she has drawn closer to Christ, she has been able to help others draw near to him as well. Every day, Rosie

ministers to the people around her by her smiling presence, which demonstrates the love of Christ within her.

Rosie loves the community of St. Ann's and as much as she gives to them, she likewise has expressed much gratitude at how much the SOLT priests, sisters, and volunteers have given to her. Before working at St. Ann's, she had no idea that priests could be so much fun, but she loves the fact that she can spend the majority

of her day working and laughing alongside them.

She goes beyond her job description by putting her whole heart into everything she does, big or small. Every year, St. Ann's draws upon Rosie's heart and soul efforts to help with the Annual Car Raffle. Most Fridays, during the last several months of the Raffle, you can find Rosie in "the Mall" in front of Jollie's selling raffle tickets along with a Development Office staff member. If you were to ask one of the staff members if they enjoyed selling raffle tickets with Rosie, with smiles on their faces, they would say that they wouldn't trade it for all the raffle tickets in North Dakota.

St. John the Baptist Parish

By Father Mark Wheelan, SOLT

We have received an abundance of snow this winter. Unfortunately, the snow plows don't make it out this way on the weekend, but most of the parishioners have braved the roads anyway.

The new rectory is nearly completed. One parishioner has commented on how the old rectory had blocked the view of the Grotto, but thankfully this is no longer the case.

If you happen by the church on a sunny February afternoon, you may see a light show in the sanctuary. About a year ago, at the entrance to the church, the windows that depict the seven sacraments were completed. Now, when the sun hits these windows at about 2:30 in the afternoon, it falls first upon the statue of the Virgin Mary and then upon the crucifix above the altar. For a few moments, the beautiful colors seem to bring to life both the statue and crucifix.





St. Ann's Indian Mission
P.O. Box 220, Belcourt, ND 58316
Telephone: 701-477-5601
Fax: 701-477-0639
stanns@utma.com

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St. Benedict's Parish

By Father Mark Wheelan, SOLT

If you visited our church this winter, you probably noticed the new entryway over the steps into the church. This was an especially welcomed improvement to those of us who used to shovel snow off the steps every week during the winter and to those of us who were afraid of slipping and sliding on those same steps.

This year has gotten off to a great start with various get-togethers and more to follow. After the first of the year, we had a wonderful "Appreciation Dinner," to the very special families who have met the needs of the church in an outstanding way, and it was held during the Family Week Celebration. Certificates were awarded. It was a wonderful time for all.

As a given event, every Sunday we gather for more fellowship after mass and enjoy coffee and cookies as another way that we keep up on the events happening in one another's lives.

When May rolls around, on Mother's Day, the men of the parish will prepare breakfast for the women, and come

Father's Day, the women will do the same for the men.

Then, the third week in June, we have a St. Ben's Picnic, a good fundraiser for the church and also an opportunity for people to get together and, you guessed it, to enjoy wonderful food and fellowship with one another. This and the Fall Supper are the big activities and fundraisers for St. Benedict Parish.

Some families, like the Albert Azure Family, have attended St. Benedict for three generations. The Dave Keplin family has also been a big supporter and long-time parishioners, instrumental in keeping vitality in the church.

The Parishioners out here at St. Ben's feel an ownership toward their church. Some of them have been coming here for three generations. What would we do without them? People like Dave Keplin, Albert Azure, and Bob Herdt get together and maintain the church grounds at no cost to the church on a regular basis.

Thank you one and all!

