



Monthly publication for the Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls

March 2021

THE BISHOP'S BULLETIN

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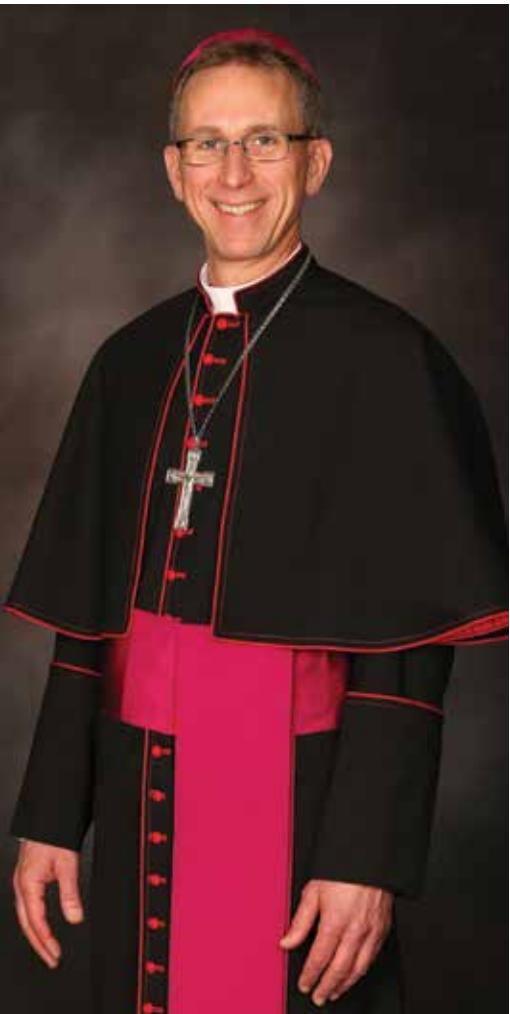
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MEETING GOD IN THE SILENCE

AN INVITATION OF LOVE

In the silence, God speaks



Perhaps you are much like me in wanting to hear God speak to you. After many years of learning more about prayer, I have found that it is important for me to be in silence so I can hear the voice of God speaking to my mind and heart. Learning how to receive all the good things God wants for me and His direction in my life is not always easy. But if I can find the right environment, time and an open disposition to really listen, I am much more able to hear and receive God's interior messages in my mind and heart as I prayerfully try to listen intently.

One such place in our diocese I find helpful to spend time in silence is Broom Tree Retreat Center near Irene. Broom Tree takes its name from 1 Kings 19, in which the great Old Testament prophet Elijah fled to the mountain of God, Mount Horeb. After just a day into his 40-day journey, he stopped and rested beneath a broom tree, was fed by an angel of the Lord, and was given the strength to make it to Mount Horeb (verses 4-8). We then read that God revealed Himself to Elijah on the mountain, but not in a strong and violent wind, nor in an earthquake, nor in a fire, but in "a light silent sound" (verses 11-13).

In light of this passage consider the inscription on the front of the altar at Broom Tree (see picture on cover): "In the silence God speaks." I love this inscription because it speaks a profound truth about the importance of silence in order to "hear," that is, to sense interiorly the movement of God's stirrings in our mind and heart.

Silence enables a person to remove all other distractions and ponder deeply what is going on in our mind and heart. It wasn't in the great noise of the wind, earthquake or fire that Elijah heard the Lord, but in the silence.

Entering into this kind of silence before God in His Real Presence in the holy Eucharist in places like the Broom Tree chapel help me to open up to God what is in my heart, mind and emotions so I can receive His love,

encouragement, direction and yes, at times, His correction of me (which of course we all need in our journey of conversion). When I do this, I find the words of St. Paul becoming more true within myself: "It is no longer I living but Christ living in me." (Galatians 2:20) My experience is this: the more I let God live in me, the happier I am and the more divine love I have to share with God, others, and learn to love myself as God loves me.

Another place I find helpful to listen deeply in my mind and heart is in nature. Both at Broom Tree and Abbey of the Hills in Marvin (see photo below) I find the silence in nature a fruitful place to allow God to speak to my heart whether it is when I can't really hear much of anything or through the sounds of nature which help me to reflect upon God, their creator. Nature helps me get my mind off myself and reflect upon the awesome beauty of God's creation which in turn helps dispose me to receive what the Lord wants me to receive rather than me "staying in my own head" and allowing what is in my mind, heart, will, and emotions to come to the surface to be reviewed with God so I can sense what He is trying to share with me.

This Lent I invite you into the silence of prayer at home, before the Blessed Sacrament, in nature or wherever that place is so we are able to discover ever new the love of God where, "In the silence He speaks."

In the silence with the Love of the Lord may you all be blessed.



Abbey of the Hills, Marvin, SD

BISHOP'S SCHEDULE

March

- 3 7:00 Confirmation, Holy Spirit, Mitchell, Holy Family, Mitchell, at Holy Spirit, Mitchell
- 4 8:00 Catholic Schools Mass, Holy Spirit, Sioux Falls
- 6 10:00 Regional confirmation, St. John, Plankinton, St. Mary, Stickney, St. Peter, White Lake, Ss. Peter and Paul, Dimock, Sacred Heart, Parkston, at Holy Spirit, Mitchell
- 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph*
- 7 1:30 Confirmation, Risen Savior, Brandon, St. Teresa, Dakota Dunes, St. Joseph, Elk Point, St. Peter, Jefferson, St. Dominic, Canton, St. Magdalen, Lennox, at Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 9 12:00 Diocesan Finance Council meeting, Catholic Pastoral Center
- 10 7:00 Confirmation, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Sioux Falls, St. Therese, Sioux Falls, at Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 13 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph*
- 17 7:00 Confirmation, St. Mary, Salem
- 18 1:30 Chrism Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 20 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph*
- 23-24 Kenrick Glennon Seminary visit
- 27 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph*

*Broadcast on Keloland TV or live stream via sfcatholic.org

Pope Francis on Ash Wednesday: Lent is a journey from slavery to freedom

(CNA) - The 40 days of Lent are an opportunity to turn from the slavery of sin to the freedom found in reconciliation with God, Pope Francis said on Ash Wednesday.

"The journey of Lent is an exodus from slavery to freedom," the pope said Feb. 17. "These 40 days correspond to the 40 years that God's people trekked through the desert to return to their homeland. How difficult it was to leave Egypt!"

The Israelites had many temptations during the 40 years they wandered in the desert and "so it is with us," Francis added. "Our journey back to God is blocked by our unhealthy attachments, held back by the seductive snares of our sins, by the false security of money and appearances, by the paralysis of our discontents."

"To embark on this journey, we have to unmask these illusions."

To mark the start of Lent, Pope Francis offered Mass at the Altar of the Chair in St. Peter's Basilica with about 50 cardinals and a congregation of around 100 people.

In his homily, Pope Francis reflected on St. Paul's exhortation in 2 Corinthians to "be reconciled to God."

"Be reconciled: the journey is not based on our own strength," he said. "Heartfelt conversion, with the deeds and practices that express it, is possible only if it begins with the primacy of God's work. What enables us to return to him is not our own ability or merit, but his offer of grace."

"The beginning of the return to God is the recognition of our need for him and his mercy, the need for his grace. This is the right path, the path of humility," Francis said.

He also noted God's message through the Prophet Joel: "Return to me with all your heart."

"How many times, in our activity or indifference, have we told him: 'Lord, I will come to you later, wait... I can't come today, but tomorrow I will begin to pray and do something for others,'" he said.

"God now appeals to our hearts," the pope said. "In this life, we will always have things to do and excuses to offer, but now, brothers and sisters, is the time to return to God."

According to Pope Francis, Lent is about more than the little sacrifices we make, but about realizing where our hearts are oriented, and turning them back toward relationship with God.

THE BISHOP'S BULLETIN

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The essential gift of patience for a missionary disciple

By Katie Eskro

In the June 2020 issue of the Bishop's Bulletin, Father Scott Traynor describes missionary discipleship as "encountering the love of Jesus Christ, growing in relationship with him, and inviting and helping others to do the same."

I love this definition. The first thing that strikes me about this description is that the first two steps have to do with us: are we aware of the encounter of Jesus in the events of our everyday lives, and are we growing closer to him and his Church through these ordinary, everyday events?

The last part of the definition, to invite and help others, can only flow from what we've received. Indeed, if we are to live the Christian life of community in its full, we are not just sharing morality, an ideal or an intellectual idea. We must share the life and love we've received from the Father.

A gift meant to be shared

Father Andrew Dickinson, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Aberdeen, says the Christian who has encountered God personally naturally desires to share that encounter. "St. Thomas Aquinas would say that the good and the beautiful are diffusive. They want to be shared. When you

encounter something good, you want to share it. And so there's already within us this natural impulse to share what we have received."

