From Bishop Folda: “Made for More”—a celebration of Theology of the Body

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eucharisticcongress.org
ON THE COVER:
St. Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home in Warsaw.
(Paul Braun | New Earth)

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Let the light
that has been lit in my soul
never be extinguished."
Saint Gianna

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readers about the Catholic faith and the life
of parishioners in Eastern North Dakota.
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Contact *New Earth* staff
news@fargodiocese.org
(701) 356-7900

*New Earth*
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Over the course of his nearly 25 years as pope, St. John Paul II left a rich legacy of teaching and spirituality for the Church and for the world. But one of his most revolutionary contributions was a series of teachings that now is called the “Theology of the Body.” Pope John Paul II had a profound sense of the sacredness of the human person, the whole person—body and soul. He recognized that God’s plan of creation included the creation of each person as a body-soul reality, and our bodies are sacred, period. The Book of Genesis tells us we are made in the image and likeness of God, and our bodies are a manifestation of that divine image and likeness.

The culture we live in, however, takes a very different approach to the human person. There is a notion that the body is all there is. We are nothing more than a biological organism like any other. The body is merely a vessel that expresses our immediate needs and desires, and so we are justified in using the body in any way we choose. Another approach admits the body-soul reality of the human person, but also sees the body as an instrument, as something that can be manipulated or altered to satisfy our every want. The notion of the sacredness of the body is entirely foreign to both of these mindsets.

What are the consequences of this way of thinking? In the realm of sexuality, the person becomes an object of pleasure alone. Relationships become merely physical, and love is only a side effect. Sexual activity is casual and has no deeper meaning. Promiscuity, same-sex relationships, and broken marriages and families become commonplace. For those who struggle with gender dysphoria, the body is considered a mistake that must be altered. The fact of biological sex is set aside and even surgically reconfigured to reflect one’s gender of choice. This is the transgender mentality we hear so much about these days. And in cases of illness or old age, the body is seen as a burden that should be cast off through suicide or euthanasia. An even more extreme consequence occurs at the beginning of life. If the conception of a child is nothing special, then abortion becomes acceptable and is even encouraged. We’ve seen that reality all around us for the last fifty years.

Our culture touts an understanding of freedom and self-determination without limits, especially the limits of the body. But not surprisingly, we find much more unhappiness, higher rates of depression and mental illness, skyrocketing rates of addiction, family dysfunction, suicide, and euthanasia. Attacks on human life continue to increase on all sides. When we disconnect from the plan of God, including his plan of our creation, then we inevitably experience disintegration and despair within ourselves.

But again, St. John Paul II had a very different vision. He recognized that the human body expresses the interior life and the dignity we have been given by God. In fact, the person as body united with soul manifests the self-giving love of the persons of the Trinity. The body is given to us so that we may give and receive love. This is especially true in the self-giving love relationship of marriage. It is also expressed in the conception and birth of children. Pope John Paul had a surprisingly romantic but very human sense of the beauty of marriage. And yet, this bodily expression of love isn’t only found in marriage. In the realm of friendship too, we give and receive love, we express commitment and generosity, and we make sacrifices out of love for others. He taught what is sometimes called the “law of the gift.” By giving of ourselves, we find ourselves and reach our highest fulfillment in the plan of God. This, in a nutshell, is the “Theology of the Body.”

During this time of the Eucharistic Revival, we can readily see connections between the Theology of the Body and our belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Through the Incarnation, Jesus took our human nature and accepted a human body like our own. He gave his life for us upon the cross, sacrificing himself, body and soul, for our redemption. That sacrifice is made present to us sacramentally in the sac-
sacrifice of the Mass, and the Eucharist is the Body and Blood, soul and divinity of Christ, which he offers to his people. By receiving the Eucharist, we become one with Jesus in his own act of self-giving love, a love that conquers sin and death, a love that is life-giving.

We are certainly made for more than what our culture has to offer us. Both in our bodies and souls, we are made to share in a communion of life and love with God. The Theology of the Body that St. John Paul II taught so beautifully, along with our Eucharistic faith, are two expressions of this divine plan for our lives, a plan for life and joy here on earth and in heaven.

This is good news that must be shared, and on November 16, the Diocese of Fargo will sponsor a public event called “Made For More,” with nationally known presenters Christopher West and Mike Mangione. Through prayer, music, video, and the spoken word, they will lay out the good news of the Theology of the Body and the mystery of Christ’s bodily presence in the Eucharist. You can find more information on page 19 and also on www.m4mfargo.eventbrite.com. Thousands of people have taken part in this event around the country, and I hope many here in the Diocese of Fargo will also share the joy of this experience. God truly loves us, and we are indeed “Made for More.”

Diocese of Fargo Official Appointments/Announcements

Most Rev. John T. Folda, Bishop of Fargo, has made the following appointments, announcements, and/or decrees.

Rev. Msgr. Brian G. Donahue is appointed Dean of Deanery I for a term of five years beginning August 18, 2023.

Rev. Reese J. Weber is appointed Dean of Deanery V for a term of five years beginning August 18, 2023.

Rev. William Slattery is appointed Assistant Vocation Director for the Diocese of Fargo, effective September 1, 2023 and continuing ad nutum episcopi.

Rev. David Snow, SOLT, is appointed parochial vicar of St. Ann’s Church, Belcourt; St. Anthony, Alcide; and St. Michael, Dunseith, effective September 1, 2023 and continuing ad nutum episcopi.

Prayer Intention of Pope Francis

October - For the Synod

We pray for the Church, that she may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level, and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

BISHOP FOLDA’S CALENDAR

Oct. 14 at 5:30 p.m.
St. John School Hope Dinner and Auction,
St. John Academy, Jamestown

Oct. 15–20
Retreat master, Denver, Colo.

Oct. 25 at 3 p.m.
St. JPII Schools Board Meeting, Pastoral Center, Fargo

Oct. 26 at noon
Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting,
Pastoral Center, Fargo

Oct. 26 at 4:30 p.m.
Dedication of NDSU Chapel, NDSU, Fargo

Oct. 29 at 11 a.m.
Mass of Installation for Rev. Gregory Haman,
St. John Church, Wahpeton

Nov. 1
All Saints Day, Pastoral Center closed

Nov. 2 at 5 p.m.
Fall Fundraising Banquet for NDSU Newman Center,
Delta by Marriott, Fargo

Nov. 9–10
Catholic Rural Life meeting, St. Paul, Minn.

Nov. 11–16
USCCB meeting, Baltimore, Md.
On April 1, 2017, Julia (a young girl suffering from POTS, a nervous system disorder that affects heart rate and blood pressure) went with her family to their local Adoration chapel for their regular Saturday Holy Hour. Julia could not sit upright in a pew, so she lay on an exercise mat in the back of the chapel. She described the incredible thing that happened that day.

“I had prayed for healing before, but the answer was always a very clear ‘not yet.’ This time, my prayer was different. It was April Fool’s day. Knowing Jesus has a sense of humor, I asked if he would grant me a dramatic healing as an April Fool’s prank, so I could confuse people with my sudden health. To my surprise, he agreed!”

At first, she didn’t feel any different, and she didn’t want to try walking in case she fell. She asked for confirmation that what she was hearing was genuinely from God, and not just her own mind telling her what she wanted to hear.

“I asked Jesus, ‘I know you don’t do this a lot outside of the Old Testament, but if I’m really healed, could you send a physically audible voice telling me it’s ok to get up and move around?’ He said he would, but I didn’t hear anything outside of my own heart just yet.”

When it was time to go, her mom teasingly quoted John 5:8, whispering, “Take up your mat and walk.” Julia knew that was her sign.

“I rolled up my mat, genuflected, and to the alarm of my parents began to walk home. It was only a few blocks, but even walking across a room would normally have worn me out. Walking all the way home should have been impossible! My mom walked beside me, ready to assist if needed, and my dad followed closely behind in the car, expecting I would need a ride. I told them it wasn’t necessary. I was healed!”

Julia’s sudden recovery was a big shock to her physical therapists and medical providers. “The next few days were fun,” she said, recalling everyone’s surprise. “POTS is an illness that never goes away that suddenly, so it was definitely a miracle.”

Soon Julia was back in the dance studio, a passion she had to abandon due to POTS, and she was able to help start a program for dancers with disabilities—“the type of program I had longed for when I was sick.”

Julia is doing well today, and she wants to share an important message. “Miracles aren’t restricted to biblical times. The same Jesus who healed the lame man in John 5:8 reached across time and extended the same blessing to me through his Real Presence in the Eucharist. I’m beyond grateful that he healed me of the illness that was keeping me bed-bound! God is so good!”
What is an Apostolic Pardon?

Often the apostolic pardon is given in the context of “last rites.” This consists of confession, anointing, and viaticum, which is Holy Communion as “food for the journey.” At the moment of death, the Church is there to offer these sacraments in which we receive the grace and presence of Christ.

After receiving the sacraments, there is a beautiful rite called the “Commendation of the Dying.” This is intended to “help sustain the union of the soul with Christ until it is brought to fulfillment after death.” It expresses the desire for God’s mercy and confidence in Christ. Others who are present can join in the prayers and assist the person at their last moments. These prayers can help and give consolation, especially if the person is suffering from fear.

