

# LaCrosse Roads

VOLUME XIII No. 4

August/September 2006

## From the Acting Director of Family Life

It was with a great deal of humility and apprehension that I accepted the role of Acting Director of the Office of Family Life. Indeed Alice and I have always been a part of the Office in our work with natural family planning, but our focus was specific and our work with the faithful of the Diocese targeted. But the taking on all of Family Life, well that wears me out just being the father of 3 young adults and a husband. So after prayerful discernment, conversation with some fellow Curia members and my Spiritual Director it seemed the logical thing to do.

So beginning June 5th as has often been the case Alice and I determined priorities of which the most pressing were the facets of marriage including the 50th & 51st wedding anniversaries being celebrated in the Diocese and marriage preparation teams being prepared to begin the Fall programs.

Simultaneously we are asking lots of questions and listening, listening, listening. It would help us greatly to hear from you how the Office could be of best assistance to you in the trenches.

Finally, we are meeting on a periodic basis with Monsignor Gilles, Moderator of the Curia, and Bishop Listecky to provide updates and recommendations on the scope of services that the Office provides or should provide.

### EDITORS NOTE:

I have asked the contributors to provide articles that might be used as Bulletin Inserts. I would encourage you to consider the article by Chris Ruff – “Deacons in the Trenches “. This article could be educational for our Diocesan faithful.

Should you like them in a bulletin ready (cut & paste) format please email my Office and they will be sent to your bulletin editor.

## Marriage – A Vocation of Choice

By: Jeff Heinzen, Acting Director Family Life

We are in interesting times in Wisconsin with the defining of marriage in our State constitution. It is not the intent of my column, however, to do such a review (Check the Catholic Times) but rather to Celebrate with you the Good News about marriage in our Diocese.

I thought it useful to go to the Catechism and select references on marriage and family life.

“The conjugal community is established upon the consent of the spouses. Marriage and the family are ordered to the good of the spouses and to the procreation and education of children. The love of the spouses .... create among members of the same family personal relationships and primordial responsibilities”..... (to which) The Christian family has an evangelizing and missionary task” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2201, 2205).

The Diocese is, as you receive this, celebrating 50th Wedding Anniversaries in Central Wisconsin, the Chippewa Valley and the Coulee Region (La Crosse). We will celebrate over 750 couples who have attained this milestone. Yes, 750 couples (over 37,500 years of marriage).

As I pondered the Catechism references, the ones that struck me were “consent of the spouses”. How many of these couples 50 years ago had a clue what they had consented to. To the good and bad times, to the sickness and health and to now in their senior years the reality that the end of life is nearer rather than so far away.

From the couples who sent replies with there were 1,240 children, 2,437 grand children and 314 great grandchildren.

I pondered again how this Sacrament of Marriage has “ordered to the good of (these) spouses and to the procreation.... of children,” a call to the “evangelizing and missionary task.”

And all I could think was isn't God amazing with all he has done. These families who can evangelize about the joy of 50 years of marriage and as families be the missionaries to share the “Good News”.

May God bless you and your family abundantly.

## DIOCESAN CALENDAR

### AUGUST

- 6.....Vocations in Progress Diocesan Center, La Crosse
- 6.....50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Celebration, St. Bronislava, Plover
- 7.....Adoration at the Diocesan Center. w/Fr. Hirsch
- 13.....50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Celebration, Christ the King, La Crosse
- 15.....Feast of the Assumption, Curia Offices Closed
- 18-19...August Inservice
- 22.....NFP Class Series Starts – Eau Claire
- 27.....RCIA Mass, St. James, Eau Claire, 2:00 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER

- 4..... Labor Day, Curia Office Closed
- 4.....Adoration at the Diocesan Center w/Fr. Hirsch
- 5.....Chippewa Falls Deanery Inservice Notre Dame, 6-9pm
- 8..... Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 6..... Durand Deanery Curriculum Training  
St. Mary's, Big River, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- 13.....Tomah Deanery Inservice, 7:00-9:00 p.m.
- 14.....NFP Class Series Starts - Wausau
- 17.....Catechetical Sunday
- 17..... RCIA Mass, St. Stephens, Stevens Point, 2:00 p.m.
- 20.....Teaching the Way of Love – Parent Presentation  
McDonell Central Auditorium – Chippewa Falls
- 26.....NFP Class Series Starts – Marshfield
- 27.....Rural Life Day-Holy Family Parish, Poniatowski

### OCTOBER

- 1.....RCIA Mass, Blessed Sacrament, LAX, 3:00 p.m.
- 4.....Teaching the Way of Love – Parent Presentation  
Pacelli High School – Stevens Point
- 5.....Teaching the Way of Love – Parent Presentation  
St. Francis Parish – Ellsworth
- 10.....NFP Class Series Starts – Chippewa Falls
- 14.....Men's Ministry Leadership Training  
St. Mary's, Altoona
- 20-Nov 1...Net Retreat – Northeast Region

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS.