The way we share our faith looks different for different people, each of us having our own unique personality and temperament, "but everyone has some share in that mission," says Father Dickinson. And this sharing of our faith and our life does not come from ourselves but from God himself.

"I don't have the power to cause conversion in someone, but he gives me the grace, and anyone who is open to it, the privilege of working with him," Father Dickinson says.

We are all meant to live life on mission by inviting the people around us to encounter God's love, but we don't have the power or control to make anyone choose to accept God's invitation. And so, we invite but we wait in patience for God's work to be done in the heart of the person we are inviting. And while this waiting in patience can be frustrating as it can feel like nothing is happening, Father Dickinson encourages that God is always moving.

"God is never not working in the lives of

all the people of this earth, never not offering salvation," he emphasizes.

Evangelization requires patience

Since growing in patience means letting go of our own desire to control another person's choices, it involves a measure of suffering.

"The word patience is tied into the word for suffering. If I'm patient, I'm willing to suffer. I'm willing to suffer for the sake of the good that can come," Father Dickinson says.

Most, if not all, of us experience the suffering of patience in watching loved ones, friends, neighbors and acquaintances dismiss God's love in their lives. We can continue to lovingly invite them to accept God's love, "but you can't force it to happen," says Father Dickinson.

In those times when we invite others to the Church or make our beliefs known to others and our invitation is refused, Father Dickinson encourages us to remember we are not alone. He says Jesus offers us a gift in these moments if we are willing to accept it.



Father Andrew Dickinson

"Jesus offered himself and on many occasions it was not returned. And so for the missionary disciple, it's not a failure, rather it's a new opportunity for a new way to be intimate with Jesus, and for Jesus to be intimate with you, if through your life of disciplined prayer, you take that disappointment to the Lord and look to his answer," Father Dickinson says.

He also warns against impatience, when we try to push someone toward God or force them to partake in something we think would be good for them.

Before becoming pastor of Sacred Heart in the summer of 2020, Father Dickinson was pastor at the SDSU Newman Center for 11 years. In his experience there, he tells of a time when a missionary invited a student time and time again to a Catholic conference. The student felt so pressured by this missionary that eventually the student stopped even going to Mass. The missionary's well-intentioned invitation went awry because the missionary pushed the invitation too much.

In these cases, Father Dickinson says we "must be willing to suffer the 'no.'" A patient urgency would have heard the no, and would have said okay, let's get to know this person and why they're saying no. And then loved them in that, and prayed for them with the love of Jesus, and waited to see what Jesus wants."

Essential to love and freedom

Ellen Bauman, director of Discipleship and Education at St. Lambert Parish in Sioux Falls, recognizes how important it is to be patient with others' growth and

choices. "Patience implies that you're acknowledging the other person's freedom," she says. Without freedom, there can be no love.

"Any diminished amount of patience is a diminished amount of love. It doesn't mean I don't share truths; it's not the kind of freedom that allows the person to have their own way. But there's a patience to it and a charity to what it is you're teaching, while at the same time recognizing there's a whole lot you don't know about the people in front of you," says Ellen.

Ellen recognizes that the people she encounters know whether they are being loved through their relationship or whether they're being imposed upon, and that it is through friendship and a trusted relationship that people become open to God's invitation.

"I've seen the transformation in a person's heart where they've been closed to something, but if there's a friendship, even if they're not where you want them to be, I can love them in their journey," Ellen says. "But that means I'm a part of their life. Is there room to recognize they're a whole person? Do I have the patience to wonder about who they are as a person? Can I allow that person to show themselves in time?"

This patience can be challenging, and we need to remember that it is God who takes the lead in conversion and formation. He invites us to be co-laborers with him, but it is he who guides. Patience is a necessary virtue for missionary disciples if we are to be faithful to the Lord's guidance. His timing and his ways often remain mysterious to us, and faithfulness to a life on mission requires trusting obedience.



Ellen Bauman

Growing in patience

Father Dickinson and Ellen both offer some concrete steps to growing in this patience. Ellen says we must always pray and remain open to God's plan.

"Praying and asking him to give what I need. Listening, really, really listening to people is super important," she says.

She also emphasizes that we must be aware of our biases and know our hearts in order to continue following God's path instead of our own agenda.

Father Dickinson adds we must always begin from a place of gratitude for our experience of missionary discipleship in God's love.

“

Hold on to your desires, but not to your plans.

- Father Andrew Dickinson

”

"Christian discipleship isn't something I can manufacture; it didn't happen on my timeline. It's God's timeline. And so I have to be humble and receptive to that," he says.

"Hold on to your desires, but not to your plans," Father Dickinson emphasizes.

"I desire that the entire southern half of Aberdeen, my responsibility at Sacred Heart Parish, would be converted to the love of God and Jesus Christ, as lived and revealed by the power of the Holy Spirit and the sacraments of my Catholic Church, here at Sacred Heart. And I have very many plans on how to do that, but those plans are always flexible, moveable, and I can't hold onto them too tight. And I'm always prepared for those plans to be frustrated. And I have to be patient with those plans."

As missionary disciples, you and I are called to live a life of fruitful mission. In that mission we know that God invites us to share his goodness with others, and that we must embrace a patient suffering as we hope and pray for our family and friends to embrace God's love for them.

In this cross of waiting, we have hope because there is a beauty that arises from waiting and watching for God's infinite love to be revealed in his time and way. What a gift it is that he invites us to be co-laborers with him in spreading his truth, beauty and goodness to those he has placed on our hearts and in our lives.



MEETING GOD IN THE SILENCE

AN INVITATION OF LOVE

by Renae Kranz

Five or six years ago, I was driving home alone after doing something at church. Maybe I had gone to confession, maybe it was Stations of the Cross. Somehow that detail escapes me now.

Whatever I had done at the church that night had stirred a new thought in me as I drove. I felt prompted to turn the radio off and drive in silence. I never do that. In fact, I always have something on to create noise. It's how I have functioned my whole life.

As I drove down 57th Street in silence, God found me. I think he had been waiting for some silence so I could hear him. He said to me, "I want you to write for me."

Once the initial "Wait, was that...?" wore off, my next thought was, "Okay. But how?"

I thought more about this encounter over the next few days, never disregarding it, but at the same time, not really knowing what to do with it. I am a writer, yes, but I had not been a

working writer for a number of years at that point. I didn't know what I was supposed to do, so I just followed the promptings of my heart wherever they led me.

Over the next few years, I took various writing classes to sharpen my skills, started a freelance writing business and eventually ended up here, working for the Diocese of Sioux Falls, writing for my Lord through his Church. I had no idea I would end up here—not even an inkling.

God found me in silence that night. I needed the silence to hear his call for me.

SILENCE LEADS US TO GOD

In his book, "The Power of Silence," Robert Cardinal Sarah describes our world as a "dictatorship of noise" that robs us of peace and separates us from the God who desires to have a relationship with us. It keeps us from offering to God our true selves and our adoration of Him.



Heller Family: Ben, Faith, Jim, Michala, Katie, Grace, Gabe

“

IN THE SILENCE OF THE HEART GOD SPEAKS.

If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you. Then you will know that you are nothing. It is only when you realize your nothingness, your emptiness, that God can fill you with Himself. Souls of prayer are souls of great silence.

-St. Teresa of Calcutta

“The tragedy of our world is never better summed up than in the fury of senseless noise that stubbornly hates silence. This age detests the things that silence brings us to: encounter, wonder, and kneeling before God,” Cardinal Sarah says in his book.

Father Scott Traynor, vicar for lay and clergy formation for the diocese, says silence is not only about keeping our lips closed. Silence is actually more about not taking things in: refraining from reading a book, watching TV, browsing the internet, or even having a conversation. He says because we are constantly bombarded with noise and images, we need to fast from those things sometimes so we can “have a deeper conversation with God, with the divine persons.” It allows us to be ready to receive from the other.

“I want to allow what’s in my heart to surface and to be attentive to it instead of constantly receiving new input from my universe around me,” Father Traynor says.

If we want to hear God speaking to our heart, bringing silence to our prayer is key. When we’re constantly seeking out noise, we don’t leave room for listening to and hearing God when he’s speaking to us. Father Traynor says silence only really makes sense in the context of our relationship with God. Prayer is that principal relationship.

“Prayer is a heart-to-heart conversation with God,” Father Traynor says. “If I want to share my heart with God, I first have to be attentive to what’s in my heart. I want to become more aware of what’s stirring in my thoughts, feelings and desires (the things in my heart). And silence serves that.”

Father Traynor describes what happens during the silence as an amplification of our thoughts, feelings and desires and then a slowing down. He says they will stop being jumbled up and instead become more distinct so we can see them more clearly, as God sees them.

Why does that matter? Father Traynor says it helps us in discernment, to understand what is from God and therefore leading us to God, and also what is not from God. We can enter more deeply into that heart-to-heart conversation with our Lord.