It begins with a reading from scripture. This is followed by a litany of the saints, where we invoke the presence of the Church triumphant to intercede for the dying. Then there is a prayer of commendation where the priest entrusts the soul of the dying to God and invokes his mercy. For some it gives permission for them to let go and accept their death. It concludes with the Hail Holy Queen where we ask for Mary’s prayers to help the soul at the hour of death. This rite can be very helpful and should not be omitted if at all possible.

Once death has occurred, the rite has a section of prayers after death. These consist of psalms and some ancient prayers for the dead. These prayers commend the soul to God and ask for forgiveness for his or her sins. In addition, we pray for the family and friends of the deceased. The body may be sprinkled with holy water as a final blessing.

Death is perhaps the most difficult moment in our lives. The Church provides the apostolic pardon and other rites to help us prepare for death and our particular judgment. They can give us a sense of peace and serenity. We can experience the hope given by Christ who has conquered death by his death and shares with us his eternal life.

Every Catholic should prepare for death. We should practice the faith through going to Mass, regular confession, daily prayer, obeying the commandments, and having faith, hope, and love in Jesus Christ. Certain practices are highly recommended by the Church such as frequent acts of contrition, devotion to St. Joseph (patron of the dying), and of course the rosary. We should pray that we will have a happy and holy death. We should also pray for those who have died. All of us should strive to live in a state of grace, which is friendship with Jesus Christ. If we live that way, then we will likely die that way.
OUR VOCATIONS
Answering God’s call to the priesthood, religious life, and diaconate

SEMINARIANS

Dcn. Seth Skjervheim
Hometown: Langdon
School: MSMS
Year: Theology IV

Timothy Kraemer
Hometown: Grand Forks
School: MSMS
Year: Theology III

Richie Stenger
Affiliation: Fargo
Parish: St. Paul’s Church,
Sauk Centre, Minn.
Year: Pastoral Year

Garrett Aberle
Hometown: Minot
School: SPS
Year: Theology II

Brendon Schneibel
Hometown: Manvel
School: MSMS
Year: Theology II

Pat Sorrells
Hometown: Fargo
School: SPS
Year: Theology II

Taylor Ternes
Hometown: Devils Lake
School: MSMS
Year: Theology II

Paul Zach
Hometown: Rosholt, S.D.
School: SPS
Year: Theology I

Matthew Follis
Affiliation: Fargo
School: MSMS
Year: Pre-Theology II

William Gerads
Hometown: Ham Lake, Minn.
School: SGGS
Year: Pre-Theology II

Brendon Schneibel
Hometown: Manvel
School: MSMS
Year: Theology II

Kade Palmer
Hometown: Portland
School: SGGS
Year: College III

Anthony Wanner
Hometown: Fargo
School: SGGS
Year: College II

Joseph Kern
Hometown: Lisbon
School: SPS
Year: Propaedeutic Year

Dalton Booth
Hometown: Fargo
School: SGGS
Year: Propaedeutic Year

MSMS: Mount St. Mary’s Seminary, Emmitsburg, Md.
SGGS: St. Gregory the Great Seminary, Seward, Neb.
SPS: Saint Paul Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.
What is a Propaedeutic Year?

This past year, Pope Francis mandated a year of human formation before a man enters a formal seminary program of formation, which is known as a propaedeutic year. Propaedeutic means “to teach beforehand.” Prior to entering the rigorous studies of seminary, a man spends a year of discernment and prayer to deepen and clarify his call to the priesthood. He lives at a house of formation, generally offsite from the seminary building. He establishes a regular routine of prayer, meets regularly with a spiritual director, addresses vices or character flaws that will inhibit priestly formation, attends retreats and pastoral work, and grows in community with other men. The Diocese of Fargo currently utilizes propaedeutic formation programs at St. Gregory the Great Seminary in Seward, Neb.; Saint Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minn.; and Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Emmitsburg, Md.

Following this year, the man will enter one of two formation programs. College seminary, sometimes called minor seminary, to complete a bachelor’s degree in philosophy. Or, a two year pre-theology program for those that already have an undergraduate degree but need the necessary philosophical and language courses as well as directed study of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Once the seminarian has completed his philosophical studies, he begins four years of graduate theology studies for a masters in divinity.

RELIGIOUS IN FORMATION

**Megan Krause**  
*Hometown: Rockford, Mich.*  
*Aspirant*  
*Carmel of Mary,*  
*Wahpeton, N.D.*

**Conan Rainwater, SJ**  
*Hometown: Fargo*  
*Theology*  
*Society of Jesus,*  
*Midwest Province*

**Rev. Trevor Rainwater, SJ**  
*Hometown: Fargo*  
*Theology*  
*Society of Jesus,*  
*Midwest Province*

**Br. Joseph Maria Toelke, KHE**  
*Hometown: Crystal*  
*Temporary Professed*  
*Knights of the Holy Eucharist,*  
*Lincoln, Neb.*

**Shawn DeKeyser**  
*Blessed Sacrament Church,*  
*West Fargo*

**Brian Herding**  
*St. Anthony Church,*  
*Fargo*

**Ted LeMier**  
*Sts. Anne & Joachim Church,*  
*Fargo*

**Tim Mosser**  
*Sts. Anne & Joachim Church,*  
*Fargo*

**These men are in their fourth of five years of formation.**

**Tom O’Keefe**  
*St. Anthony Church,*  
*Fargo*

**Randy Severinson**  
*St. Michael’s Mission,*  
*St. Michael*

**Steve Splonskowski**  
*Cathedral of St. Mary,*  
*Fargo*
Dakota Hope Women’s Clinic opens in Bottineau

By Paul Braun | Editor of New Earth

Women in northern North Dakota who are experiencing challenges during pregnancy no longer have to travel to Minot for care and pregnancy services. Dakota Hope Clinic, a faith-based women’s health center based in Minot, opened their second satellite location in September in Bottineau. Dakota Hope Clinic offers anyone who is experiencing unplanned, unintended, or an otherwise challenging pregnancy free services, such as free pregnancy tests, a free ultrasound, and consultation regarding their options.

“We are a life-affirming center,” said Dakota Hope Clinic Director Nadia Smetana. “We do not recommend or refer for abortion. We do want to see abortion-minded women in our clinic because we don’t want them to make an abortion decision out of pressure from someone else and not really knowing what all the facts are about how it could affect them and their baby. We want to make sure that women are fully informed and then they can make their decision.”

Since its establishment in Minot ten years ago, Dakota Hope Clinic had been the only pregnancy center between Devils Lake and Sydney, Montana, in the north and north central part of the state. Most patients were coming from Minot or areas close to there, but not many from the rural areas. Because of the expense and the time commitment of travel, not many returned for follow-up visits.

“We know how important the follow-up is for them to participate in the program and get the free baby items,” said Mandy Crocker, a registered nurse with Dakota Hope Clinic. “The support that we can give them throughout their whole pregnancy and up to the time their baby is a toddler... we just weren’t seeing that. Because of the burdens of travel, we weren’t seeing many rural clients, but we knew there’s a need in those communities, so we decided to see if we could take our services to them.”

The Bottineau location is the second satellite office Dakota Hope Clinic has started. The first is located in Tioga. Both satellite clinics are about 80 miles from Minot. The centers are supported mainly through fundraising activities and private donations. Area churches also offer financial and spiritual support. In Bottineau, the local right-to-life group, made up of representatives from different Christian denominations, had been trying to find the right home for Dakota Hope Clinic to operate there.

“These folks here at Dakota Hope are providing hope and life to these women and these couples that are wrestling with very hard, real-day decisions,” said Father Jered Kadlec, pastor of St. Mark’s Church in Bottineau. “Why is it important? We’re witnessing to life. When we say Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, this is trying to tap into that mission precisely.”

The clinic operates in Bottineau Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Mary Johnson receives papal award following 25 years of service to the Diocese

By Kristina Bloomsburg and Susan Noah | New Earth

Mary Johnson, accountant for the Diocese of Fargo, received the Benemerenti medal on Aug. 22 at the Pastoral Center in Fargo. The Benemerenti is a medal awarded by the Pope to members of the clergy and laity for service to the Catholic Church. “Benemerenti” literally translates to “good merit.”

Bishop John Folda nominated Mary for the award following her 25 years of service to the Diocese of Fargo. The Benemerenti award is granted by the Holy Father to lay members of the Church in recognition for their exceptional service to Christ and his Church.

“I am very grateful to receive the Benemerenti award from Bishop Folda for 25 years of service as an Accountant for the Diocese of Fargo,” said Mary. “It has been an honor and a blessing to serve the priests and parishes and it has given me insight on how hard-working and dedicated they are to the mission of the Church! It has been a pleasure to work with so many inspirational people over the years that have become an important part of my life.”

The Benemerenti depicts the image of Christ on a gold Greek cross. The Savior, depicted in radiant splendor, has his hand raised in blessing. On the left is the tiara and crossed keys symbol of the papacy. On the right is the coat of arms of Pope Francis. On the reverse is the word “benemerenti.” The medal is suspended from a ribbon of the papal colors, yellow and white.

Mary retired from her position after 25 years. She was responsible for the day-to-day processing of accounts payable, accounts receivable, and deposit activity. She also processed payroll, priests pension, and Foundation annuities.