- Nov. 2-9.....Net Retreat – Northwest Region
- Nov. 4-5.....Kalahari Retreat in WI Dells
- Nov. 7.....NFP Class – Chippewa Falls
- Nov. 10-16...Net Retreat – South Region

## Quote of the Month:

*“When you get to your wit's end,  
you'll find God lives there.”*

## SPONSORING OFFICES

### CATECHESIS & EVANGELIZATION

Ann Lankford, Director  
*alankford@dioceseoflacrosse.com*  
(608) 791-2658

### CONSECRATED LIFE

Sr. M. Stephania Newell, F.S.G.M.  
*snewell@dioceseoflacrosse.com*  
(608) 791-2690

### FAMILY LIFE

Jeff Heinzen, Acting Director  
*familylife@dioceseoflacrosse.com*  
(608) 791-2665

### JUSTICE & PEACE

Dr. Arthur Hippler, Director  
*justiceandpeace@dioceseoflacrosse.com*  
(608) 791-2675

### MINISTRIES

Christopher Ruff, Director  
*ministries@dioceseoflacrosse.com*  
(608) 791-2667

### SACRED WORSHIP & RCIA

Christopher Carstens, Director  
*worship@dioceseoflacrosse.com*  
(608) 791-2674

### YOUTH MINISTRY

Christopher Rogers, Director  
(608) 791-0161

The Diocese of La Crosse through its policies and procedures seeks to provide a prompt, appropriate and compassionate response to reporters of sexual abuse of a child by a priest or deacon. Anyone wishing to make a report of an allegation of sexual abuse should send that report to the Very Rev. Msgr. Richard W. Gilles at the Diocese of La Crosse, P.O. Box 4004, La Crosse, WI 54602-4004. The report form is available through the Diocese of La Crosse, Office of the Vicar of Priests, or on the diocesan website at [www.dioceseoflacrosse.com](http://www.dioceseoflacrosse.com). Copies of the diocesan policy are available through your local parish. If you have any questions about the Diocese of La Crosse and its implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, please contact Rev. Joseph W. Hirsch, Vicar for Priests, Diocese of La Crosse, at (608) 791-2666 or send an e-mail to: [jhirsch@dioceseoflacrosse.com](mailto:jhirsch@dioceseoflacrosse.com).



## **NFP Fall Class Schedule**

Couples within the Diocese of La Crosse still have several options to learn about Natural Family Planning (NFP) this fall. Several, face-to-face, three class series are being offered at the following locations this Fall.

St. Joseph Hospital in Chippewa Falls – October 10, October 24, November 7

Sacred Heart Hospital in Eau Claire – August 22, September 5, September 19

Franciscan Skemp Hospital in La Crosse – November 5, November 19, December 3

St. Joseph Hospital in Marshfield – September 26, October 10, October 24

St. Clare's Hospital in Wausau – September 14, September 28, October 26

For more information about natural family planning or to register, please call 800-255-6226. Or you can email us at [nfp@dioceseoflacrosse.com](mailto:nfp@dioceseoflacrosse.com)

## **We Want To Learn NFP But---**

We realize that some couples are not able to attend any of the face-to-face class series listed above, yet they want to practice NFP. For these couples we would recommend registering for distance learning instruction. This method of instruction follows the same format as the face-to-face class series, uses the same materials and includes follow-up services with one of the diocesan NFP instructors. The only difference is that the couple must read through the material rather than have an instructor explain the method using a slide presentation.

One advantage to the “home-study” program is that it can begin at anytime of the year. Couples do not have to wait for a scheduled class as they do with the face-to-face option. Many couples find this to be advantageous. To find out more about distance learning, contact the NFP Program office

at 800-255-6226.

## **What Makes NFP Instruction Effective?**

Any successful NFP instruction includes a gradual approach to learning. This means that the basic concepts of the method are presented in a logical, measured fashion. Couples receive the information in “bite-size” portions rather than all at one time.

Secondly, the instruction includes learning activities that test the couple's ability to correctly apply what they are learning. Learning activities identify any misunderstandings that the couple might have and give the couple a chance to correct what may have been learned in error.

Finally, an effective NFP instruction provides follow-up services with a certified instructor who ensures that the couple can apply what they have learned to their own situation. This vital step can be done in a face-to-face, phone or email mode and is the key to couple success in using NFP confidently.

The last building block to effective NFP instruction is its ability to refer you to supplemental readings and resources related to NFP. These resources should help the couple understand the “bigger picture” of NFP use and how it will impact the couple's marriage spiritually, ethically, emotionally and physically.

Couples who receive instruction through the Diocese of La Crosse are assured of receiving all of these basics. Whether a couple takes a face-to-face class or a home study version of NFP, they will go through a gradual instructional approach that included learning activities as well as the support and reference services of a professionally trained instructor.

**For more information about NFP contact the program office at 800-255-6226.**



## August Inservice

### Time Adjustment For Saturday, August 19th

8:00 a.m. – Check In/Continental Breakfast

Textbooks, Youth Ministry Offerings, Resources etc. for viewing.

9:00 a.m. – Welcome, Introduction of Chris Rogers and Opening Prayer.

9:30 a.m. – Mass With Bishop ListECKi

10:405 a.m. – Keynote by Bishop ListECKi

Banquet/Lunch and afternoon as previously scheduled.

### Deanery Networking and Resources for Viewing

Beginning at 12 noon on Friday, August 18<sup>th</sup>, there will be textbook samples from the major companies, as well as new resources for certification and purchase all on display at the Diocesan Center. We invite you to come before and/or to take time after the Required Session on Confirmation Guidelines, which will be from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Furthermore, the Friday evening session will include a session on Prayer and Discernment entitled God labors to love us: “The Gift you have received, give as gift” (1 Peter 4:10) presented by Fr. Randy Timmerman, from the Newman Center, University of Wisconsin at Madison. Strengthening the Spiritual Life is at the heart of this thriving Catholic community.

In early August, you will receive more information on the August Inservice, specifically the list of sessions on various areas of parish life that will be offered at the Knowledge Café. In addition to the Knowledge Café on Saturday afternoon, there will be deanery networking to allow for more Youth Events among parishes.