Michala Heller, parishioner at Sacred Heart in Aberdeen, has spent much of her life pursuing silent conversation with God. For her, the opportunity to allow God to speak to her in silence is vital to her being. She’ll sometimes have an idea sparked when in silent prayer and knows it wasn’t from herself but from God. Other times something will be revealed to her that maybe she needs to work on or that God wants to affirm or challenge her with. She says to always be open when it comes to silence.

“I do feel blessed in that very often, when I’m in my prayer time, especially in silence, I do hear Jesus talking to me,” Michala

says. “I know that might sound really weird, but thoughts or feelings or even instruction or questions will come to my mind. And I’m like, ‘That’s not me. I would not ask that question of myself.’ So I’ve learned to just acknowledge that as the voice of God and the voice of Jesus.”

Even though Michala has enjoyed silence for years, she still had to take a hard look at what she was often doing at adoration. She says it’s easy to feel like we have to fill up the hour with prayers and meditations and books. Although these things are good because God can speak through those as well, leaving time for silence helps to teach us discipline and gives God time to just love us—and us time to love Him back.

Putting aside time for silence with God has helped Michala grow spiritually, especially when it comes to humility. It’s not the silence that creates the growth, but the time spent with the Lord in that silence.

“For me to just not make it be all about me, every minute of my day is not about me, and all of that has helped me be able to work on that humility,” Michala says. “We reside there with the Holy Spirit and with the Lord, and then He can work on us with all of that, the pride and the humility or whatever it is. Those gifts that we seek and those faults that we need to work on the most. Those things that keep us from Him.”

For Mary Jo Gallagher, parishioner at St. John Paul II in Harrisburg, silence calms her and gives her a deep sense of peace. She has come to know that being in silent prayer is where we can hear the voice of God best. She reminds us if we never stop to be quiet, it will be more difficult for God to reveal his will for our lives. When the chaos of life takes over, she goes back to silence which ushers her into the presence of God to hear his voice in her heart.

“Silence moves me to know and do the will of God and be of service to God and others,” Mary Jo says. “If my silence and prayer don’t move me out of myself and towards God, what good is it? I become a clanging gong or crashing cymbal. Silence moves my heart; it calls me to something deeper, to more of God, more of His love, more of His care, tenderness and mercy, and it brings forth the desire in my heart to know him and serve him in a deeper way.”

A quote from St. Teresa of Calcutta probably explains silence best:

“In the silence of the heart God speaks. If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you. Then you will know that you are nothing. It is only when you realize your nothingness, your emptiness, that God can fill you with Himself. Souls of prayer are souls of great silence.”

SILENCE CAN BE SCARY

This silence business can be a frightening thing. Father Traynor has seen it firsthand when leading silent retreats as the executive director at Broom Tree Retreat Center in Irene. Even when someone finally works up the courage to go to a silent retreat, that first day creates a lot of apprehension and fear. It takes a certain amount of courage to be alone with our thoughts, feelings and desires, especially in silence.

Father Traynor says fear is why we pile on the noise in our lives. We're often afraid of what we might see, what might come up. It's critical to understand we are not alone. If we can set fear aside and deal with what Fr. Traynor calls "a gnawing unhappiness" that we try to drown out with more and more noise, we can meet God in the silence.

"If I realize I'm not alone in the silence, but I'm with God who loves me unconditionally, I don't need to fear whatever comes in my heart because whatever's there, if I don't like it, well, as long as I offer that to God and ask him with his love to come into those thoughts, feelings, and desires and rearrange them or give me new ones, He will do that. And He wants to do that because He wants our happiness and what's best for us," Father Traynor says.

He has seen over and over again how those on silent retreat change after just one day. The apprehension is gone; the fear is gone. When people take the leap into silence with God, they're never disappointed. They always find His love there.



Dan and Mary Jo Gallagher, parishioners of St. John Paul II, Harrisburg

"There's something about entering generously and courageously into silence that expands our experience of what God can accomplish in us. It opens up a new fullness of receptivity to the grace and blessing in the work of God," Father Traynor says. "There's an invitation of love to come away by ourselves and rest."

Michala and Mary Jo agree that silence can be scary because we fear what we might find out about ourselves as well as what God might ask of us. We might even be afraid of our own interior voice that says we aren't good enough or something is wrong with us. But God is always waiting for us to take a step toward him, waiting for us to respond to his call.

SILENCE MAKES ITS MARK

Silent retreats have helped both Mary Jo and Michala further challenge their pursuit of a relationship with God through silence. Even with busy schedules, they have felt it's as important as anything in their lives.

For Michala, the first silent retreat was challenging, but she went into it with a serious heart and respect for the other retreatants. Once she got into a rhythm, she knew she had made the right decision to be there.

"The relief my body felt and just being quiet and knowing I didn't have to say anything to anyone and having that quiet time, that time to decompress, that I think is so vital in our world right now," Michala said.

Mary Jo had been going to a silent retreat every year but not really embracing silence in her everyday life. Her spiritual director challenged her to change up her prayer life by setting aside her devotions and other prayers. Instead, he told her to sit in silence for five minutes every day. When she got distracted, she was to simply say, "Jesus, I give you permission to love me." She gradually increased her time to 20 minutes and now never misses that silent prayer time.

"It is during times of silence that I experience the deepest spiritual consolation, times when I can sink into his presence and feel his pursuit of my heart and know his nearness, experience his great love for me and know his tender care and mercy and rest in the peace that only He can bring into my life," Mary Jo says.

Father Traynor's most memorable moment of silence was preceded by a lot of moments of noise while at a convent in Assisi, Italy. He was there to spend some quiet time with God and tell him that he loved him. It's a bit of a long story, so if you want the detailed version, you'll have to ask Father Traynor.

Over seven days, he tried each day to spend time in silence. Every day his silence was interrupted by all manner of noise, from loud Germans to floor buffers, from scouts singing to miter saws and tourists. No matter where he went to find silence, it eluded him.

At a small chapel where he was interrupted once again, Father Traynor finally had enough. He let his frustration out and screamed at the top of his lungs that he could get no peace! It was all noise, noise, noise!



Father Scott Traynor, vicar for lay and clergy formation for the Diocese of Sioux Falls



HOW TO GET SILENCE INTO YOUR LIFE

"Right into the middle of that rant," Father Traynor said, "I hear Jesus clear as a bell in my heart say, 'Scott, at every moment of your life, I come to you. And all I want to do is to be with you and tell you that I love you. But all I ever find is noise, noise, and noise. Be still and know that I am God.'"

He thought the world was going to end, but the rebuke was so sweet and full of love, Father Traynor said he felt totally convicted.

"I'm like, Lord, if this is what it's like to be rebuked by you, rebuke me every day. This was so amazing, and that has really made me a disciple of silence," he said.

SILENCE OF THE HEART

Michala reminds us that instead of continuing to move at Mach speed all the time, we need to take time to just give God a "chance to look at us, and for us to just recognize him," even if we are looking at a tree or a beautiful blue sky. Don't miss the chance to spend time with Him.

Father Traynor hopes more people will treat themselves to the gift of silence and find more peace, happiness and a day-to-day sense of wellbeing.

"Silence is not an end in itself, but it's a tremendous tool to help us grow in relationship with God for these reasons: amplifying and slowing down what's in my heart so I can share that with God," he says, "and being able to listen to God and experience the reality of His being with me and speaking His love into my heart."

Mary Jo's heart longs to be in the silence with God.

"'Silence until the world be no more,' a silence so deep that the rest of the world falls away and I'm drawn into the heart of God just to be with him."

Michala Heller

"Give yourself a little bit of time to just quietly take a shower, take in the benefits of the warm water that we're blessed with. Find small ways of starting to introduce that silence into your day. So if it's a radio when you go into your car, if you've got your radio on automatically, shut your radio off and just drive to wherever you're going in silence. And maybe even intentionally put aside that time and just say, 'Lord, I'm going to take this time to listen to you. Let me hear what you want me to hear, direct me the way you want to direct me. Let me just calm down.'"

"I don't think people should feel intimidated that they have to start off with an hour of silence every day, or a whole day of silence or a retreat of silence."

Michala also says to remember that silent time with the Lord is just as (or more) important as volunteering at church. Doing things shouldn't be evidence of validation in our faith. We have to work on our faith and our relationship with God by intentionally pursuing Him and teaching ourselves discipline she says.

Mary Jo Gallagher

"To find silence in our busy lives, we may need to make sacrifices to make space for it. By this I mean sacrificing time spent elsewhere, watching TV, reading a book, sometimes even sacrificing sleep, and then having a set time and place. Start small, set aside five minutes a day to be quiet and invite God in. Put away all of the distractions, set a timer for five minutes and just pray, 'Jesus, I give you permission to love me.' When your mind wanders, as it will, come back to that, 'Jesus, I give you permission to love me, to love me in those hard to love places; I give you permission to love me in my sinfulness, when I'm yelling at my kids, or frustrated with the people in my life, in my sadness, in my business, and I give you permission to love me in my joy.'"