“Mary was a key team member and we are grateful for her 25 years of service to the Diocese of Fargo, and related assistance provided to the priests and staff of our parishes,” said Scott Hoselton, Finance Officer for the Diocese of Fargo.

Contact us today!
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www.sgpmmhome.org
(701) 248-3077

Job Opening: Live-In Housemother

Be a part of this beautiful Pro-Life Apostolate. We are seeking mature and balanced young women to serve the mothers and children of Saint Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home. We will have 3 positions open in November. Applicants must be joyful, confident, and be able to work with others. They must also believe in the teachings of the Catholic Church, especially regarding life, and have a valid driver’s license. Duties vary but include, running errands, simple meal prep, cleaning, classes, childcare, and mentoring these young mothers as they make big decisions. Room and Board included as well as 8 days off per month.
Sister Mary Pieta professes perpetual vows

By Sisters of Life

The Sisters of Life, a contemplative-active religious community founded in 1991 by John Cardinal O’Connor, Archbishop of New York, and dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the sacredness of human life, is pleased to announce that Sister Mary Pieta, S.V., 38, professed her perpetual vows as a Sister of Life on Aug. 5 at St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City.

His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan was the main celebrant and homilist. Sister Mary Pieta was raised in Fargo and attended the parish of Sts. Anne and Joachim. Sister Mary Pieta earned a bachelor’s degree in speech, language, and hearing science at Minnesota State University-Moorhead. Prior to entering the Sisters of Life, she served as a FOCUS missionary, sharing the Catholic faith with college students. Sister Mary Pieta is the daughter of Deacon Patrick and Brenda Breen. She has six siblings: Jim (and wife Laura), Aaron (and wife Sarah), Josie, Sam (and wife Sarah), Madeline (and husband Jackson), and Miriam.

Sister Mary Pieta has participated in the retreat works of Villa Maria Guadalupe (Stamford, CT) from 2014–16 and again from 2019–23. From 2016–19 she was missioned to the Holy Respite in Manhattan for pregnant women and their unborn children.

Superior General and Councilors elected

By Sisters of Mary of the Presentation

The Sisters of Mary of the Presentation, an International Religious Congregation, met July 15 through Aug. 1 in Broons, France at their Motherhouse. These General Chapter meetings, which are held every six years, are their highest governing assembly. Each time they meet they elect their International Leaders: Superior General and three General Councilors.

July 24–26, the delegates at the General Chapter, engaged in an extended time of prayer, silence, and dialogue. They elected as their Superior General, Sister Therese LeMee, who has been a General Councilor for the past 12 years. Sisters Adele Andele, Suzanne Stahl, and Madeleine LeClaire were then elected as General Councilors. Their terms of office are six years. They were commissioned into their leadership roles Aug. 1. These Sisters, often called “the Generalate” met Sept. 13–25 at the Motherhouse to create a plan for the next six years.

Sister Suzanne Stahle will continue to reside primarily in North Dakota but will travel periodically to the other entities of the Sisters of Mary of the Presentation located in France, Belgium, Canada (Quebec), Cameroon, and Democratic Republic of the Congo. She will continue her present responsibilities as leader of the United States entity of the SMP, at this time. She can continue to be reached by text, email, or phone at susanne.stahl@smphs.org and (701) 840-0000.
The Diocese of Fargo is now partnering with Flocknote to support ongoing communication and evangelization efforts by ministries and offices in the Diocese. Flocknote is a convenient way for dioceses and parishes to text and email members. Thanks to an agreement with the Diocese of Fargo, your parish also has the opportunity to use Flocknotes for parish communications.

Beginning Oct. 11, email and text messages will be sent directly to the faithful of the Diocese of Fargo from Bishop John Folda. The purpose of Bishop's messages is to inspire and encourage you in your journey of faith, as well as strengthen your relationship to the local Church. Watch for a new message every second and fourth Wednesday of the month.

“From Bishop’s Desk” will offer up-to-date news from Bishop Folda and the various offices of the Diocese of Fargo. These messages will provide easy ways for you to find news, register for events, and connect you to the Catholic resources you want most.

At the end of each message will be an invitation to sign up for updates from ministries most important to you. You can receive messages for youth activities, young adult events, Maryvale retreats, and more.

If your email or phone number are registered at a parish or the Diocese of Fargo, you should receive these messages from Bishop Folda automatically. The messages will default as emails, but if there is no email available, the messages will be sent as texts. If you did not receive a message Oct. 11 or Oct. 25 or would like to change how you receive these messages, sign up by scanning the QR code or by visiting www.fargodiocese.flocknote.com.

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VIA EMAIL OR TEXT MESSAGE
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On May 18, 2021, ground was broken for a new 235-seat chapel and learning center for Devils Lake’s St. Joseph School and St. Mary Academy. Twenty-eight months later on Sept. 22, the first Mass was held to dedicate the new $2.5 million facility. The Most Reverend John Folda, Bishop of Fargo, was on hand for the Mass and dedication.

For decades, St. Joseph schoolchildren celebrated weekly Mass during the school year in the school gym. While the focus in the gym has always been Mass and the Holy Eucharist, according to principal Michelle Clouse, there is no substitute for having an actual worship space.

“You can just see the respect and the reverence,” said Clouse. “Before in the gym, we were setting up the chairs and bringing out the altar and there was a sense of this is something special, but then it’s still a gym. Now, you can tell when they walk in, they’re even more reverent and respectful.”

The new chapel’s interior reflects some of the history of the Diocese of Fargo. The pews, tabernacle altar, and the St. Mary and St. Joseph altars came from the closed St. Anselm’s Church in Fulda. Workers and volunteers spent weeks sandblasting, sanding, and staining the pews to help them look brand new. The main altar and ambo were donated by St. Therese the Little Flower Church in Rugby, and the baptismal font came from a small church in western North Dakota through the Cathedral of St. Mary in Fargo.

It’s definitely a great blessing for the school, for the parish,” said Father Matthew Kraemer, pastor of St. Joseph’s in Devils Lake. “Just a spiritual center for the school. It’s big enough to fit the entire student body, all the teachers, everyone. It’s big enough to grow a little bit, too. It shows a vision for the school that we’re moving forward. We want to grow, but we also want to keep in mind what is our foundation.”

Not only does the new, 75-hundred square foot addition house the new chapel, but also a new learning and media center for the school. There are two meeting/study rooms, one of which was donated by the local St. Joseph’s parish Knights of Columbus council, and a main library, complete with donated book shelves from Lake Region State College. The center also features state-of-the-art learning tools for students.

“The media center is top-notch for a small school,” said Draper Lundquist, president of the St. Joseph School St. Mary Academy school board. “We have a 3-D printer, a touchscreen monitor, and everything’s Wi-Fi enabled so when students have their laptops in here they can connect right into our internet and work on their projects in the library.”

The new chapel was named St. Mary’s chapel in remembrance of the former St. Mary’s Academy/St. Mary’s High School in Devils Lake. The high school burned in 1979 and was never reopened.

“It’s a piece of our heart here at the school,” said Clouse. “We wanted to keep it close.”
Back to school in our own school
By Jason Kotrba | Principal at Holy Spirit school in Fargo

There is an expression that comes to mind when I reflect on the journey Holy Spirit School was on the past 18 months. “Home is where the heart is.” Due to unforeseen circumstances in May of 2022, Holy Spirit School had to close for construction renovations, and classes were moved to the Wanzek Center, the former St. Mary’s school in Fargo, for the 2022-2023 school year.

We were blessed with a supportive parish at the Cathedral of St. Mary to welcome us into their building to use for the school year. We were thankful for the JPII Schools Community of parents, staff and students to help move us back and forth when we needed it most. We are joyful for the Holy Spirit parish community who committed to rebuilding Holy Spirit school and transform it into a brand new school. God’s intercession was truly there through it all!

Even though the dimensions didn’t change for the school, everything is brand new. When you lose something for a timeframe and then get it back, you appreciate it that much more. It is good to be home, and we are looking forward to providing a quality Catholic education to all students who walk through the doors.

On Sept. 1, Father Jayaseelan Chinnappan, HGN, parochial vicar of Holy Family Church in Grand Forks, spent time teaching the fourth and fifth grade students from the parish and parish school about altar serving. The students will continue the training and will be serving at the altar at school and parish liturgies. (submitted photo)
Nested in a grove of trees in tiny Warsaw, North Dakota, the stately structure of St. Gianna’s Maternity Home stands as a 20-year testament to serving the pro-life cause. Established in 2003 and opened in 2004, St. Gianna’s has served the needs of many young, pregnant women facing obstacles and hardships in their lives. For all of these women, abortion could have been their only option, but for the efforts of St. Gianna’s.

“In these 20 years, we’ve had roughly 330 or 340 people call this home their home,” said Mary Pat Jahner, the home’s Director. “That’s the mothers who come in for sometimes just a couple weeks and sometimes a couple years. That’s the babies who have been born here and lived here. It’s truly been a home; it’s truly been a gift. And there’s so many miracles here. Our work isn’t just the moms here. It’s a lot with our former moms who come here without family, and being a part of them and supporting them to whatever degree.”