**Note: Assessments will be Oct. 31<sup>st</sup> – Nov. 17th**

### Mary, the Model Catechist

How is it that Mary is the model catechist? It is appropriate to begin by asking what is a catechist? A catechist is someone who hands on or instructs others in the one true Faith. The purpose of the instruction is to lead others into communion with Jesus Christ (Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, On

Catechesis in Our Time, 5). This instruction includes enlightening the mind with knowledge in order to inspire the will in the one true Faith. There is only one true Faith that contains the fullness of the truth. This is the Faith of the Roman Catholic Church, established by Jesus Christ.

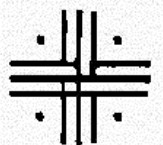
Mary is a catechist in that she instructed the Christ Child, she lived out the Word that she received, she has led those who went before us and she continues to lead us to her Son through communicating the truth. In order to communicate the truth, a person must have strong faith, a daily habit of prayer, and a commitment to living in conformity with God’s will. As described below, Mary perfectly embodies these three qualities and therefore She is the model catechist.

### The Faith of Mary – Clear and Unwavering

In the Catechism, faith is defined as “first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a *free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed*” (CCC n. 150). We see these qualities exemplified in the clear and unwavering faith of the virgin of Nazareth.

In the beginning of Luke’s Gospel (1:26-38), the Angel Gabriel’s announces to Mary that she will be the Mother of the Savior. Tradition tells us that Mary was in prayer, probably pondering the Old Testament Scriptures. Our Lady welcomed the incredible words of the angel as a message from God. She did not have to debate whether this message was true or not because Mary knew God through prayer. She knew that God loved her completely, she believed in His perfect goodness and she trusted in His Plan for her life. Therefore, Mary received and personally adhered with all her heart to this message from God. Further, she gave her free assent, “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word” (Luke 1:38).

In the events of Mary’s life, it is obvious that her faith was real, believing in the authority of God who cannot deceive nor be deceived. “...Until her last ordeal when Jesus her Son died on the cross, Mary’s faith never wavered. She never ceased to believe in the fulfillment of God’s word, and so the Church venerates in Mary the purest realization of faith” (CCC n. 149).



## The Prayer of Mary – From the Heart

From the words of Scripture, we can imagine that Mary prayed with great love for God from the depths of her heart. Mary's prayer to God, in response to the greeting of Elizabeth in addressing her as the Mother of God, expresses her profound humility: "My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:46-47). Furthermore, the Magnificat is a "song of thanksgiving for the fullness of graces poured out in the economy of salvation and the song of the 'poor' whose hope is met by the fulfillment of the promises made to our ancestors, 'to Abraham and to his posterity for ever'" (CCC 2619).

Scripture also implies that Mary prayed always. With the birth of the Savior in Bethlehem, the angel told the shepherds of the good news of great joy. When the shepherds arrived at the stable and worshipped Jesus, they reported what had been told them concerning this Child. The wonderful happenings of God sending His Son led to Mary's response of prayer. She "kept all these things, pondering them in her heart" (Luke 2:19). In the difficult time of losing Jesus in Jerusalem for three days, Mary again responded with prayer: "His mother kept all these things in her heart" (Luke 2:51b).

Mary was always faithful in her prayer relationship with God. Consequently, she is called the perfect *Orans* (pray-er) (CCC 2679). Let us follow her example and ponder the Scriptures in our heart, allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us deeper in our understanding of the truth.

## The Life of Mary – Complete Obedience to God's Will

Mary's entire life was about living in conformity with God's will. One example is her quick response to the angel's revelation about her cousin Elizabeth. Mary, sensitive to Elizabeth's needs in her old age, went in haste to serve her cousin for three months, taking care of Elizabeth and Zechariah, praying with them for greater trust in God's plan, encouraging them, listening to them and serving them in their household needs.

Referring again to the prayer of the Magnificat, Mary helps us to know what it means to do the will of God in our daily life:

We are to praise God and not ourselves

We are to rejoice in God's will no matter how hesitant we may be

We are to be humble no matter what great things God may do through us

We are to have a holy fear of our Heavenly Father, seeking not to offend Him

We are to be poor in spirit, recognizing our total dependence upon God

We are to be thankful for God's gifts, most especially His gift of Divine grace

Mary was completely docile to God's perfect will throughout her life. It is why we need to hold onto her words that she told the waiters at the wedding feast of Cana: "Do whatever [Jesus] tells you" (John 2:5). Even at Calvary as she watched her Son dying the most cruel death upon the Cross, she died to her own will and trusted in God's will.

## Devotion to Mary – Deep esteem and love for the Blessed Virgin

At the foot of the Cross, Jesus gave John to Mary. As John represented each of us, Jesus gave Mary to us to be our Spiritual Mother who desires to help us on our pilgrimage to Heaven. She also helps us in our service to others, guiding us to know how to serve each person with gentleness and prudence. Therefore, catechists need to cultivate a devotion to Mary, because having a devotion to Mary means that we have a deep esteem and love for her. True devotion to Mary is mainly based on an understanding of the faith and is founded on our love of God because this was part of His plan for our salvation. It was God's will that the Savior be born to Mary, the Immaculate Virgin who was conceived without sin.

As Mary is the model catechist, let us ask for her intercession before the throne of God in all of our efforts of catechesis. Mary, Seat of Wisdom, pray for us.



---

## God is enough! The Evangelical Councils

By: Sr. Stephania Newell, F.S.G.M.