"Silence requires discipline, sacrifice and perseverance. It doesn't just happen; we have to create space for silence in our lives and in our hearts. I had to be willing to set aside time to be quiet and listen. It requires me to create a quiet place in my home where I can draw away to be quiet without distraction, especially when I was first introduced to silence. As the years have gone by I have learned to draw away and be quiet within myself even with the noise of the world, to just be for a bit with God and let the distractions around me go and rest in his peace."

"Make a plan and do your best to stick to it. When you fall, start again, persevere and never give up. It's worth it!"

Father Scott Traynor

"It was Blaise Pascal who said 'What's wrong with the world is man's inability to sit quietly in a room alone by himself.' That was a very penetrating analysis. And so people have that fear, that apprehension, but when they enter into it with generosity, it becomes much easier. And then they find that they love it. And they're like, when can I do this again?

"And there's actually choices we can make in daily life to embrace more silence. I'm a big news junkie and it's easy for me to turn on a podcast or whatever news program as I'm driving around. But I just have to intentionally take some of that drive time and just to be quiet and see what's going on in my heart and then turn to God with that. And it's a great blessing."

"That would be my invitation for our readers. Treat yourself. I'm just going to take some alone time and turn my heart to God, talk to him about whatever comes up in my heart. You'll be surprised what comes up. If you choose a little silence and share that with God and ask God to speak to your heart, you'll experience him speaking of his love for you, because this is what he does at every moment."

Do I have to go to confession during Lent?

Q

Why does the Church require going to confession during Lent?

A

Actually, the requirement for Catholics is to receive the sacrament of reconciliation or confession at least once per year, but it does not specify when that should be. Many Catholics, however, do receive this sacrament during the Lenten season, and for good reason: Lent is an especially penitential season, meaning that during Lent we are called to make an extra effort to examine our lives and to strive to live in greater conformity with our faith, to imitate Jesus in a greater way.

During Lent we also take on some extra penitential practices in order to grow in holiness and be free from the bondage of sin. Because of this, it is fitting that many Catholics choose to receive the sacrament of reconciliation during this holy season.

At the same time, the Church's requirement to go to confession once a year is only the bare minimum; we are highly encouraged to receive this sacrament regularly and often.

The essential purpose of confession is to free us from sin, mortal sin in particular. Jesus gave us this sacrament so we might have some means by which our serious sins can be forgiven and by which we can have certainty the sins we confess are indeed forgiven.

While we can sometimes ask, "Do I have to confess my sins to a priest?" in truth our response might be that "we get to confess our sins to a priest." Remember, Jesus explicitly gave His authority to forgive sins to His Apostles: after He rose from the dead, He appeared before them, breathed on them, and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." (John 20:22-23)

It's certainly true that those who have not received the sacrament of reconciliation for a long period of time often find it difficult to receive the sacrament, and in many ways this is understandable: it is

humbling to tell your sins to another person. But we can and must take solace in the fact that this sacrament is in fact a gift from God to us.

Just a brief moment of self-reflection

is often sufficient to show us we do not live as we ought to, and in many cases, we cannot change ourselves... becoming the men and women we ought to be is impossible without the grace of God. And this sacrament in particular is given to us as the means by which we might be freed from the sins that weigh us down, that prevent us from being what we can be.

It's for this reason it has been the practice of Catholics for many, many centuries to receive this sacrament in order to have each and every sin wiped away. Many saints and spiritual writers encourage all Catholics to receive this sacrament on a monthly basis, and in fact many people receive it on a weekly basis.

It's worth noting that the form for the sacrament as we've been practicing it since around the 11th century is far easier than it was in the early centuries of the Church. Back then, in many places the norm was you confessed your serious sins in public, before the entire congregation, and the penances given often were not complete for weeks or months.

So instead of seeing the practice of going to confession as a burden, ask God for the gift of seeing it as it really is: a great gift from Him. This sacrament is the means He has given to us, his beloved daughters and sons, as the normative means by which we might restore our relationship with Him when we've done it harm, and as the means by which we can in fact deepen that relationship.



By way of conclusion, consider the words of the great saint and spiritual writer St. Francis de Sales in his classic work, *Introduction to the Devout Life*, regarding the gift of this sacrament.

"In confession you do not only receive absolution for your venial sins, but you also receive great strength to help you in avoiding them henceforth, clearer light to discover your failings, and abundant grace to make up whatever loss you have incurred through those faults. You exercise the graces of humility, obedience, simplicity and love, and by this one act of confession you practice more virtue than in any other."

Be sure to check out the additional resources at sfcatholic.org/answer. If you have a question you need an answer to, email rkranz@sfcatholic.org.

Chris Burgwald holds a doctorate in theology and is the director of Adult Discipleship and Evangelization for the Diocese of Sioux Falls.



The Church has a critical role in protecting children

By Renae Kranz

In April each year, we observe Child Abuse Prevention Month nationally. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops encourages every diocese to use this month to bring greater awareness and focus to the protection of children. In our own diocese, the Office of Safe Environment takes this month to collaborate with mental health practices and school systems to promote child abuse awareness and to highlight ways they currently provide safer environments for children throughout the diocese.

Alison Conemac, safe environment coordinator for the Diocese of Sioux Falls, oversees the training implemented by the diocese within all programs related to children, minors and the vulnerable. The training highlights signs and symptoms of abuse, predator behavior and ways to respond to disclosures of abuse. The training equips people with the tools they need to recognize and support victims/survivors and to report abuse.

“We’re desiring to protect children from all forms of abuse,” Alison says. “The training includes awareness about sexual abuse, but extends to all forms of abuse. Its aim is to promote a culture in our Catholic environments where people can disclose abuse, whether minors or adults. We all want our parishes, schools and ministries to be places where abuse can be talked about so that harm can stop and healing can begin.”

Former diocesan safe environment coordinator Renee Leach explains that abuse happens because we live in a broken world. Research shows the majority of abuse is perpetrated by someone known to the child and trusted by their families. She says the Church has a special role to play in identifying abuse and equipping children and adults with a language to disclose it.

“Because we’re the Church, we have a tendency to deal with kids and adults when they’re more vulnerable or when they’re wanting to grow in their faith,” Renee says. “And so a lot of times a disclosure may come about while an individual is on a journey of faith. By training our staff and volunteers to recognize those signs of abuse, we can get help for victims/survivors so they can continue their healing and continue their faith journey.”

Background checks and safe environment training have been required in our diocese since the early 90s. Besides the length of our history of this requirement, our diocese is also unique among dioceses in the U.S. in that we go through safe environment training every year instead of just doing it once or periodically. Because we do this training every year, we must be careful it doesn’t just become a box to check.

“When you have to do something every year, there’s a danger of it becoming an item to check off the list,” Renee says.

“The importance of having this kind of conversation is that it refocuses back into the employees why we do this. Child abuse, and especially child sexual abuse, is a staggering statistic. To think of it another way, if there was a cancer that was affecting children to the extent that child abuse is affecting children, there would be all sorts of efforts made by everyone in society. I think having these conversations is more than a box to check off, it’s a ministry. It’s the future of our Church because it’s about healing our kids and ensuring our Church is a place of safety and healing.”

The statistics of child abuse are staggering in our country. Research estimates that one in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they turn

18. In South Dakota alone, the Center for Prevention of Child Maltreatment estimates 4,000 children in our state from all socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds experience sexual abuse each year. Alison is always aware that when she’s helping train adults who will be working with children, some of those adults themselves were likely victims.

“As adults, we love to think ‘I’m becoming equipped to help a child.’ Often this ministry can also be a place where we invite people to see where their own hearts desire healing and health. Teaching our children about abuse can trigger hard memories for us or memories of the hurts of our loved one. It’s an invitation to heal or to walk with those we love and to whom we minister. This ministry is for all of us. Deeper personal healing frees us to grow in happiness and holiness, to move more deeply into our faith because often human wounds keep us back from living fully as we deserve, as Christ desires for us,” Alison says.

Please visit sfatholic.org/safe-environment for more information on reporting abuse, resources to provide a safe environment, and for materials that invite you to pray for all affected by abuse. You’ll find more information in the April issue of the Bishop’s Bulletin about events scheduled in the diocese.



Stations of the Cross immerses us in Jesus' sacrifice

By Deacon Joseph Graves

A number of years ago, while hunting for something to read in a second-hand book shop, I came upon a title I couldn't resist, "I Like Being Catholic." The tome served up a smattering of reasons, big and small, consistent with the book's title, as well as scads of essays by American Catholics on their reasons for liking Catholicism.