The home is named after St. Gianna Beretta Molla, a pediatrician who lived in Italy during the mid-1900s. When her fellow physicians told her she would probably not live through the birth of her fourth child, they urged her to have an abortion to save her own life. She said no and gave birth anyway to Gianna Emanuela Molla. St. Gianna died a week after giving birth in 1962. She was canonized a saint by Pope St. John Paul II in 2004. She is the patron saint of mothers, physicians, and unborn children.

The home itself was once the St. Anthony convent and boarding school. It was built around 1920, but closed in the early 70s. While Mary Pat Jahner was teaching grade school students at St. Ann’s in Belcourt on the Turtle Mountain reservation, the parish priest from St. Stanislaus Church—located just across the county road from the former St. Anthony’s Convent—came to Belcourt to help prepare her youngsters for their first Holy Communion. Father Damian Hils learned from Mary Pat that she always wanted to start a maternity home. The former convent was available, and Father Hils asked Mary Pat to consider using the dilapidated building for that purpose. That was in 2001.

“I was the one who got to name the home for Blessed Gianna at that time,” said Mary Pat. “I had used her always as an example to my students, just with the call to holiness, and that we’re all called to be holy.”

With the help of the Park River Pregnancy Help Center and private supporters, St. Gianna’s came to be. Mary Pat spent most of her time traveling the area to tell the story of Blessed Gianna and to line up support for renovating and operating the home. For example, 64 windows had to be replaced at a cost of $80,000, and the organization only had about $1,300 in the bank. There were structural, plumbing, and electrical renovations needed, along with building a new, safer fire escape. Many local contractors helped out doing the work mostly for just over cost. Mary Pat says through all of the updates, God was at work.
“I don’t know what God was doing, but when the bills came we paid the bills,” said Mary Pat. “And that’s how God’s always provided for us. It’s how it’s always worked. We’ll probably never have a million dollars in the bank, but that doesn’t matter.”

The daily life for residents includes attending classes at one of the local high schools to earn a diploma or continuing education opportunities like trade schools or college. Therapy and addiction counseling sessions are offered, as well as pre and post-natal doctor appointments. Residents also receive parenting classes, and everyone pitches in with the household chores and cooking. There is daycare and taking care of the smaller residents. Daily and Sunday Mass is also offered.

Molly Richard is typical of the young women who seek out help at St. Gianna’s. Molly came to St. Gianna’s in 2019 when she was about six months pregnant with her son, who is now about three years old. Molly first heard about St. Gianna’s home from a nurse who worked with an OB-GYN doctor. She only spent a month in Warsaw, and then went back home due to homesickness. Molly had her child back in her hometown, but about a year after giving birth she realized that her home situation was not good for her newborn child, and she asked to be allowed to come back.

“It just got me out of the situation I was in because I used to live on a reservation, and basically for me growing up I was just surrounded by drugs and alcohol,” said Molly. “There was abuse too, so I was like, ‘well I don’t want my son to experience that. So I came here because I knew they would help me with anything I needed and they were just very loving.”

Molly’s son is being cared for in foster care, with the hope that the family he is living with will adopt him soon. Molly herself still lives at St. Gianna’s where she is finishing high school, and then hopes to continue her education, either in social work or possibly law enforcement, after finding a place of her own.

One of the most demanding, yet rewarding positions at St. Gianna’s home is that of housemother. The home employs up to three. They play the role of a mom to the young women living at the home. They live at the home, take care of household duties, and act as role models for the other residents. Teresa Schmidt came to work for St. Gianna’s home as a young, 19-year-old, and worked there until she was 21. Earlier this year she was called back to St. Gianna’s home due to staffing issues, and filled in until late August. Teresa says her experience has
helped her grow by sharing in the pain and sorrow some of the home’s residents have experienced.

“We try to love them and you give them that family experience that a lot of the women here have never had,” said Teresa. “We do the household chores, we take them to appointments, we do fun things with them, give them mentorship and answer their questions and just try to love them and give them help to find their value as much as we can. I’m going to miss the people here a lot, the relationships that I’ve built with the residents, the girls. It’s not exactly like a sister bond, maybe like an aunt or something, but I will miss the contact with everybody and just being able to help in this way, in this work.”

The staff who run St. Gianna’s realize that, although they deal with young mothers, there also must be a male role model for these women, many of whom have been abandoned by either their own fathers or the men who fathered their children. That’s the reason the home recently changed its name to the St. Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home.

“We’ve added Pietro to our patronage here as St. Gianna’s husband, who I was able to meet, who I believe truly will be a saint soon,” said Mary Pat. “And we need him. He also lived on his own 48 years after St. Gianna died. He knows the struggles of a single parent. He knows the struggle of loss and of grief. And I think people come here with all sorts of things. It’s just truly the gospel of life, the sanctity of life.”

Serving as the on-site male role model at the home is Father Joseph Christiansen, a priest of the Third Order Franciscans of Mary Immaculate. He is their chaplain, father-figure, spiritual advisor, maintenance engineer, chauffer, all things a father does in his own home and more.

“Fatherhood is broken in this country, in this world, and especially in these women’s lives,” said Father Joseph. “The father of the child or even their own father has failed many of them and their children, or have fallen short greatly. None of us are perfect, but there’s a lack there. To be here as a father figure, as a man of prayer, a man of God, obviously, to live the faith, to show the faith, and to see that it’s authentic in our life, it’s real. So they see hard work, they see responsibility, they see virtue, they see spirituality, religion, worship, just all aspects that should be part of a father’s life.”

To commemorate the home’s 20 years of service to young women and the pro-life movement, a series of events are scheduled now through July 2024. The year-long celebration kicked off with Mass on Aug. 19 at St. Stanislaus in Warsaw. Other events include the Canticle of Praise banquet and Mass at the Alerus Center in Grand Forks with Raymond Cardinal Burke and Gianna Emanuela Molla as honored guests on Apr. 16, and a Mass at St. Stanislaus in Warsaw on Apr. 28, the Feast of St. Gianna, presided by Bishop John Folda.

“We’re looking at a year mostly of gratitude and celebration,” said Mary Pat. “But also evangelization and just getting the word out there, letting people who’ve been a part of it to celebrate with us, to really rejoice, but also to continue to teach and to continue to love life. I know the Dobbs decision changed laws, but we’ve got to change hearts. I think that God’s giving us a golden opportunity. Sometimes people in the pro-life movement get a bad rap and (others) say we only care about the babies. But they can see here we actually work more with the mothers than the babies. The babies are pure joy, and they’re innocent, and they’re beautiful. But these moms, when you see the conversions, when you see the baptisms, when you see the graduation or the GED or just the joy, there’s happiness in their life too.”

Mary Pat says that volunteers are always appreciated, and monetary donations keeps the home running. But the greatest way others are able to support the St. Gianna’s mission is through prayer. Moreover, she hopes the St. Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home will continue to be an attractive example of loving and supporting life for generations to come.

For more information on the services the home has to offer, go to www.sgpmollahome.com.

Upcoming St. Gianna and Pietro Molly Maternity Home 20th anniversary events:

- Dec. 9, 2023 – Pro-life day of Recollection
- Feb. 2, 2024 – Pre-Giving Hearts day dinner and dance with the Johnny Holm Band at the Minto Community Center
- Apr. 16, 2024 – Canticle of Praise banquet and Mass with Raymond Cardinal Burke and Gianna Emanuela Molla at the Alerus Center, Grand Forks
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Spiritual forces at heart of beloved fantasy series

By Matt Komprood | Parishioner of St. Thomas Aquinas Newman Center, Grand Forks

“T”he Lord said to Cain, ‘Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it’” (Gen. 4:6-7).

Life after the Fall of Adam and Eve from the earliest moments until our present day has been a battle. Hence, the Church aptly refers to her embattled members as the Church Militant. Yet, as St. Paul notes, this war is not a war of flesh and blood, but one of the spiritual and interior forces which move upon and within man (Eph. 6:10-20). If a man sins, he first sins in his heart. Conversely, acts of faith, hope, and charity along with all the virtues are rooted in the human heart and find their sustenance in their rootedness of the interior life, in that hidden center where God himself dwells. The heart is ultimately the place of decision where we choose life or death (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2563).

The Lord of the Rings trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkien has captured the imagination of generations, and has been the source of many cinematic renditions, and the source of inspiration for the entire genre of fantasy literature. While the contemporary portrayals of this timeless story concentrate on the actions and adventures of the story as Frodo and his companions seek to destroy the One Ring to save Middle Earth from the malice of Sauron, the deeper drama of the story happens in the interior battle Frodo wages between his will and the oppressive, evil will of Sauron concentrated in the ring Frodo carries. As a humble hobbit, Frodo does not seek out the power, notoriety, fame, or fortune that comes with being a hero. He rather inherits this grave burden from his Uncle Bilbo, who himself was not fully aware of what he passed along.

Time and again in The Fellowship of the Ring, Frodo attempts to pass the ring on to others greater than he. In one key passage, Frodo encounters a mythic and eccentric creature, Tom Bombadil. Tom is described as Master, and one who was present in the beginning before all other creatures and before evil had infected Middle Earth. Speaking of himself, “Eldest, that’s what I am... He knew the dark when it was fearless before the Dark Lord.” Yet, his mastery is not boundless. When asked if there would be danger to the hobbits as they set to leave the boundaries of Tom’s domain, he said, “Tom is not master of Riders from the Black Land far beyond his country... Tom’s country ends here; he will not pass the borders.” His ability over the outside forces of nature, which enabled him to command Old Man Willow to release the hobbits ensnared in the tree or his crushing and casting out of the Barrow-Wights with a song, is testament to his mastery of both himself and the order of nature within his domain. He himself knew the limits of his mastery, and he did not seek to transgress its boundaries.