Each year, August 15<sup>th</sup> rolls around and I continue to be more and more grateful. This date, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, is our Community's Feast day as well. On this day, our Postulants receive the Holy Habit, are received into a new life with Christ by taking on a name He has chosen, and are received into the community as members of the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George. The second year novices lay down their lives before Christ at the altar and profess the vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience to God, the Community, and the Church. Some years, our Junior Professed Sisters are invited to make Final Vows where "they place themselves at the *disposal* of God and His Church" FOREVER!!! What a beautiful day to have these celebrations as we celebrate a Woman who is both Mother and Model for all religious.

When I travel to various schools and CCD classes throughout the year, in and out of the Diocese of La Crosse, the questions that young people want to know are: How did you know? What did you have to give up? and What can and do you *do*?

My answer to these questions come in a simple phrase: "*God is enough!*" What God does, He does very well and He always has a reason for the journeys He has taken me through.

When we enter the convent, we come because we feel *called by God* to a life *lived for Him*. We *stay* because we find the joy and peace amidst the stress, struggles, sacrifices of daily living. Each vocation has its joy and sacrifices. The consecrated life is no different in that aspect. It is through our profession of the vows and living them out, that we find that God is enough. If we are ever unhappy and unsatisfied in our vocation, we must look to see if we are placing other things or people in the place of Him. If so, then this must be remedied immediately, lest we lose the love we have for our Spouse.

*The Evangelical Councils:* The evangelical councils of [poverty](#), [chastity](#) and [obedience](#) are called evangelical because they were taught and practiced by Christ in the Gospels. Moreover, they are especially proposed by the Church as means for attaining Christian perfection.

*God is enough in Poverty:* He is enough that I do not need unnecessary material things for my own. We *voluntarily* renounce all or part of our right to the ownership of material things. All belongs to the Community. I have no right to anything, as *ALL IS GIFT FROM ABOVE!* (including our vocation). Everyday, I love opening my closet and wondering if I should wear grey or grey? Each morning, when we put on the Holy Habit, we speak

to Our Lord, asking Him to “put on the new man,” which is Christ.

Having nothing as our own, we find freedom in the vows. Some sisters are assigned to teach, take care of the elderly, do the laundry, cook, clean, do the bills, etc. In this way, a sister acts responsibly with the things she has, asks for the things she *needs*, and has the time to give of herself to her students, patients, the priests, or others, in her apostolate (work).

*God is enough in Chastity:* God is enough in Chastity that I love *Him alone*. On the day of our Profession, we become brides of Christ. So we are not single women living together in a community. No, we have been chosen by Him to live, love, and serve our Lord and King, our Redeemer, and Friend. Embracing this vow means that we make the sacrifice of Holy Matrimony and all that that entails as well as not having children of our own. Like a married woman taking on the name of her beloved, we take on *His name He has chosen for us* and embrace a *spiritual motherhood* in the people (young and old) whom Jesus brings into our life. These “spiritual children” are sent to us each day to help them learn about God and grow closer to Him. Sometimes this is simply by telling someone that Jesus loves them or that they are a child of God. Other times, we have the privilege of assisting a soul to profess their faith in God before death. The vow of Chastity, as in marriage, must be guarded with fervent prayer, fidelity to Christ and Church teachings, and vigilance in what we watch and listen to on the television, movies, books, and music. Our model, of course, is Our Lady, the Immaculate Conception. Her

chaste and pure love for her Son is what we strive to imitate and follow.

*God is enough in Obedience:* God is enough in Obedience that *I do whatever He asks me to do through the command of my superior*. Evangelical Obedience is the voluntary submission of oneself to obey legitimate ecclesiastical authority beyond the demands of obedience prescribed on all the faithful. It is the free surrender of one's autonomy, according to the Church's directives, in order to better imitate Christ, and to co-operate with Him in his work of redemption, “Who become obedient until death, even death on the Cross.”

In my short eleven years of religious life, I have found that the cliché “Ask nothing, refuse nothing,” has given me many opportunities to do things I would never have chosen and go places I would never have been able to go. God chooses the small and weak and makes them strong. Often I have felt “inadequate, unworthy, unprepared” to do what I am asked to do, but trusting in God and in the intercession of Mary, the Mother of God, and of my patrons, St. Francis, St. Stephen, and St. Catherine of Sienna, I can truly “place myself at the disposal of God to make the Merciful Love of Christ visible.”

Just when I am feeling “comfortable” in my apostolate, God rips my roots up and plants me somewhere new. Though it can be difficult at first, I am confident that I am not doing *my will but His*. That is the beauty and freedom of this vow.

“I can do all things in Christ Who strengthens me.” Philippians 4:13

<http://www.religiouslife.com/documents.phtml>

## Why Do Our Young People Need Catholic Social Teaching?

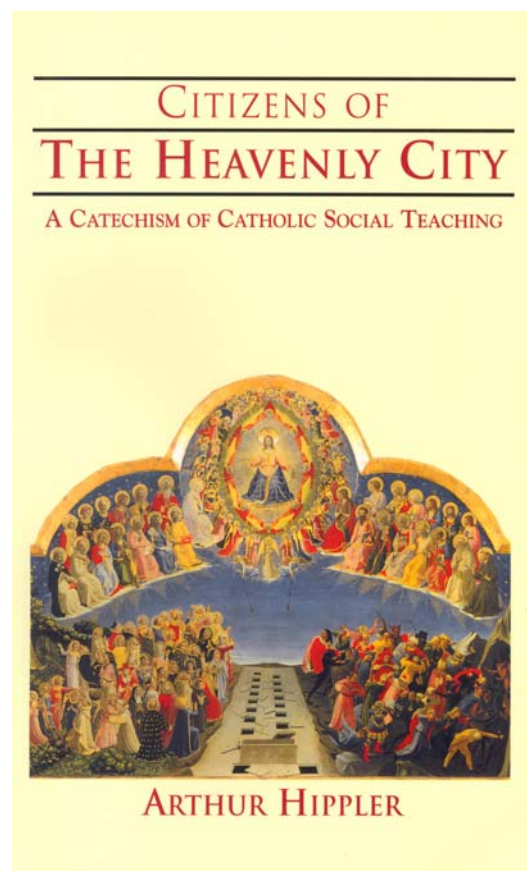
It is very common for Catholic schools and home-schooling families that are trying to provide an education faithful to the Magisterium to neglect Catholic social teaching. Such people follow the four pillars of the *Catechism* in the four years of high school, and that seems, for most, task enough for limited time and resources. If social teaching is addressed, it is usually by way of additional to the unit or units on moral teaching.