Parts of the book were enjoyable, other parts disappointing. Completing it left me in the mood to make a list of my own. It is a monumental task; the list goes on and on. I like being Catholic because it is a vehicle for salvation. Hard to beat that one. But there are so many other facets to what it is about being Catholic I find compelling.

Here's one we don't always think about or, if we do, sufficiently appreciate: The Catholic Church understands me as a human being. This should come as no surprise since its founder not only created human beings but literally became a human being Himself. It's enough to make the biologist studying the dolphin, kangaroo or iguana green with envy. They can study their animal from every imaginable angle but one—from the inside.

But Jesus Christ can and does. Because of that, the Church He established demonstrates an innate and often times rather amazing understanding of the human being.



Deacon Joseph Graves

As evidence of this, I would offer the Stations of the Cross. Like Lent, the most popular time for the Stations, and the liturgical calendar in general, the Stations of the Cross provide us with recurring reminders of our faith. This is important because we have notoriously short attention spans. (And there is some evidence today they are growing ever shorter.) If the Church did not regularly remind us of aspects of our faith, that faith would grow cold. When we participate in the Stations, we are reminded of the reality of the Via Dolorosa, the cost that was paid by one who was responsible for none of it, to redeem us.

In addition to a short attention span, the Church demonstrates its understanding of us as both rational and nonrational beings. Rationally, we can understand we have a fallen nature and Christ redeemed us through his suffering, death and resurrection, but it is not enough to just recite that reality, to make that logical argument. We must also feel it. We must immerse ourselves in it if it is to dwell in our hearts and remain there.

As the presider intones those familiar words and we respond with our communal offering, "Because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world," rising from our knees in recognition of our emancipation from the chains of death, we are infused with, drawn into, drenched with the reality of our release.

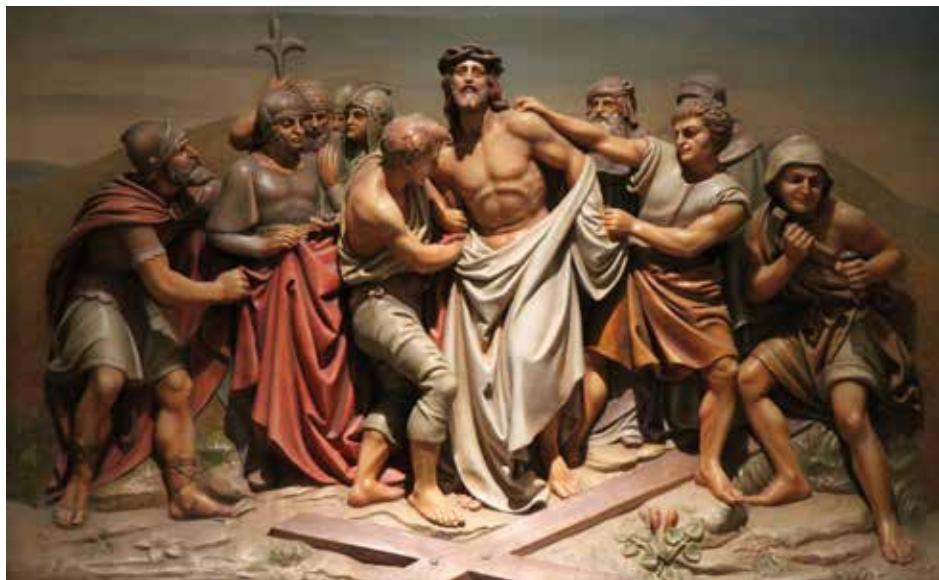
This feeling is not irrational. It is not some surrender to theatrics or mawkish displays but rather a basking in the edifying. Just as the Church calls us to ensure our places of worship are truly beautiful in their architecture and adornment, so are the Stations, when done well, uplifting and illuminating.

In Mitchell, the high school students annually present the Living Stations. The silence of the portayers, the beauty of the musical accompaniment, the simplicity of the costumes, and the startling crash of the hammers all combine into an experience both reflective and appalling.

I took my mother to one of these Living Stations near the end of her life when her grandson was portraying the sacrificial victim, and she wept openly as the now inhabited cross rose above the heads of the soldiers and the women who stayed faithfully at his feet.

If we are to hold fast to our faith, to never allow what we know in our heads to grow cold in our hearts, to be reminded in a too-busy world of a greater, an ultimate, reality, to overcome our human frailties and failures which our Savior and our Church understand too well, we must experience a recurring, uplifting and even visceral reminder of the reality of salvation and how it was given, freely, to us.

Thus, the Church gives us the Stations. One of so many reasons I so very much like being Catholic.



Vocations Q&A

with Deacon Scott Miller

Deacon Scott Miller is a transitional deacon in the Diocese of Sioux Falls. He will be ordained to the priesthood May 28, 2021. This month we get a peek at one of our soon-to-be new priests.

Q. Tell us a bit about your family and where you grew up.

A. I grew up in Sioux Falls. My parents are Todd and Linda Miller, and I am the youngest of three boys. Ryan and Chad are the oldest and middle, respectively.

Q. How did you get your call to the priesthood?

A. The thought of the priesthood came to me at age eight, when I distinctly remember at every family gathering my grandparents would ask me, “Scott, what do you want to do when you grow up?” They asked almost jokingly, thinking that a child’s dreams are often not realized. But every time they asked, I responded, “Either an NBA player or a priest.”

I was convinced of becoming an NBA player; I had no idea why the word “priest” even came out of my mouth. Little did I know, the Spirit was already at work in me planting those initial seeds of desire.

As the years went on, the thought of the priesthood remained, though I tried harder to push it away. I wanted to be married and even the thought of public speaking almost gave me a heart attack. But I had not yet learned that nothing was impossible for God if it’s His will.

I remember telling God before my first year of college, “I don’t want to be a priest, but if you want me to be a priest, you gotta help me say ‘yes’ because I won’t.” That first year of college at USD was a great gift. I loved my classes, my friends, and I even began to attend daily Mass. But I felt unsettled about my path at the time; I was planning to become a physical therapist. Something deep down knew that this was not God’s path for me.

At the beginning of the second semester, three priests within two weeks

approached me in seemingly random encounters asking me more or less the same question: “Have you ever considered becoming a priest?” Little by little, my heart opened up to the possibility in those weeks.

The third priest encounter was at my grandfather’s wake after he died of a heart attack. I felt convicted to speak about my sense of grandpa and his great faith, yet I was terrified of doing it. I was shaking as if the earth were imploding beneath me. Yet in addition to the aunts and uncles’ affirmations of my “beautiful words,” the pastor approached me and said, “If you want to become a priest, I’m the vocations director for the diocese.”

It was clear to me then God was saying to me, “Scott, I can use even what you think is your greatest weakness for my glory.” I was sold. The miracle was the interior change of my heart. It was not only God who wanted me to be a priest, I wanted it, too. And I still do.

Q. Who has been most influential in your life?

A. My parents (Todd and Linda Miller) have played the most foundational role in instilling the faith and sustaining me. I remember how obvious the fruitfulness of my upbringing was to me the moment I left home for college. The thought to missing Mass on the first Sunday away from home didn’t even become the slightest temptation. I knew that the faith was what my parents valued most, and it became my own in the years following confirmation and leading up to the first year of college. But without their upbringing, the yes’s I’ve made in following the Lord’s plan for my life would not have been possible.

Q. Who is your go-to saint? Why?

A. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the saint I make the most recourse to. She has very concretely manifested answers to a number of my prayers, and her tender heart always desires to bring her children closer to her Son. I also regularly pray to Saint Catherine Laboure and Saint Thomas Aquinas.



Deacon Scott Miller

Q. What do you do in your spare time?

A. I love to invite myself over to peoples’ homes for dinner and share life with them. Having lived in Italy for two years, I grew to love Italian people (many of whom are my personal friends), Italian espresso, and the Italian language. I’ll share a good espresso with anyone willing to try, and I keep up my study of the language by listening to native speakers on podcasts. I also love sports. Basketball and tennis are my favorites, but I also love cross-country skiing (skate style) as my brother has gotten me into it.

Q. What is something most people don’t know about you?

A. I jumped off of a 70-foot cliff called Jenny’s Gulch into Pactola Lake in August of 2020, and I made it!

Q. If you could have supper with anyone from history (besides Jesus), who would it be and why?

A. I would have supper with Roger Federer. He is certainly one of the best (if not the best) tennis players of all time. Hearing some of his interviews, I am fascinated by his approach to the sport and would be interested to hear more from him about his life story and outlook.

Q. How can people in the diocese best help you on your journey?

A. In all sincerity, pray that I would continually consent to God conforming my heart and mind according to His will and to follow His promptings with boldness.



Better entertainment choices bring lasting benefits

By Laura Melius

From the moment we open our eyes each morning, countless sources of entertainment vie for our attention. We may awake to a favorite song. Our cell phones report how many social media notifications have appeared overnight. News, music or talk fills the background of our morning routines and as we drive to school or work.