Despite Tom’s mastery within his boundaries, Gandalf counseled against entrusting the One Ring to Tom. “He would not understand the need. And if he were given the Ring, he would soon forget it, or most likely throw it away. Such things have no hold on his mind. He would be a most unsafe guardian; and that alone is answer enough.”

The character of Tom Bombadil can be instructive to each of us in the spiritual life. All of us have inherited a fallen condition because of Original Sin. Yet sin and evil were not a part of the original design of creation, but entered the scene as a privation of the right ordering of relationship when Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s natural design for them. In some ways, Tom Bombadil is an imaginative consideration of what life would be like in this state of original innocence when man’s dominion over nature was wholly intact and rightly ordered. Rather than seeking the idols of power, pleasure, wealth, or vain notoriety, each of us would be at peace with the glory God has given to us, and the dominating impulse to forcefully ensnare others in the orbit of our own desires would not be present.

Ultimately, the One Ring in the story is destroyed through the heroic efforts of the Fellowship who sacrificed, suffered, endured in hope, and in some cases gave their lives in order to break the bondage and rule of the malice of the Dark Lord. Such loving sacrifice and virtues are our weapons as well as we journey to our heavenly inheritance where all things will be made new!
The cup of God’s judgment

By Mary Hanbury | Director of Catechesis for the Diocese of Fargo

This four-part image comes from a 14th century illuminated manuscript that was once part of a prayer book owned by Charles Robert of Anjou, King of Hungary. The image would have accompanied the prayers of Christ’s passion. The upper left side depicts Jesus at the Last Supper blessing his apostles with John, the beloved, reclining toward Jesus. It is at this point where Jesus is saying that one of them will betray him. In the Gospel story, Peter will soon turn to Jesus and ask who it is that will betray him, leading us to think that Judas will soon be shown. In the next scene to the right, we see Jesus offering up the bread and wine as he says the words of consecration. Notice the chalice of wine which Jesus holds up that will become His Blood; it will be a recurring theme. We see it again in the next scene in the Garden of Gethsemane. The chalice is sitting on some rocks. It illustrates the scene in which Jesus is praying to his Father, “take this cup from me, but not my will but your will be done” (Matt. 26:39).

The last scene finally shows Judas, his close friend, betraying him with a kiss along with Peter slicing off the ear of one of the soldiers. Jesus is looking at Judas, but his arms are reaching out to stop Peter who is in the action of slicing off the man’s ear. Again, scripture reminds us of the “cup,” as Jesus says to Peter, “put your sword into is scabbard. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father gave me?” (John 18:11). The blood gushing out of the man’s ear, just shows a more dramatic representation that should remind the viewer of the suffering Jesus endured in his bloody sacrifice, as well as, the suffering of a betrayal by a close friend.

It was Jesus who shed his blood for us. The cup represents God’s judgement to sacrifice his Son, and we are reminded of that sacrifice Jesus chose, the cup of sacrifice. The cup does not pass from him; he drinks it and then invites us to drink the cup of salvation he won for us through his death and resurrection. We drink the Blood of Christ; we take part very intimately in that sacrifice. Because he has conquered death instead of having to endure what he endured, we instead receive the grace of his very life within us.
An update on North Dakota teen pregnancies, Farm bill, charitable gaming, and more

CATHOLIC ACTION

CHRISTOPHER DODSON

Executive director of the North Dakota Catholic Conference, which acts on behalf of the Catholic bishops of N.D. to respond to public policy issues of concern to the Catholic Church.

Consider this column a collection of shorts. It includes developments on issues previously discussed, items that could not fit into earlier columns, pieces of information that, while important, would not fill an entire column, and new issues worth reporting.

Teen pregnancies in North Dakota fell to an all-time low in 2022. In actual numbers, 364 pregnancies involved teen mothers. That is a 50% decrease in just ten years. The number of pregnancies involving minors (17 and below) is also at an all-time low at 80. That is a 60% decrease in ten years. The percentage of all pregnancies that involved teens was also a record low at 3.59%. Clearly, North Dakota is doing something right when it comes to teen pregnancy.

While we are on the subject of numbers, we can give thanks that less blood was shed by abortion on North Dakota soil in 2022. The abortion clinic shut down in the first days of August. For the last few years, the clinic has done about 96 abortions a month. That means that the Dobbs decision and the state’s laws prevented about 477 abortions from being done in North Dakota last year. At this time, we do not know how many North Dakota women went elsewhere for an abortion, but at least we have taken an important step toward making the state a sanctuary for life.

Earlier this year, I wrote about the many sources of Catholic social doctrine. For those interested in a more concise and introductory approach, I recommend The Church’s Best-Kept Secret: A Primer on Catholic Social Teaching by Mark Shea. It is the best introduction to Catholic social doctrine I have read, and it avoids slipping into partisan or left/right ideology.

In the final days of 2022, Congress passed the Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act. The act, which was supported by a broad spectrum of organizations, including pro-life groups and the U.S. bishops conference, provides additional workplace protections to women who need accommodations because of pregnancy or a miscarriage. Throughout the legislative process, Congress made it clear that the act did not cover abortion-related services. Nevertheless, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has released proposed regulations that attempt to use the act to require employers to provide accommodations for abortion. The proposed rules, if adopted, could be challenged in court.

Perhaps no single federal legislation impacts our lives in North Dakota more than the Farm Bill. But it also impacts the lives of urban and suburban residents. The Farm Bill encompasses development, conservation, energy, trade, and more. It also provides nutrition assistance to low-income families. Because the bill covers so many programs, Catholic Rural Life, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Relief Services, and Catholic Charities USA are working together to express the voice of the Catholic Church on this multi-layered bill. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops website has a page dedicated to the Farm Bill (www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/agriculture-nutrition-rural-issues/farm-bill). It includes principles for the bill, background information, and work on previous Farm Bills. As work on the Farm Bill moves forward, look for opportunities to learn and share the Church’s perspective.

Every North Dakotan probably has noticed the massive expansion of charitable gaming in the state. Electric pull-tabs, which look and operate much like slot machines, have driven this growth. Along with this development, there exist concerns about bad actors, the impact on persons with gambling addictions, and whether all the beneficiaries are really charities. Not surprisingly, therefore, the Judiciary legislative interim committee has started a comprehensive study of all aspects of charitable gaming in the state.

The Catholic Church does not teach that gambling itself is immoral. But, as with all things, the government has an obligation to regulate for the common good and with special attention to those most vulnerable to the negative impacts of the activity. Hopefully, the committee will consider these principles in its study.

Charitable gaming is not the only issue of interest that legis-
lative interim committees are studying. Committees are studying school choice models, the state’s guardianship programs, health care in many aspects, behavioral health, homelessness, legal restrictions on carrying firearms (including in churches), the child welfare system, and childcare. There is also a study on the impacts of artificial intelligence, including its impact on youth.

Interim committee information is a little hard to find on the legislature’s website (www.ndlegis.gov/assembly/68-2023/committees/interim), but all interim committee hearings are streamed live and available for playback the day after. Contact the North Dakota Catholic Conference office if you need help navigating the site.

“F or I know well the plans I have in mind for you...” (Jer. 29:11). These words of Jeremiah are so familiar to us during the climactic moments of life. People love to reflect on them during big life changes and milestones: graduations, weddings, ordinations, even the passing of loved ones. It would seem foolish however, to reserve these words of our Lord for only life’s big events. The truth that he is the one who guides every moment of our lives for all times and seasons, and lately, it would seem he wants me to remember this just as much in the little moments of life as in the grand ones. I’ve learned this a few times here in the seminary.

For starters, as with any walk of life, I get curve balls thrown at me throughout the day. In my busy sixth year of seminary, I try to plan my days as best I can. Each day has lots of time set aside for prayer, study, class, and fraternity. As most of us know though, if the day is packed, all it takes is one unforeseen variable and the whole day is suddenly impromptu. In the seminary, all it takes is an unexpected phone call, a bit of writer’s block, or a bad night’s sleep, and you can suddenly feel like you have no control. The irony is: you don’t. God is in control. It is so easy to be frustrated that your plan isn’t happening, but the Lord is the one with the plan. He knows well the plans he has in mind for us. There is peace knowing that, even though I have to stay up late to study, or cut a game short for prayer time, or whatever else the adjustment is: God is in control, and he will make all things work together for our good.

A more specific example of when I have to trust the Lord’s plan and not my own is when I am the one that goofs up. Earlier this semester, there was a weekend that illustrates this well.

Mount St. Mary’s seminary has a proud tradition of putting together a soccer team for an inter-seminary soccer tournament, called the Vianney Cup. I love soccer and was getting ready for practice one Sunday evening when a classmate poked his head in my room. “Do you have a ride yet?” he asked. Since this classmate hadn’t been practicing soccer with us, I was a little confused and replied, “No. Are you coming to soccer tonight?” He surprised me further by saying, “No. To the Hahn’s.” I had completely forgotten about a class outing to supper at a professor’s house, and we were supposed to be leaving for it right that minute! I suddenly felt like I had spoiled my whole evening by forgetting this, but what gave me peace was to say, “Lord, you know the plans you have for me.” In moments like that, all I can do is let go of my expectations and entrust my time to the Lord. Moments of our own failings can help us realize how good this is, because we can see better that we are not the ones in control, and thank heaven, because we are weak human beings. God is almighty and all-loving, and he guides all things—even our actions—for our good.