If we only have four years to teach our young people religion, why should one semester be devoted to Catholic social teaching? If we do not have one semester that addresses our social teaching in a clear and definite way, we have given our students an incomplete understanding of their faith. There are at least three important principles of Catholic social teaching they must grasp before they graduate from high school.

First, they must understand that Catholic social teaching flows from the moral law. In our culturally relativistic society, it is very hard for them not to study the Ten Commandments, and interpret as private commands for believers. Young Catholics find it hard to apply the moral law, in a consistent and conscious way, to the entire human race. They are always worried that some tribe in New Guinea steals and lies without any remorse of conscience. For them, “good” and “evil” is a personal matter. Their only framework for universal justice is “human rights,” rights which, for them, are not clearly founded on the moral law.

Because they start all political discourse with “rights,” consequently, they do not have a true notion of the relation of rights and duties. They believe that all duties arise because of rights – if I have the right to private property, you have the corresponding duty to respect my property. They do not understand that rights flow from

duties. It is because I have a duty to care for myself and my family, which flows from my nature as a man, that I have the corresponding right to private property to allow me to fulfill this responsibility. The moral law provides the basic obligations that arise from human nature, the basic “duties” which we must fulfill, which in turn provides our basic rights.



To order your copy of **Citizens of the Heavenly City**, call Borromeo Books at 1-888 353-4367 or order online at [www.borromeobooks.com](http://www.borromeobooks.com).

Second, our students should understand the need for authority; all laws, including the moral law, are based on due authority. Authority is harder for our young people to understand than you might think. It is not an exaggeration to say that, for them as for many Americans, democracy is not just the best form of government – it is the only legitimate form of government.

As a result, they think all power comes from the people. Their tendency will be to believe that no law is just that does not involve, in some way, the consent of the people. This fits nicely with their confusions on the moral law – they think of the morality as a work of one’s “culture,” as if morality were a matter of consensus and discussion. The notion of an authoritative law that is binding on all men is harder for them to take in, especially in the face of disagreements about its precepts.

Authority lays down the law and enforces it. It is, as it were, the agent cause of the law. But every agent acts for a purpose. And the ultimate purpose of the law, whether the divine or human, is the common good. So our young people must also have some grasp of the common good. This is the third principle of Catholic teaching.

The common good, so basic to the political discourse of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, is a mere phrase to many Catholics. What is the common good? By the common good, we do not mean a good that applies to many, or to most, but to *all*. We distinguish just forms of government from unjust ones based on the common good. If a government acts for the good of the whole, it is just, whether that government is a king or an aristocracy or a parliament; if on the other hand a government works for the good of the few against the many, or the many against the few, it is a tyranny. One cannot understand the difference between just and unjust forms of government without referring to the common good.

What is the common good? The common good is one in which all may share, and do so without diminishing that good. Money for example cannot be a common good, even if we distribute it – the amount received diminishes as the recipients increase. On the contrary, when a community enjoys peace, it is not the peace of individuals – all share in the peace, whether they will it or not. The larger the community, the more individuals share in the peace. Truth also is a common good, as St. Augustine teaches at the beginning of his book *On Christian Doctrine*. It is not my truth or yours. I do not lose it when I give it to you.

These three principles, the moral law, due authority and the common good, are the starting points that our young Catholics need to understand how their Catholic beliefs applies to the social and political questions of the day. Without these principles, our young people can keep their faith, but they will not know how to apply it to the larger issues around them. Indeed, they will probably reason from a set of liberal, secular assumptions that they do not even know they have. We cannot give our young people everything in four years of high-school, or even twelve years of school (if we have them that long). But it is my belief that Catholic social teaching merits some time within the curriculum if we have to graduate students who have a solid grasp of Catholic teaching.

**Remember:** Rural Life Day  
Wednesday, September 27, 2006  
Holy Family Parish, Poniatowski



## Deacons in the Trenches

I've got some good news and some bad news. First the bad news: we have a growing priest shortage in the Diocese of La Crosse. We need more priests; we need more young men to respond to God's call to that great vocation. Part of the good news is that we have a wonderful group of 28 seminarians seeking to do just that, by the grace of the Holy Spirit and with the wise counsel of Vocations Director Fr. Joseph Hirsch. But a look at the demographics of the situation quickly reveals the number of priests dying or entering senior status is growing far faster than the rate of new ordinations. So we need more good news, and we have some—the Permanent Diaconate.

There are currently 20 permanent deacons, mostly married men, with active assignments in the Diocese of La Crosse. That's a fairly modest number (but it will be increasing rapidly—more on that later), and thus many people have not seen a deacon's ministry and may wonder what they do. But first of all we want to be clear about what a deacon is.