A wait at the doctor's office is an opportunity to catch up on texts or news feeds. A free Saturday afternoon provides uninterrupted hours to conquer a new video game or binge-watch a new TV series. We no longer need to leave our homes to seek out entertainment—it constantly surrounds us.

This is not all bad. When healthy entertainment options are consumed in moderation, the benefits can bring us closer to friends and even improve our mental health. However, if unhealthy entertainment choices are allowed into our lives, or if these distractions take up too much of our time, the opposite can be true.

While so much of this entertainment may seem harmless, passive or mindless, it is crucial that we recognize this truth—all our entertainment choices affect both our

bodies and souls in our daily walk with Christ.

Affecting body and soul

Our physical bodies and souls cannot be separated from one another as we engage in this world. FOCUS missionary Chris Tibbetts, parishioner at St. Lambert Parish, explains that the Church's Catholic anthropology looks at each human person as both body and soul. We are not one or the other; we are a composite of both.

"When it comes to entertainment, the fact that we have a body and soul and that they interact with each other all of the time is a hugely significant factor," Chris says. "This means that what we do with our bodies, what we consume, has a direct, though not always recognizable, impact on our soul as well."

Our brains are actually changed by the entertainment we consume, even though we may not realize it at the time. Clinical mental health counselor Katelynn Beldin explains that use of technology creates new neural pathways within the brain that send and receive signals with the brain's pleasure centers. The sending and receiv-

ing of these signals releases serotonin and dopamine, often recognized as "happy hormones." When these pathways are used regularly, new experiences have to be increasingly stimulating to feel this same release of hormones.

"Thus, we need to continuously be stimulated to feel pleasure, making it difficult to find joy outside of entertainment via technology. This change does not have to be permanent, but it does require action on behalf of each individual to change their behavior. A behavior change results in a pathway change," she says.

Just as our brain needs to be protected from unhealthy influences, so do our souls. No matter what the entertainment option, we must always guard our souls from sin or the near occasion of sin. Katelynn sites pornography as one source that always results in sin. She notes others, such as social media, can cause sin when we post negative comments or passively allow behaviors to happen without addressing them as sinful.

Sometimes sinful situations may catch us off guard. This is different from actively seeking out inappropriate entertainment.

"All of us have probably been exposed to a movie containing explicit and vulgar content. However, that is radically different than a situation where you and a couple of friends are browsing Netflix and end up choosing to re-watch 'Fifty Shades of Grey,' knowing full well the graphic content of the sin of pornography consumption," Chris explains.

The power to change

If we realize we have not been consuming the appropriate entertainment, we have the power to change our behavior to make more positive choices in the future.

"Choosing to do better means we make a conscious decision each day, each hour, to do it differently," Katelynn says. "One way we can do this is by asking, 'How does this align with my values? Will this bring me closer to Christ? How will I feel after I have completed this activity?'"

Chris adds that it can be helpful to examine how we feel after watching, reading or listening to something. "What is your perception of yourself after having just done so? How did it affect your view of God, the world, or others? What about your thoughts? Are they thoughts you would consider good, true, optimistic or even holy? Did it help you grow more into the person you truly want to become?"

He also suggests asking yourself a simple question, "Would I suggest this content for entertainment if it was just me and Jesus hanging out?"



Katelynn Beldin

"The catch, of course, is that He is always with you anyway," Chris says. "Or, if that is a little too abstract, replace Jesus with your mom or your future child."

It's worth paying attention to what en-



Chris Tibbetts

tertainment friends are consuming, too, as friends' actions can affect our opinion of ourselves and alter our own behaviors. If a friend spends too much time on electronics, we might begin to think we should as well. If another is continually scrolling Instagram and is preoccupied with their appearance, we may begin to think we should be more concerned about our appearance, too, Katelynn explained.

If friends invite you to watch or see something you have chosen to avoid, Katelynn suggests being honest with them.

"If a friend engages in an activity or is partaking in entertainment you disagree with, it is crucial to acknowledge this," Katelynn says. "We can tell our friends that we would like to change the channel, pick a different song, or suggest different activities that entertain something wholesome or healthy."

Chris admits this honesty may not be easy, but it is necessary in a healthy relationship. The truth often hurts when doing the right thing or when helping another to do so.

"But, if you are actually sharing the truth with someone and doing it in love, and they do indeed feel hurt by it, you can rest assured that it was never you that intended to actually hurt them in the first place—the truth did. Often all that is needed is more time for that truth to set

in, and the reconciliation follows. After all, as harsh as it sounds, true friendship cannot actually be formed on the foundation of anything but truth," Chris says.

Choosing well

Does this mean all entertainment needs to come from Christian sources such as Christian radio stations, apps, movies or only spiritual books? Not at all.

"I think it is about knowing yourself, your relationship with Christ and having the ability to evaluate if this decision will draw you closer to or further away from Christ," Katelynn believes.

Chris agrees. "There is something to be said about the fact that those who have done significant work in forming their consciences in accordance with the good, the true and beautiful often find themselves gravitating more naturally to these types of outlets than others. At the same time, we don't need to be perpetually scrupulous about entertainment. Entertainment is still a gift from God and can be used for such great good!"

Would I suggest this content for entertainment if it was just me and Jesus hanging out?

- Chris Tibbetts

Entertainment options may be a constant in our lives, but it is our responsibility to make sure what we choose to engage in is healthy for us in both body and soul and is in line with our Catholic values. To fail to take on this responsibility is a sure step away from our walk with Christ.

"As we partake in entertainment or media that does not align with our faith but does result in positive chemical reactions within our brains, we believe that in order to feel that amount of joy, peace or comfort again, we must continue to partake in that form of media," Katelynn says. "In this cycle, we leave out the Lord and fail to find joy, peace, grace and comfort from having a relationship with Him."

House bill would help secure conscience rights

By Chris Motz, executive director of the South Dakota Catholic Conference

“To refuse to take part in committing an injustice is not only a moral duty; it is also a basic human right.” Pope St. John Paul II wrote these words 26 years ago this month in his great pro-life encyclical, “*Evangelium Vitae*” (The Gospel of Life). He’s referring to what is called conscientious objection.

John Paul specifically explains this basic human right as being of fundamental importance for those working in health care when he goes on to teach,

“What is at stake therefore is an essential right which, precisely as such, should be acknowledged and protected by civil law. In this sense, the opportunity to refuse to take part in the phases of consultation, preparation and execution of these acts against life should be guaranteed to physicians, health-care personnel, and directors of hospitals, clinics and convalescent facilities. Those who have recourse to conscientious objection must be protected not only from legal penalties but also from any negative effects on the legal, disciplinary, financial and professional plane.” (No. 74)

It is in our consciences that we hear God’s voice as we reflect on moral truth. It is in our consciences that we come to acknowledge right and wrong, and it is there that we first exercise a choice for one or the other. The Church teaches we are bound to obey our consciences; this is one reason the Church teaches that we have a duty to form our consciences in accord with truth. What we come to know in our conscience, as either right or wrong, plays out in how we act.

Even so, why, in 1995, did St. John Paul the Great insist health care providers must be protected in rights of consciences, to refrain from participating in what they understand to be morally wrong?

He did so because he saw the great harms of a culture of death, and he was wise enough to foresee where such harms might lead in the medical profession. John Paul’s insights were prophetic. Consider this excerpt from a reading assigned to many medical students in our country: “[H]ealth care providers—and all those whose jobs affect patient care—should cast off the cloak of conscience when



patients’ needs demand it.” The author tells us what is meant by patients’ needs. “Qualms about abortion, sterilization and birth control? Do not practice women’s health,” appears in the same essay. In contradiction to John Paul’s defense of rights of conscience and call to protect them robustly in civil law, this influential writer urges that conscience be “cast off”—in other words, to ignore morality. By this reckoning, faithful Catholics should not be working in medicine.

Which brings me to a bill currently (at the time of writing) under consideration by the South Dakota legislature, House Bill 1247. In addition to the SD Catholic Conference, the bill enjoys support from the Catholic Medical Association, Americans United for Life, the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, South Dakota Right to Life, and others. The bill aims to provide ironclad conscience protections for medical professionals, institutions and insurance payors. HB 1247 ensures Catholics and others of goodwill are free to live their faith in this noble and important profession.

Some have suggested HB 1247 is redundant with federal law. While federal law provides some protection in theory, reality is quite different. In practice, this relief is very difficult to pursue, much of it relies on politically appointed staff in federal agencies, and its future is tenuous.