Probably the best moments recently of coming to trust in the Lord’s plan have been in moments of ministry. At least twice last year, I handed out rosaries and talked to students about the faith at Mount St. Mary’s University. I was super nervous for this street-evangelization-style ministry, but I had confidence it was what the Lord wanted me to do. So, I simply entrusted that time to him, knowing that it would be what he desired it to be. It was fantastic. My nerves never got in the way of me speaking, and I received such joy in telling young people about our Lord and our Lady. This same thing has happened in my work at parishes and schools, and plenty of other times as a seminarian.

So, no matter if it was some chink in my plan, my own mistake, or something I expected but was unsure how it would go, entrusting my time and plans to the Lord brings me the most peace in moments of business and uncertainty. He is the one who holds all time, and he is most patient in showing us that all his plans are best for us. Thanks be to God, who keeps us in his mind and heart at every moment.
Among the important issues involving the dignity of human life, abortion is of prime importance—but it is not the only pro-life issue.

As Little Sisters we are deeply concerned about the “other end” of the pro-life spectrum—the care of the sick, the elderly, and the dying.

In his landmark encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II wrote, “Neglect of the elderly or their outright rejection are intolerable. Their presence in the family, or at least their closeness to the family in cases where limited living space or other reasons make this impossible, is of fundamental importance in creating a climate of mutual interaction and enriching communication between the different age-groups. It is therefore important to preserve, or to re-establish where it has been lost, a sort of ‘covenant’ between generations.”

Today our society is very far from Pope John Paul II’s vision.

Pope Francis often speaks of the “throwaway culture” to describe the neglect and abandonment of those considered useless, particularly the very young and the very old.

Francis’ concept of the throwaway culture aligns with what John Paul II termed the “culture of death.”

I am convinced that the scarcity of religious vocations, including vocations to our Congregation, is related to this culture of death. A decrease in the number of young women joining our community may also be related to the fact that many young people today grow up far from their elders, “without roots,” as Pope Francis often says.

From Little Sisters who share their vocation stories, it is evident that a close and loving relationship with grandparents or other family elders is often the spark that lights the flame of a vocation at the service of the elderly.

For several years now, the Little Sisters have also been grappling with the same workforce issues faced by other providers of senior care.

In the aftermath of the pandemic, 99 percent of U.S. nursing homes and 96 percent of assisted living communities are dealing with staffing shortages.

Over 300 U.S. nursing homes closed during the pandemic and two-thirds of the remaining homes are at risk of closing.

Today over 800,000 needy older adults and people with disabilities are languishing on Medicaid-funded state waiting lists without caregivers to provide needed services.

By 2030, 3.5 million new workers will be needed in long-term care services just to keep pace with our rapidly aging population.

Without dramatic changes, thousands of older adults and their families will lose access to quality care, creating fertile ground for the legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia.

I share these frightening statistics not to be a prophet of doom but to issue a call to prayer and action!

There are many things we can do today to nurture a covenant between generations and a more caring culture.

If you are a young person, OPEN YOUR HEART to the seniors in your life, and to the possibility that God is calling you to a career or a vocation of service to the elderly.

Don’t be afraid to contact the Little Sisters! Our life shared with the elderly, lived in the spirit of the Beatitudes, is a beautiful, joy-filled life!

PRAY that young people will be drawn to careers in geriatrics/gerontology and even better, to life-long vocations at the service of the elderly!

CREATE opportunities for intergenerational encounters and ENCOURAGE youth to explore a caring profession, or a priestly or religious vocation!

AFFIRM LIFE by helping the seniors you know to pursue what is most meaningful to them.

Spend time with the elders in your family; volunteer in a home for the elderly. Show esteem and support to those who work in caring professions and thank them for their service.

DEFY DEATH by voting against assisted suicide and euthanasia and by helping others to understand the inherent evil of these acts.

Support initiatives and policies in favor of increased compensation, benefits and incentives for aging services professionals.

Support immigration reform to make it easier for qualified caregivers to enter the workforce in our country.

Support reform of restrictive long-term care regulations and inadequate financing.

Two years ago, Pope Francis instituted a day honoring grandparents and the elderly, the “World Day for Grandparents and the Eldery.” It is my dream that this day will evolve to the point where the streets of our major cities are filled with families and people of all ages joyfully celebrating the covenant between generations.
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"Lord, by the words of consecration the substance of the bread and wine is converted into the substance of your Body and Blood. All powerful Lord, say over me the word which will change me into You."

Quotable
St. Anthony Mary Claret
Feast day Oct. 24

Knights of Columbus (‘KofC’) offers life insurance, annuities, long-term care insurance and disability income insurance products. For costs, terms, conditions and complete details regarding these products, please contact your agent directly or call KofC at 1-800-380-9995. Products may vary by state. Insurance solutions are available to eligible KofC members in the U.S. and Canada. Knights of Columbus is located at: 1 Columbus Plaza, New Haven, CT 06510.
As you may know, the Living Our Faith, Building Our Future campaign has begun in a number of our parishes across the diocese. Each pastor was given a choice of three timeframes: this fall, spring of 2024 or fall of 2024. Your parish, and every one of our 127 parishes and missions will conduct the campaign in the timeframe that works the best for your parish.

Thirty-two parishes have chosen to conduct the campaign in our Block 1, happening now. Many of these have already begun discussing and presenting the benefits of the campaign to our diocese as a whole, and to their parish in particular. A critical part of the Living our Faith, Building our Future campaign is parish support. Bishop Folda believes strongly that our diocese is only as strong as our parishes. With this in mind, the campaign has been structured so that 30% of all funds raised up to a parish’s goal will remain at the parish for its own needs. Once a parish exceeds its campaign goal, 70% of all the funds raised above that goal will remain at the parish, allowing for unlimited potential.

Each parish will be given time to discern its needs and to create a Parish Case. This parish case will outline the use of the funds raised within the parish. Parishes are allowed and encouraged to use the funds as they require. Some examples of parish cases include: current and future maintenance, renovation and expansion, technology enhancement, education, evangelization, and the creation of a perpetual care fund. The parish case allows the parish to work towards a common goal, and to see the results of their generosity in action.

Father Thomas Graner, pastor of St. Margaret Mary, Drake; St. Francis Xavier, Anamoose; and Holy Family, McClusky, has determined needs for his three parishes. While all three parishes plan to allocate their funds raised to maintaining and upgrading church, rectory, or parish hall facilities, St. Francis Xavier plans to utilize a portion of their funds to enhance the life of the parish through a very special project.

The year 2024 marks the celebration of 125 years of worship at St. Francis. By utilizing a portion of their campaign funds for a special project, the Living our Faith, Building our Future campaign will allow parishioners a chance to come together in celebration for the 125 years of faith, and to lay the groundwork for the future of their faith.

Father Reese Weber, pastor of St. John, New Rockford and Sts. Peter and Paul, McHenry, likewise has discerned the needs of his individual parishes. With input from his parish council, the determination was made at St. John to utilize their campaign funds in the creation of a growth and development fund. This fund will be earmarked for ministry and evangelization. Building upon the Living our Faith, Building our Future diocesan wide goal of renovating the Maryvale retreat center to increase education and evangelization opportunities, Father Weber is dedicated to providing opportunities to his community to grow in their faith. Sts. Peter and Paul will utilize their campaign funds to beautify their parish campus, to better display the glory of the Kingdom of God on earth.

“Encountering Christ changes lives,” said Father Weber. “This capital campaign funds efforts that will give more opportunities for the faithful to encounter Jesus. Giving to this campaign can prioritize our commitment to regularly investing our lives into what is eternal, making friends for heaven” (cf. Luke 16:9).

Please pray for the success of the Living our Faith, Building our Future campaign and for the 32 parishes conducting the campaign this fall. May they lead our diocese towards our common goals as together we secure the future of the Maryvale retreat center and safeguard the future of our retired clergy through their pensions and a retirement home. May each parish achieve their own success, so that their life of faith is enhanced through the fulfillment of their needs.

For more information regarding the Living our Faith, Building our Future campaign, please contact Jeff Weber at (979) 549-2640 or jweber@guidanceingiving.com. Further information is also available on the campaign website: www.fargodiocese.org/lof.