A deacon is an ordained member of the clergy, not a layman. He shares in the threefold Sacrament of Holy Orders (Bishop-Priest-Deacon), which conforms or molds its recipients to Christ according to the degree of Holy Orders received. In a special way, then, we see in the bishop the image of Christ the Shepherd (hence the significance of the bishop's crosier, or staff), in the priest Christ the Priest (offering the Eucharistic sacrifice), and in the deacon Christ the Servant. Now it is true that all three are called to be servants, and the bishop is also a priest (indeed, it is the bishop who by his ordination receives the fullness of the priesthood). But the respective images of Shepherd, Priest and Servant can help us grasp the threefold distinction within Holy Orders.

So if the deacon is conformed in a special way to

Christ the Servant (and indeed the Greek word for service is *diakonia*), what forms does a deacon's service take? The Catechism tells us that it takes three fundamental forms. Strengthened by the sacramental grace of his ordination, the deacon acts in the service of the liturgy, of the Gospel, and of works of charity (cf. n. 1570).

With regard to the liturgy, the deacon may baptize, officiate at marriages, distribute the Eucharist, impart benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, bring Viaticum (the Eucharist as "food for the journey" into the next life) to the dying, and preside over funeral and burial services. He may also assist the priest or bishop during liturgies, and may administer various sacramentals (such as blessings).

With regard to the Gospel, he may proclaim the Gospel and preach the homily at Mass. Of course deacons should also live the Gospel. Indeed, as ordained ministers who most often also live and work in secular surroundings, deacons have a unique opportunity to bring Christian values into the world.

Finally, as regards works of charity, the deacon may exercise his ministry in countless ways. For example, he may assist the poor or homeless; care for the sick, people with disabilities, the elderly or the grieving; visit the imprisoned; assist the unemployed; work to strengthen marriages and families; defend human rights and dignity through pro-life and other efforts. It is this last of the three forms of service, works of charity, that is the ministry most characteristic of the deacon. All the forms of diaconal ministry just mentioned are represented in the service of the permanent deacons of the Diocese of La Crosse.

And now for some really good news. There are 11 deacon candidates finishing their formation and due to be ordained on January 27, 2007 at the

Cathedral in La Crosse. There are also currently 24 deacon aspirants entering their second year of formation (two years of aspirancy and three years of candidacy precede ordination). And Bishop ListECKI has given the go-ahead to launch another class of aspirants in the fall of 2007. With the current plan of starting a new class every two years, and projecting an average of 12 deacon ordinations every two years beginning in 2010, the number of deacons active in the Diocese will grow from the present 20 to around 55 by 2012, and more than 75 in just ten years.

Deacons are going to play an ever-increasing role in the pastoral plan for the Diocese of La Crosse. While they must not be seen as ‘quasi-priests’ or ‘mini-priests’—because they have their own rich identity and mission in the image of Christ the Servant—they will without question help to ease what would otherwise be a tremendous burden on our priests. And though most deacons presently minister on a part-time basis while continuing to hold jobs in the secular world, a growing number are being employed full-time in parishes. This will in all likelihood become more and more common.

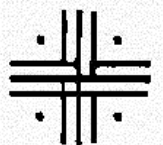
Because deacons are mostly married men with families, and work, or have worked, in secular employment, they are uniquely inhabitants of two worlds, the clerical and the secular, thus forming a bridge between the two. They have a precious opportunity to infuse the world of secular work and society with the light of Christ and, conversely, to enrich their diaconal ministry in the Church with firsthand experience of marriage, family life, and the secular world. And by virtue of their extensive human, spiritual, doctrinal and pastoral formation, they are well prepared to collaborate fruitfully with pastors, pastoral associates, DRE’s, catechists, youth ministers, leaders of prayer and others involved in the Church’s mission in the Diocese of La Crosse. It is good news, indeed, that in these times full of challenge and opportunity we have deacons in the trenches.

Those who think they may be called by God to serve the Church in this way, or who know someone they think might be called to be a

deacon, should consider the following traits and requirements for that vocation:

1. Age: At least thirty-five and no older than sixty-five at the time of ordination. Exceptions to the upper age limit may be made at the discretion of the Bishop.
2. Status: A Roman Catholic, married or single, of sound moral character, mature faith and possessing a sense of vocation to service.
3. Family: If married, a partner in a stable marriage for at least seven years, who has the expressed consent and support of his wife, and whose children are of such an age and adjustment as not to be unduly affected by their father's pursuit of a life that involves special apostolic commitments.
4. Natural Gifts: Demonstrates the basic potential to develop the ministerial skills of relating to people, speaking well, and being a spiritual leader.
5. Spirituality: A man of prayer willing to make personal sacrifices to be a consecrated sign of God's love for others in his vocation to serve.
6. Education: At least a high school or GED diploma, and the capacity to do college level work.
7. Employment: A person who reflects prior stability in career or work.
8. Church / Community Involvement: A man living the Christian life who has demonstrated active service, apostolic involvement, and leadership among the People of God.

As noted earlier, a new class of deacon aspirants will be launched in the fall of 2007. The Diocese of La Crosse will hold information nights in the fall of 2006 on the Permanent Diaconate for men who feel they may be called to this vocation. These are scheduled for September 12 in Chippewa Falls, September 14 in Plover, and September 21 in La Crosse. Anyone interested in attending one of the information nights should call the Office of Ministries at 608-791-2667 for more details.