For example, it took four years for the federal Health and Human Services

Department (HHS) to resolve the complaint of one nurse who was forced to participate in a gruesome dismemberment abortion of an unborn child at 22 weeks’ gestation. In another case dating to 2016, HHS permitted a state to force all health insurance plans—no exceptions—to cover abortions, in plain violation of several federal legal provisions. And in comments collected during an HHS public input process in 2018, tens of thousands of health care workers reported facing an environment of discrimination and attempted coercion due to their moral or religious convictions.

Notably, existing statutory provisions have no “right of action” (a right to sue) for a person who has been wronged. With promises recently echoing from Washington to codify *Roe v. Wade* and strip current religious freedom protections, the need for state-based action is timely.

Medical providers must be free to decline involvement in procedures they believe are morally wrong. As St. John Paul II emphasized, what is at stake is a basic human right. Federal protections have shown themselves inadequate and recent executive actions portend rollbacks of even those. Safeguards are therefore needed in state law, where recourse for medical practitioners can be both timely and effective. For more information on how you can support HB 1247, visit www.sdcatholicconference.org/category/2021-session.

Catholic Schools Week



Photos 1-3: (1) Kids at Holy Spirit School, Sioux Falls, dressed as their favorite book character. (2) Students at Aberdeen Roncalli played virtual Bingo with religious themes. (3) Father Shaun Haggerty visited a classroom at St. Lambert School, Sioux Falls.



Photos 7-9: (7) Students from St. Joseph's Indian School, Chamberlain, display their artistic skill to create a poster for Catholic Schools Week. (8) Bishop DeGrood visits with students during a break at St. Lawrence School in Milbank. (9) Students at John Paul II School, Mitchell, show their appreciation for the opportunity to attend a Catholic school.

Photos 4-6: (4) Kids at Christ the King School, Sioux Falls, dressed up for Future Day. (5) Students at St. Mary School, Dell Rapids, celebrated Mass with Bishop DeGrood. (6) Students pray a blessing over Bishop DeGrood in the hall of St. Mary School, Salem.





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CLEAR LAKE – Dennis and Mavis Stoltenburg celebrated their 65th anniversary on February 11. They have 5 children (2 deceased), 17 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Mary Parish.



MICHELL – Joe and Aggie Shields celebrated their 60th anniversary on February 4. They have 5 children (1 deceased), 7 grandchildren and are members of Holy Family Parish.



MICHELL – Dale and Marlene Grunewaldt will celebrate their 50th anniversary on March 20. They have 4 children, 9 grandchildren and are members of Holy Family Parish.



SIOUX FALLS – Dean and Kathy Roper will celebrate their 50th anniversary on March 6. They have 3 children, 4 grandchildren and Kathy is a member of St. Mary Parish.



WOONSOCKET – Jack and Bernie Davis celebrated their 40th anniversary on February 28. They have 3 children, 1 grandchild and are members of St. Wilfrid Parish.

Prayer for Married Couples

Almighty and eternal God,

**You blessed the union of married couples
so that they might reflect the union of Christ
with his Church:**

look with kindness on them.

**Renew their marriage covenant,
increase your love in them,
and strengthen their bond of peace
so that, with their children,
they may always rejoice in the gift of
your blessing.**

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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ANNIVERSARY SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We accept anniversary submissions for the following anniversary years: 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60, 65, and 70. We include them in the issue of the month of the anniversary, and late submissions will only be accepted from the prior month.

Send a color photo, your anniversary information and a self-addressed, stamped envelope by **March 16** for inclusion in the April 2021 edition to:

The Bishop's Bulletin
523 North Duluth Avenue
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rkranz@sfcatholic.org.

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Father Charles Duman passes at 97

Father Charles Duman, 97, a retired priest of the Diocese of Sioux Falls, died January 25, 2021, at Avera Brady Nursing Home in Mitchell.

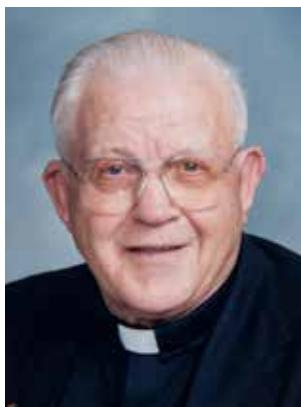
Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated February 1 at St. Mary Parish in Salem. The Most Reverend Donald E. DeGrood, bishop of Sioux Falls, was the main celebrant. Burial was at Sacred Heart Cemetery in Yankton.

Charles J. Duman was born May 5, 1923, in Hartington, Nebraska, to Ben and Leone (Wiebelhaus) Duman. One of six children, he was baptized May 6, 1923, at Holy Trinity Church in Hartington. The Dumans later moved to Wynot, Nebraska, where Charles attended elementary school at St. James and then to Vermillion where he attended high school.

In 1942, Charles enrolled at St. Bernard Seminary in Sioux Falls, a work of the Mariannhill Fathers. When the seminary was closed in 1943, Charles transferred to the seminary's Brighton, Michigan, location where he completed his minor

seminary formation. He attended major seminary at St. Meinrad Seminary in Indiana. On May 3, 1952, Charles was ordained to the priesthood by the Most Reverend William O. Brady at Saint Agnes Church in Vermillion.

Upon his ordination until 1963, Father Duman served as an associate or temporary administrator at Christ the King and Cathedral of Saint Joseph parishes in Sioux Falls and also at the Yankton, Aurora, White, Hartford and Huntimer parishes. In 1963, he was assigned pastor for the first time in Marion. He would go on to serve in pastorates at Scotland,



Father Charles Duman

Vodňany, Estelline, Garretson and Castlewood. Beginning in 1981, Father Duman would serve at chaplaincies to the Sacred Heart Monastery, the SD Human Services Center, and the Federal Prison Camp in Yankton. From 1992 until 1996, he served in his final assignment as pastor at St. Patrick Parish in Wakonda.

Father Duman retired from his last assignment in 1996. After retirement, he ministered many times to the REC (Residents Encounter Christ) program offered to inmates within the South Dakota Penitentiary. In addition to providing substitute ministry for pastors at many locations, Father Duman offered priestly ministry at Hartington, Nebraska, Salem, Marion and Mitchell. While residing in these communities, he provided regular liturgies and other sacramental ministry to parishioners and to members of senior living facilities.

Father Duman was preceded in death by his parents and siblings. He is survived by most of his 41 nieces and nephews.

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UNDONE:
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March 12-14
Broomtree Retreat Center

Directed by Father Scott Traynor
with speakers Mary Weber & Emily Leedom

Find out more and register at broom-tree.org

Hosted by the Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls and Catholic Family Services

SEEK21 Conference plants seeds for future fruit

The Diocese of Sioux Falls teamed up with FOCUS for the SEEK21 Conference in February which brought together college students and adults from across the diocese for a weekend of faith-filled talks, worship, confession and adoration. Bishop DeGrood stopped by to talk about his vision for the diocese; John Zimmer, vice president of Apostolic Development for FOCUS, made a surprise in-person appearance; and many other nationally known speakers joined by livestream.

FOCUS Team Director for SDSU, Dylan Reinhardt, said those who attended loved having the conference in our home diocese. Attendees came away with an understanding of how the bishop's vision of *Lifelong Catholic Missionary Discipleship Through God's Love* can plant seeds to produce much fruit on campuses and beyond.

"We spent a good amount of time learning about God's love for us, how we are called to receive it, and how to invite others to do the same," Reinhardt said.

Reinhardt and others are excited to see the seeds planted at the conference take root and spread God's love on a wave of grace.



Above: Members of the diocesan staff joined members of the FOCUS national and regional staff along with FOCUS missionaries from USD and SDSU for a quick pic. Left: Bishop DeGrood invited students from each school on stage for a tongue twister competition to kick off his keynote. (Photos by Madisen Martinez)

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UPCOMING RETREATS

SILENT RETREATS

Men's Silent Retreats

April 15-18
August 19-22
September 23-26
October 21-24
November 18-21

Women's Silent Retreats

March 4-7
May 13-16
June 17-20
August 12-15
September 16-19
October 7-10
November 4-7

DAY OF RECOLLECTION

Broom Tree Days of Recollection begin at 10 a.m. and consist of conferences, time for Adoration, Mass, and an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The day ends in mid-afternoon. Because lunch is also served, we ask that you please register. A prayerful donation is requested.