**List of Block 1 parishes**

Anamoose, St. Francis Xavier; Aneta, Sacred Heart; Ashley, St. David; Cooperstown, St. George; Dazey, St. Mary; Drake, St. Margaret Mary; Enderlin, St. Patrick; Fairmount, St. Anthony; Fargo, St. Anthony of Padua; Fargo, Sts. Anne & Joachim; Fingal, Holy Trinity; Finley, St. Olaf; Hankinson, St. Philip; Harvey, St. Cecilia; Hope, St. Agatha; Jessie, St. Lawrence; Kensal, St. John; McClusky, Holy Family; McHenry, Sts. Peter & Paul; Milnor, St. Arnold; Munich, St. Mary; New Rockford, St. John; Reynolds, Our Lady of Perpetual Help; Sanborn, Sacred Heart; Selz, St. Anthony; Sheldon, Our Lady of the Scapular; Starkweather, Assumption; Thompson, St. Jude; Wembleton, St. Boniface; Wishek, St. Patrick; Wyndmere, St. John; Zeeland, St. Andrew.
LIFE’S MILESTONES

Mike and Debbie Bailly, parishioners of St. Boniface in Walhalla, will celebrate their 50th anniversary Oct. 13. They have been blessed with 4 married sons and 9 beautiful grandchildren.

Stanley and Rhonda Jordahl, parishioners of St. Paul’s Newman Center in Fargo, will celebrate their 40th anniversary Oct. 22. They were married at Trinity Lutheran Church in Enderlin. They have been blessed with 3 children.

Deacon Emery and Annette (Wangler) Mears, parishioners of St. Joachim’s in Rolla, celebrated their 60th anniversary on Sept. 28. They were married at St. Anselm’s church in Fulda. They have 6 children, 16 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren.

Math J. Gross, parishioner of St. Philip Neri in Napoleon, celebrated his 100th birthday on Oct. 7. Math and his late wife, Barbara (Weigel), were blessed with 4 children, 4 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren.

Bernadine Kopf, a parishioner at St. Boniface in Walhalla, celebrated her 85th birthday on Oct. 1. Bernie and her late husband George, have 1 daughter, Kathy.

Thomas and Elaine Falck, parishioners of St. James Basilica in Jamestown, celebrated their 75th anniversary Oct. 2. They were married at St. Margaret Mary of Alacoque in Buchanan. They have 6 children, 12 grandchildren, and 19 great-grandchildren.

Ronald and Lorraine Kensok, parishioners of St. Leo’s in Casselton, will celebrate their 70th anniversary Oct. 17. They were married at St. Leo’s in 1953. They have 6 children, 8 grandchildren, and 12 great-grandchildren.

Dale and Julie Muscha, parishioners of St. Cecilia in Harvey, celebrated their 50th anniversary on Sept. 15. They have been blessed with 5 children and 13 grandchildren.

Loretta Heilman, parishioner of Little Flower in Rugby, will celebrate her 95th birthday on Oct. 17. Loretta and her late husband, Joe, were blessed with 5 children, 14 grandchildren (3 deceased) and 15 great-grandchildren.

Evelyn Weninger, parishioner of St. Margaret Mary in Drake, celebrated her 100th birthday Sept. 22. Evelyn and her late husband Anton were blessed with 2 children, 5 grandchildren, 8 great-grandchildren, and 4 great-great-grandchildren. Evelyn resides at Edgewood Vista in Minot.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Life’s Milestones includes anniversaries for marriages, ordinations, and religious vows for 25, 40, 50, 60, 65, and 70+ years and birthdays for 80, 85, 90, 95, and 100+ years for those in the Diocese of Fargo. Submissions will only be accepted for milestones occurring during the month of publication, one month prior, or one month following. Send a photo with text to news@fargodiocese.org or to Diocese of Fargo, New Earth, 5201 Bishops Blvd S, Suite A, Fargo, ND 58104 with a stamped return envelope and phone number. Deadline for the Nov. issue is Oct. 17, and the deadline for the Dec. issue is Nov. 10.
**Fall dinners**

**West Fargo:** Blessed Sacrament’s Fall Dinner and Bazaar is Oct. 15 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fried chicken dinner, adults $12, children $5. There will be baskets to bid on, a country store, bingo and games for all ages. Raffle tickets to win $2,000.

**West Fargo:** Holy Cross will be hosting Oktoberfest celebrations on weekends during the month of October. These include raffle, 50/50, chance baskets, silent auction, books and puzzles, cork pull, homemade baked, canned goods and crafts, photo shoot, and hoedown. On Oct. 22, a meatball dinner with all the trimmings will be served 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Adults $12 and ages 10 and under $6. Take-out available. Contact the church for weekend activities (701) 282-7217.

**Reynolds:** The Knights of Columbus Fall Supper and Bazaar is Oct. 22 from noon to 4 p.m. Serving turkey, ham, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, corn, and all the trimmings. Adults $15, ages 6 to 12 $5, ages 5 and under $2. Take-out available. Located at the Knights of Columbus hall in Reynolds.

**Grand Forks:** Holy Family Altar Society’s 63rd annual Christmas Tea will be held Nov. 4 from 1 to 4 p.m. Fresh baked pie, tea, coffee and cider will be served, bake sale, and raffle.

**Minto:** Join the Sacred Heart community for their Fall Dinner Nov. 5 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Minto Community Center. Ham, meatballs, potatoes, sauerkraut, and more. Adults $15, ages 6-12 $5, under 5 free. Bake sale, quilt raffle, and mini raffles. Take-out available.

**LaMoure:** Join Holy Rosary Church for their 36th annual Buffalo Supper Nov. 5 starting at 4:30 p.m. Buffalo Roast, potatoes, gravy, coleslaw, buns, veggies, and bars.

**Casselton:** St. Leo’s will host a fall dinner on Nov. 5. Serving a roast beef dinner from 11 a.m. to 1:30 pm. Take-out available. Adults $15, ages 4-12 $6, under 3 free.

**West Fargo:** Join Blessed Sacrament Church for their 44th Annual Thanksgiving Dinner Nov. 24 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Church. Experience a Blessed Sacrament Thanksgiving; turkey and all the trimmings. Free-will offering. Take-out available.

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**Diocesan policy: Reporting child abuse**

The Diocese of Fargo is committed to the protection of youth. Please report any incidents or suspected incidents of child abuse, including sexual abuse, to civil authorities. If the situation involves a member of the clergy or a religious order, a seminarian, or an employee of a Catholic school, parish, the diocesan offices or other Catholic entity within the diocese, we ask that you also report the incident or suspected incident to Msgr. Joseph Goering, vicar general, at (701) 356-7945 or the victim assistance coordinator, at (701) 356-7965 or by email at victimassistance@fargodiocese.org. To make a report of sexual abuse of a minor and related misconduct by bishops, go to ReportBishopAbuse.org or call 1-800-276-1562.

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**Visit: MaryvaleND.Org**

**UPCOMING OPEN RETREATS**

- Beloved Husband - Men's Retreat - Nov. 30-Dec. 2, 2023 (filling up fast!)
- Couples Retreat - Dec. 8-10, 2023
- Made for Greatness Men's Winter Retreat - Jan. 19-21, 2024
- Beloved Father - Men's Retreat - Feb. 1-3, 2024
- Couples Retreat - Feb. 9-11, 2024
- Women's Directed Ignatian Retreat - April 4-7, 2024

If you have questions about upcoming retreats please contact Amanda: (701) 845 2864 | Amanda.Kunze@MaryvaleND.org
Father Armand (Bud) Brooks passes away Sept. 19

Reverend Armand (Bud) Brooks of Hankinson, died at a Fargo hospital on Sept. 19 at 82 years of age. The funeral Mass was held Sept. 23 at the Cathedral of St. Mary, Fargo, with Bishop John Folda presiding.

Father Brooks was born on March 19, 1941 in Waterbury, Conn. He was ordained a priest of the Diocese of Fargo on May 31, 1977, at the Cathedral of St. Mary. After ordination, Father Brooks served as parochial vicar at the Cathedral of St. Mary and at St. William’s in Argusville, and was appointed parochial vicar of St. Therese the Little Flower in Rugby.

Father Brook’s became administrator for the parishes of St. Ann’s in Belcourt and St. John’s in St. John, and was eventually named the pastor for those same parishes. His next assignment came as pastor of St. James in Page, St. Agatha’s in Hope, and St. Olaf’s in Finley.

Father Brooks was appointed parochial vicar for St. Mary’s in Grand Forks, and eventually became the chaplain for the Franciscan Sisters of Dillingen (OSF) in Hankinson, where he served until his death.

A glimpse of the past

These news items, compiled by Kristina Bloomsburg, were found in New Earth and its predecessor, Catholic Action News.

75 years ago — 1948

A bit of history will be made in the Diocese of Fargo in October when His Excellency, Bishop Dworschak, will dedicate three churches within four days. St. William’s church at Argusville will be dedicated Oct. 10, Our Lady of the Lake church at Lake Williams on Oct. 12, and Sacred Heart church of Orrin on Oct. 13. This brings to five the number of churches dedicated this year, for the church at Fulda was dedicated June 23 and the church at McHenry was dedicated June 27.

50 years ago — 1973

The Bishops of the United States have designated October as Respect Life Month, and have requested that it be observed in every parish and institute throughout the country. Because of the events of our time—war, abortion, euthanasia, and the other evils—it is imperative that we reflect upon the central importance of human life as a Christian value.

20 years ago — 2003

As Pope John Paul II celebrates 25 years in office, the world is taking stock of a pontificate that has helped shape political events, set new directions for the Catholic Church and offered spiritual inspiration to millions of people around the globe. Since his election Oct. 15, 1978, Pope John Paul II has delivered more speeches, met with more world leaders, canonized more saints and kissed more babies than any previous pontiff. In more than 50 major documents, on economics to the rosary, he has brought the Gospel and church teachings to bear on modern life.
With spiritual wisdom, sacramental strength, and energizing brotherhood, this retreat will equip husbands and fathers with the inspiration and tools needed to thrive as spiritual leaders in their homes. The retreat will feature spiritual insights, Mass, confession, prayer and reflection, and time for growing as brothers in Christ.