## English Translation of the Order of Mass Approved by US Bishops

By now, everyone has heard that a revised translation for the order of Mass (that is, the parts other than the prayers found in the Proper of Seasons, Proper of Saints, Ritual Masses and Commons, as well as the prefaces) had been approved by the United States Bishops at their June meeting in Los Angeles. But what exactly does this mean? What can we expect next? The *National Catholic Reporter's* John Allen, Jr. put these and other similar questions to Msgr. James Moroney, of the Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy, shortly after the Los Angeles meeting (see [www.NCRCafe.org](http://www.NCRCafe.org) for Friday, June 23, 2006 for more information). Here are some excerpts of the interview:

NCR: *What happens from here?*

Msgr. Moroney: Within the next couple of days [following the meeting], the president of the conference, Bishop William Skylstad, will write a letter to Cardinal Arinze with the final text, with all the adaptations and emendations, requesting the *recognitio* [meaning formal Vatican approval of the text]. The Congregation for Divine Worship will carry out whatever consultations it wants, including consulting with the Vox Clara Commission, and then will make its decision.

*Could the congregation make changes to the American text?*

Without question, the Holy See will follow the same procedure as in every liturgical book of the last 35 years, sending the text

back indicating which amendments it finds

acceptable and which not. I suspect there will be perfect clarity from the congregation. The Holy See may want to issue one English text for all the episcopal conferences, which could mean accepting some American changes, and then making that text standard for all the conferences.

*Assuming the Order of Mass is approved, will it be put into effect right away, ahead of the other elements of the Mass?*

That decision has not yet been made. The bishops have not begun to examine it.

*How will you approach the formation of priests?*

I've spoken in 93 dioceses to over 18,000 priests and deacons, bringing the message of the theological and spiritual depth of the new *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*. It's critically important to go to the "front-line troops" who will be most instrumental in implementing the reform. To paraphrase *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, all will be in vain unless the pastors of souls are on board. So the first constituency is the priests, then other liturgical ministers, and then the whole assembly. [...]

*What will be the most important factor in implementation?*

It's not just a question of imparting knowledge to the clergy about what words were changed and the linguistic rationale for those changes. It's a matter of discovering the rich liturgical theology beneath these translations. In some cases, priests will be

exposed for the very first time to theological insights into the celebration of the sacred liturgy, and that's very exciting. It's not just a matter of adapting to linguistic changes, but of discovering the wonders of what the renewal of the liturgy is all about. It's a spiritual and theological journey, not a political process.

### **Rural Life Day**

Holy Family Parish in Poniatoski (Wausau Deanery) will host Rural Life Day on Wednesday, September 27, 2006. Bishop ListECKI will be the principal celebrant and homilist of the Mass beginning at 10:30 a.m. The afternoon program will be held at Saint Anthony Parish school in nearby Athens. The keynote speaker for the afternoon program will be Dale Ahlquist, President of the American Chesterton Society. The Strangers and Guests Award will be given to a farm family from the Wisconsin Rapids Deanery (last year's host), and Century Farms from the Wausau Deanery will be acknowledged.

Rural Life Day, according to the Fourth Diocesan Synod, is to be celebrated on the fourth Wednesday of September in each parish. Prayer texts from The Mass for Various Needs and Occasions: After the Harvest (n.27) can be used with the Preface for the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time (P33). The readings may be taken from After the Harvest in the Lectionary (n.20), numbers 917-921. The *Gloria* also ought to be said.

### **Consider a Liturgical Conference at the Liturgical Institute!**

The University of Saint Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary will offer the following conferences this fall:

### ***Pride of Place: Gregorian Chant in the Liturgy***

September 17-20, 2006

Led by Dr. Edward Schaefer, Professor of Music at Gonzaga University, the conference will offer discussion of the place of chant in the liturgy as well as instruction in parallel tracks for both beginners and advanced singers.

### ***Heaven on Earth: Building or Renovating Your Church***

October 25-27, 2006

A theological and practical conference about envisioning the church building as a sacrament of heaven. Includes sessions on understanding traditional architecture, choosing a church architect, finding craftspeople, acoustics and music, the nature of the image, fundraising, and a beginning-to-end walkthrough of a completed church project.

### ***Preaching Advent and Christmas***

November 10, 2006

A one-day workshop for priests and deacons on preaching for the Advent and Christmas seasons with popular speaker and prolific author Deacon Owen Cummings, Regents Professor of Theology at Mount Angel Seminary in Washington.

**For more information about these offerings, please contact the Liturgical Institute at 847-837-4542 or see their website: [www.liturgicalinstitute.org](http://www.liturgicalinstitute.org)**

**RCIA Resource Group:*****Mark Your Calendars!***

The next meeting of the RCIA Resource Group (our first meeting was last May) will be held on Thursday, October 12th, 1:00–3:00 at St. Joseph Church in Black River Falls. Topics for this meeting will cover those parts of the RCIA existing at the beginning of the process, such as the interview and other administrative duties (e.g., securing proof of baptism), training the RCIA team, dealing with difficult pastoral situations, and a review of the period of evangelization and pre-catechumenate and the Rite of Acceptance, as well as any other questions group members might have. If you have specific topics related to this aspect of the RCIA, please recommend them to Chris Carstens in the Office of Sacred Worship. More information will be sent closer to the date.