March 9, 2021

"Holy Week in Art"
- directed by Fr. Paul King

April 13, 2021

"The Reality of the Resurrection"
- directed by Dr. Chris Burgwald

May 11, 2021

"Letting God Love You"
- directed by Fr. Shaun Haggerty

SPECIAL RETREATS

March 12-14, 2021 & October 15-17, 2021
UNDONE: A Healing Retreat
- directed Fr. Scott Traynor

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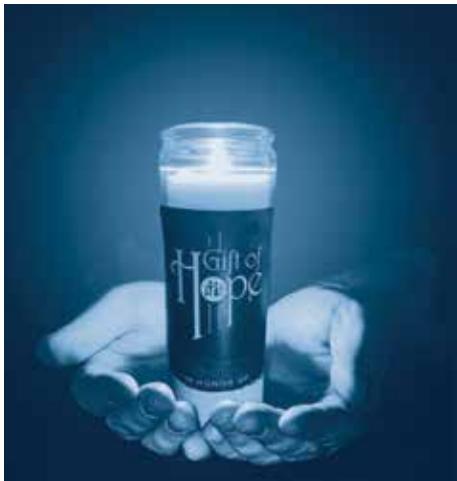
Gift of Hope takes on new format for 2021

The 21st Annual Gift of Hope Event will have a different look this year due to the realities of COVID-19. But the new format won't be short on helping its beneficiary, Catholic Family Services (CFS), in a big way.

Set to begin 8 p.m. Saturday, April 10, "Lighting a Path to Hope and Healing" will focus around a candlelight celebration in front of the Cathedral of Saint Joseph on Duluth Avenue. This celebration will bring people together to hear inspirational messages from Bishop DeGrood and CFS Executive Director Emily Leedom, praise and worship music from Jon Konz, and a moment of remembrance for long-time CFS director, Dr. Marcie Moran, who passed away January 21.

Jan Feterl, director of marketing and special events for the Catholic Community Foundation of Eastern South Dakota who sponsors the event, said much work went into creating this year's Gift of Hope.

"It was through a lot of prayer and conversation that we landed on the concept of



a candlelight celebration in front of the Cathedral of Saint Joseph," she said. "We feel this new event format speaks directly to where our world is today—searching for hope and healing. We are placing the success of this event in God's hands, as we truly believe and trust that He's got this!"

Gift of Hope candles and luminaries will

be pre-sold and ceremonially lit during this event. Proceeds from these sales benefit the Gift of Hope Endowment Fund which enables CFS to offer programs that support human flourishing in times of grief, uncertainty or transition. Your participation supports: Camp Sydney (a youth grief camp), support groups for separated and divorced, grief support groups, counseling for high school students and teachers, pornography education and prevention, healing retreats, natural family planning and much more.

We will be pre-selling the candles and luminaries, which can be personalized to remember a loved one. If you are unable to attend the event in person, we will light and display them on your behalf. For more information and to order, visit ccfesd.org, email us at events@ccfesd.org or call our office at 605-988-3765.

This event can be a light to many in our community. The light of a candle signifies God's presence and beckons us to remain present with Him. Let us be present to each other through the light of Christ.

STM NOW HIRING

St. Thomas More in Brookings seeks applicants for three positions available for the 2021-2022 fiscal year:

Director of Evangelization & Discipleship
Coordinator of Evangelization & Discipleship
Administrative Assistant

If you are interested, you may find more information on our website:
stmbrookings.org

or you may contact Fr. Terry Anderson, pastor
 St. Thomas More Parish

1700 8th Street South, Brookings, SD 57006,
 605-692-4361, frterenceanderson@sfcatholic.org



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Recitation of the rosary planned

Friday, March 5 - The rosary is recited for the faithful departed on the first Friday of the month at 10 a.m. in St. Michael Cemetery in Sioux Falls.

Pray at Planned Parenthood with Jericho's Wall group

Tuesday's - In Joshua 1:14 fighting-age men are called to go to Jericho's wall to fight for the women and children. Today we are called to step out for our faith. Men are meeting on Tuesday nights at 7 p.m. at our wall of Planned Parenthood to pray the rosary for our women and children. We are asking for men to join us. If you have questions, call Paul at 605-201-5428. Women are welcome.

Mission S.O.S. open for prayers for life

Tuesday's/Thursday's - Mission S.O.S. (Saving Others Spiritually) is for anyone interested in praying for the life of the unborn child and their mother. We are open for prayer on Tuesday's and Thursday's from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. at an apartment/chapel with a balcony overlooking Planned Parenthood. To set up a time to come and pray, or for more information, contact Sara at 605-421-8378 or Darlene at 605-254-0951.

Search for Christian Maturity retreat

March 5-7 - Located at Holy Spirit Church, Sioux Falls. Registration is open. This retreat is a student led, Roman Catholic retreat program featuring talks, skits, music, opportunities for confession, and celebration of Mass. All high school and college-age students and adults are welcome and encouraged to participate. Contact: (605) 371-1478, SiouxFallsSearch@gmail.com, www.siouxfallssearch.org.

Help for parents who have lost a newborn or pre-born child

If you've lost a child due to miscarriage, still birth or shortly after birth, The Angel Lee Cronen Memorial Fund is available to assist you in dealing with your loss by helping you secure a proper burial for your child. Most parents don't know what to do when faced with this situation and are often unable to pay for the services involved. This fund exists to help during this difficult time. For more information, contact Deacon Bill Radio at 605-336-7390 or dcnwilliamradio@sfcatholic.org.

Traditional Latin Mass available

The Traditional Latin Mass, or the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, is offered every Sunday at 2 p.m. at St. Dominic Parish in Canton. The Latin Mass is also offered on most holy days of obligation and principal feasts of the Church Year at 7:30 p.m. St. Dominic Church is located at 800 E. Walnut Street. For more information, please call 605-764-5640 or email Father Lawrence at ffrmartinlawrence@sfcatholic.org.

Parish Dinners/Socials

March 7: St. Peter Parish, Colman. In memory of Sandy Entringer and Gary Hemmer, a Drive Up and Pick Up Pancake Breakfast will be held Sunday, serving from 9:30-11:00 a.m. Freewill offering with all proceeds going to St. Peter Church Youth Group.

March 28: St. Mary School, Dell Rapids, carnival and auction. Lunch and carnival begin at 11 a.m. Auction begins at noon. Carnival games, food, raffle, prizes, unique auction items, and fun for all ages. St. Mary School, 512 State Ave., Dell Rapids. Follow St. Mary Catholic School Carnival & Auction on Facebook for more information and updates.

Sacred Heart Monastery

March 5/ Online Lectio Divina, Fridays, March 5, 12, 19 and April 2, 10-10:45 a.m. Meet online for Lectio Divina, a time for praying with the Gospel of the following Sunday. To register any time, contact group leader, S. Penny Bingham OSB at pbingham@yanktonbenedictines.org/605-668-6023. Include your email address.

Spiritual Direction/ Due to social distancing restrictions, we are currently offering spiritual direction online. Share your experience of God with an experienced companion-guide and intensify your spiritual journey. Scheduling is flexible, typically meeting once a month. Contact benedictinepeacectr@yanktonbenedictines.org or 605-668-6292 for more information.

Online offerings/ As we pray for the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, we seek to extend our Benedictine hospitality through online programs. Go to www.yanktonbenedictines.org/retreats-online-group for information on future topics and dates.

Catholic Family Services**Catholic Family Services Counseling**

Service/During this pandemic, in addition to our current in-person counseling we are offering a HIPPA compliant tele-health format. It is user friendly and as long as you have internet availability, can be accessed by phone or computer.

GriefShare Program/Catholic Family Services will host and facilitate Saint Joseph Cathedral Parish's GriefShare program. GriefShare is a worldwide Christian grief program for adults. It blends faith, educational videos, a personal workbook, and group discussion. The video series is watched as a large group followed by group discussions. The program will run for 13 weeks, with 13 various topics surrounding grief being covered. **GriefShare will be offered online only.** GriefShare will begin again on March 4-May 27 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Cost of the workbook is \$15 (scholarships available) and there will be an opportunity for a free will offering to help cover the additional costs. For more information about GriefShare or to register, please contact Catholic Family Services at 605-988-3775 or email cfs@sfcatholic.org. Space is limited and pre-registration is required.

Rachel's Vineyard One Day Retreat/ April 30-May 2. Strictly Confidential. A safe, loving, non-judgmental environment. Open to men, women, mothers, fathers, grandparents who have been affected by abortion. Non-denominational. Sponsored by Catholic Family Services. For more information, call 605-988-3775 or 1-800-700-7867 or email cfs@sfcatholic.org.

Notices

The DISC Mission Grant application forms for 2021 are now available. Any mission or Catholic organization in the national or international community may apply. Past grants have ranged from \$250-\$1,000. The grant application is now an online-only application and is due April 30. Please list Dawn Wolf in the DISC Member Name field and the Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls in the DISC Member (Arch)Diocese field. You can find the application at <http://www.discinfo.org/membership/bishop-richard-pates-mission-grant/>. Grants are typically awarded in mid June to early July.



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8:30AM - 91.3FM KSTJ - HARTFORD
9:00AM - 88.9FM KSJP - ABERDEEN
9:30AM - 930AM KSDN - ABERDEEN

OR ANYTIME ONLINE AT SFCATHOLIC.ORG/CATHOLIC-VIEWS



BTHE BISHOP'S ULLETIN



Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls

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SATURDAY APRIL 10TH

8:00 PM

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