Devin Schadt will lead the retreat.

Jan. 19-21 2024
Maryvale Retreat Center, Valley City
Cost $250-300

Devin Schadt is the executive director of the Fathers of St. Joseph, an apostolate that labors for the restoration, redemption, and revitalization of fatherhood. Devin is the author of several books and is the creator of the video-devotional system LEAD: The Four Marks of Fatherly Greatness. Devin lives with his wife and five daughters in the Midwest. Learn more at fathersofstjoseph.org.

Is your marriage going down the right road... or is it a little off track?

Weekend for couples March 1-3, 2024

Does the distance between you seem wide? Are you already separated? Looking for a better way? Retrouvaille can help and offers hope for a better relationship. Retrouvaille is a peer ministry of volunteer couples that can help you learn the tools of healthy communication, build intimacy and heal, just as they have done in their own marriages. Retrouvaille is Christian-based, and Catholic in origin, and welcomes couples of all faiths as well as non-religious couples. Retrouvaille can help get your relationship back on track.

For more information,
Call (701) 356-7903 or visit HelpOurMarriage.com
Pope Francis: Forgiveness is the cure that heals “the poisons of resentment”

By Courtney Mares | Catholic News Agency

Think of someone who has hurt you and ask God for the strength to forgive that person, Pope Francis told the crowd gathered in St. Peter’s Square on Sept. 17.

Speaking from a window of the Vatican’s Apostolic Palace, the pope underlined that forgiveness can heal “the poisons of resentment” and “restore peace to our hearts.”

In his Angelus message, the pope said that forgiving is “not a good deed that we can choose to do or not do” but “a fundamental condition for those who are Christians.”

“Every one of us, in fact, is ‘forgiven,’” he said. “God gave his life for us and in no way can we compensate for his mercy, which he never withdraws from his heart. However, by corresponding to his gratuitousness, that is, by forgiving one another, we can bear witness to him, sowing new life around us.”

“For outside of forgiveness, there is no hope; outside of forgiveness there is no peace.”

The pope compared forgiveness to “oxygen that purifies the air polluted by hatred” and heals the “many diseases of the heart that contaminate society.”

He reflected on Jesus’ response to Peter, who had asked: “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?”

“Jesus answered, ‘I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times (Matt. 18:21-22).’”

Pope Francis added: “Jesus’ message is clear: God forgives incalculably, exceeding all measure. This is how he is; he acts out of love, and gratuitously ... We cannot repay him but, when we forgive a brother or a sister, we imitate him.”

“May Mary, Mother of Mercy, help us to receive the grace of God and to forgive each other,” he said.

After praying the Angelus prayer in Latin with the crowd, Pope Francis noted that he will travel to Marseille, France, on Sept. 22 to attend a meeting of bishops from the Mediterranean region that will have a special focus on the issue of migration.

He said that migration is a “challenge” that must be faced together, adding that the future will only be prosperous if “it is built on fraternity, putting human dignity first ... especially for those most in need.”

Pope Francis said that Marseille is called to be “a port of hope” and asked people to pray for his upcoming journey to the French city Sept. 22–23.

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Your support is treasured by all who are unable to join in our greatest form of prayer, the Mass.

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Watch Sundays:

10:30 a.m. - Fargo, WDAY, Ch 6 or Grand Forks, WDAZ, Ch 8

11 a.m. - Bismarck, KNDX, Ch 26 or Minot, KXND, Ch 24

NEW EARTH OCTOBER 2023
On a “day of joy” in Poland, Sept. 10, the Catholic Church for the first time beatified an entire family at once: Jozef and Wiktoria Ulma and their seven children, who were martyred during World War II for sheltering two Jewish families from the Nazis.

“It would be misleading if the day of the beatification of the Ulma family served only to bring back to memory the terror of the atrocities perpetrated by their executioners, on whom, by the way, the judgment of history already weighs heavily,” Cardinal Marcello Semeraro, prefect of the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints, said Sept. 10 in his homily at a beatification Mass attended by some 30,000 people in the family’s village of Markowa in southeastern Poland.

“Instead,” the cardinal continued, “we want today to be a day of joy, because the page of the Gospel written on paper has become for us a lived reality, which shines brightly in the Christian witness of the Ulma couple and in the martyrdom of the new Blessed.”

Operation “Reinhardt,” a program aimed at murdering all of the Jews in Germany-occupied Poland, began to be implemented in the Ulma family’s area of Poland in late July and early August 1942.

The Nazis began to deport the roughly 120 Jews in the Markowa area to a labor camp and extermination camp. Approximately 54 Jews in hiding were found and shot on Dec. 14, 1942. An additional 29 Jews continued to hide in Markowa, including the eight who found refuge with the Ulma family.

Early on March 24, 1944, a Nazi patrol surrounded the home of Józef and Wiktoria Ulma on the outskirts of Markowa. They discovered the Jewish people hiding on the Ulma farm and executed them.

The Nazi police then killed 31-year-old Wiktoria, who was pregnant and in premature labor, and 44-year-old Józef outside their home.

An additional order sealed the fate of the remaining family members: “Kill the children, too.”

Stanisława, 7; Barbara, 6; Władysław, 5; Franciszek, almost 4; Antoni, 2; and Maria, 1, were executed.

The seventh Ulma child to die was the couple’s unnamed son, who was in the process of being born. The boy had been incorrectly described in some news reports as the first unborn child to be beatified, a key detail that the Vatican recently clarified. Though there was no time to baptize the child, what transpired instead was what the Church calls a “baptism of blood.”

In his reflections, Cardinal Semeraro also made a point to honor the memory of the Ulmas’ Jewish friends who also were killed that day.

“Today, together with the new Blessed, we also want to remember their names,” he said. They were: Saul Goldman with his sons Baruch, Meichel, and Mojziesz, as well as Golda Grünfeld and her sister Lea Didner, together with her young daughter Reszla. Among those at the beatification ceremony Sunday was Poland’s chief rabbi, Michael Schudrich.

Beatification in the Catholic Church is one step before canonization, when a person recognized for special holiness is officially declared to be a saint. Those beatified receive the title “Blessed” and may receive public veneration at the local or regional level, usually restricted to those dioceses or religious institutes closely associated with the person’s life.
STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND CIRCULATION

(Act of August 12, 1970: Section 3685)
Title 39, United States Code

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16. This Statement of Ownership has been printed in the October 2023 issue of this publication.
17. Signature and Title of Editor, Publishers, Business Manager, or Owner.

Paul Braun, Editor
I’d just parked across from the area’s only abortion facility in Moorhead, Minn., when I noticed a man approaching the pro-life advocates on the sidewalk out front. Since we’re not used to a lot of walking traffic in this dead-end spot, I was prudently alert.

Was he there, like so many others, to challenge us and argue why we shouldn’t be getting in the way of a woman’s choice? I would quickly find out.

Gathering my brochures, I made my way across the street to where he’d just arrived and had begun talking to my sidewalk friends. “Are you the people who help women who don’t want to do this?” he asked, stunning us all. It isn’t every day we are approached by someone recognizing us as the helpers and reaching out for information.

He continued. “Where would I call if I wanted to help someone change their mind?” The others there at the time only had signs, but I happened to have some information about the local pregnancy-help ministry, Women’s Care Center. I opened my backpack and dug out the pamphlet. “This number right here,” I said, pointing to the front.

He was a driver for the African community, he explained; not for a company like Lyft or Uber, but something like that; someone to whom they could reach out when they didn’t have wheels or a way to get somewhere. “A lot of these women don’t want to do this, but they don’t know where to get help,” he said. “Thanks for this information.”

The man returned to his car on the other side of the street, waiting for the woman he’d dropped off earlier. Yes, she was inside, readying to end her baby’s life. He was just the driver, so his hands were tied, but he seemed to sincerely want to help those in his community reconsider choosing this regrettable route.

As we talked, he wondered whether someone in the pro-life community could offer an educational session for the local African community to bring awareness about these resources ahead of time. What a great idea, we responded. By mentioning it here, I’m hoping someone might have ideas on how this might happen.

We’ve known for a long time that one of our biggest challenges is reaching vulnerable people ahead of time. That isn’t an easy obstacle to solve. This man, who seemed authentically eager to help be a bridge between two cultures that are neighbors, expressed a hopeful idea, leaving us surprised at the ways God works through people to see his will take root, reminding us again that together, we can meet the challenges of this broken culture.

The same day of our visit with this “African angel,” I talked with someone from Moorhead invested in getting the 40 Days for Life fall prayer vigil going. Thankfully, despite a delay in planning, that campaign is going forward. If you haven’t signed up yet to pray with others committed to the cause, please visit the website, www.40daysforlife.com/en/moorhead, and claim your hours. You might not receive your reward here for that span of time, but rest assured, heaven will be taking note.
Do you know where we are?
The answer will be revealed in the November New Earth.

Last month’s photo is from St. Alphonsus Church in Langdon.