**ACM Leader's Manual**

In addition to the RCIA *Catechist Manual* and *Participant Book*, the Association for Catechumenal Ministry is now offering a *Leader's Manual*. The *Leader's Manual*, says the ACM, is designed to provide a comprehensive aide for RCIA leaders in the work of implementing the full liturgical, catechetical, and pastoral aspects of the RCIA process. This book contains instructions for the RCIA director and team on how to facilitate an evangelizing and welcoming mentality in the parish, how to train all members of a team, how to recruit and train sponsors, how to discern the signs and stages of conversion, handling annulments and issues of baptismal

validity, etc. Practical appendices contain useful forms, sample letters, and sample retreat formats. The book also contains the entire set of handouts used in ACM's seminars, edited by Barbara A. Morgan and William J. Keimig. Samples in PDF format are available from the website [www.acmrcia.org/pub/leadmanual.html](http://www.acmrcia.org/pub/leadmanual.html).

**To order this resource, contact:**

Liturgy Training Publications (LTP)  
1800 North Hermitage Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60622  
800-933-1800 (orders)  
800-933-7094 (fax orders)  
Email: [orders@ltp.org](mailto:orders@ltp.org)

**Neophyte Masses**

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (n.251) says of the Diocesan Bishop's care for neophytes: "To show his pastoral concern for these new members of the Church, the bishop, particularly if he was unable to preside at the sacraments of initiation himself, should arrange, if possible, to meet the recently baptized at least once in the year and to preside at a celebration of the Eucharist with them." Accordingly, three Masses have been scheduled for Bishop ListECKI to celebrate with those who have received the Church's initiation sacraments:

- August 27, St. James the Greater, Eau Claire: Mass at 2:00 PM
- September 17, St. Stephen, Stevens Point: Mass at 2:00 PM
- October 1, Blessed Sacrament, La Crosse: Mass at 3:00 PM

A light reception will follow each of the Masses, and all of those who have been

received into the Church in recent years, their families, godparents or sponsors, and RCIA team members are welcome and encouraged to attend. If members of your parish wish to attend, please submit the enclosed form to the Office of Sacred Worship no later than two weeks prior to the particular celebration.

### **Beginning the RCIA Process**

As the next liturgical year approaches, many are beginning to think about starting another RCIA process. Part of this preparation, especially for those parishes that are still relatively new at using the RCIA, is the formation of the RCIA team, those people who, in various ways, assist others on their journey into the fullness of the Catholic Church. What does the RCIA team look like, and who makes it up? And how should members be recruited? Following is a list of potential team members and a brief description of their duties.

#### *Overall Coordinator*

Coordinates interviews with inquirers in conjunction with the priest

- Helps inquirers understand time frame for initiation (Rites book tells us 18-24 month process for unbaptized)
- Helps inquirers to understand they will want to be sure they are ready to commit to the way of Christ and His teachings, and if they are not, they may continue to prepare.
- Explains impediments to entering catechumenate, if necessary.
- Keeps in contact with team members.

Coordinates the follow-up with absences of inquirers:

- Provides inquirer/sponsor and/or team member with recorded audio tape of the session.
- Makes copies of the handouts for each RCIA session.

*Catechists* - The number of catechists for the RCIA process should be small (1-3). The catechists need to know the candidates and catechumens in order to craft the teaching for them and their particular requirements: we teach people, not topics.

*Greeter* - Takes care of nametags and giving out the handouts.

*Hospitality* - Brings refreshments for each particular week.

*Set up person* - Arranges the room with a Sacred Space including artwork that goes with the teaching for the meeting, as well as a crucifix, Bible, and candles.

*Retreat Planner* - Plans day-long retreats or overnight retreats before the Rite of Acceptance or Welcoming, the Rite of Election, and the Sacraments of Initiation

*Librarian* - Sets out a select group of books and tapes for check out. This person is familiar with the books/tapes in order to assist the inquirers to find what they are specifically interested in and the right level of difficulty.

*Musician/Song Leader* - Leads the music at the RCIA sessions

*Field Trip Planner* - Arranges for field trips to such places as the Cathedral, St. Rose Convent, Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe and other places of pilgrimage throughout the Diocese.



### Hello La Crosse, Wisconsin!

My name is Chris Rogers and I am excited to be part of a great ministry team the diocese has in place. My wife Elizabeth and I have been married for 9 incredible years. However she will tell you it feels like it has been a lot longer. We have three boys Matthew, age 5; Noah, age 4; and Gabriel, age 1. All of us are excited to make La Crosse our home.

Youth ministry has been a call in my life since I graduated from high school. I began my answer to this call by working as a junior high youth minister in the church where I was raised. Two years later I moved to Nashville, TN to go to school for music business and quickly realized that music business was not for me. One night I was at a meeting where the speaker talked about following your passion. He said, "If you have a passion for something then do it." It was a simple statement but it made me see what I wanted to do with my life and that God was responsible for putting that passion inside of me. The next day I changed my major from music business to religion and youth ministry. Understanding that God's call for me is my passion is what brought me to making youth ministry a career.

The past seven years I have been working as Coordinator of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Nashville. And the last two years I have also been working part time as the Life Teen director at a parish in that diocese. While both of these ministries complimented each other, it pulled me away from home more than I needed to be. It was here that I realized that my family is my first call from God and that



even people in ministry can get wrapped up in helping others find their way while the people closest to us can get lost. After much prayer I decided to look for something that would allow me to be home more with my family and continue my ministry. That is when I found that there was an open position in the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Office in La Crosse. God works in amazing ways and His timing is incredible.

A couple of months ago I had the privilege of spending some time with Chris Stefanick and Monsignor Gilles who helped me to gain some perspective on the La Crosse diocese. There seems to be so many great things happening in La Crosse and I am excited to be a part of them. Most of all I am looking forward to building relationships and learning more about the ministry that I love so much. Please feel free to call if our office can assist you with anything. I look forward to meeting and working with all of you.

Peace,  
Chris Rogers