



LaCrosseRoads

Volume XV11 No. 1

February - March 2010

Diocesan Youth Stand Tall at Washington March for Life

We can be proud of the pro-life youth of the Diocese of La Crosse!

By Christopher Ruff, Office of Ministries and Social Concerns

That is the sentiment I carry in my heart as I return from the annual March for Life held in Washington, D.C. on January 22, the anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion on demand. I am on one of five buses loaded with two hundred students from Catholic high schools of the diocese. They were part of perhaps the largest march yet, with a crowd estimated at well over 300,000 by organizer Nellie Gray.

We were immersed in a sea of people, mostly youths, from across the U.S. and beyond. Next to me was a group that had come all the way from Italy. One sign and banner after another proclaimed the sanctity of life and the name of the school, parish or diocese it represented. High school students chanted with gusto, "We love babies, yes we do! We love babies, how 'bout you?!" Numerous religious communities were also present, forming clusters of brown, grey, black or white habits. The scene was joyful, peaceful and full of hope and song – a foretaste of heaven.



Joining other young people from the Diocese of La Crosse, Connor Morgan perches atop Brandon Guenther's shoulders during the 2010 March for Life in Washington, D.C., Jan. 22.

If the March for Life was a celebration of the beauty and sanctity of life, the most profound moments for our

Continued on Page 9



In the "Year for Priests," the laity are also called to greater holiness.

*~ The Season of Lent ~
A Time to Receive God's
Healing, Mercy and Forgiveness*

Please encourage all Catholics to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent.



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/NFP

Jeff Heinzen, Director
familylife@dioceseoflacrosse.com
(608) 791-2673

MINISTRIES & SOCIAL CONCERNS

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
crogers@dioceseoflacrosse.com
(608) 791-0161

DIOCESAN CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

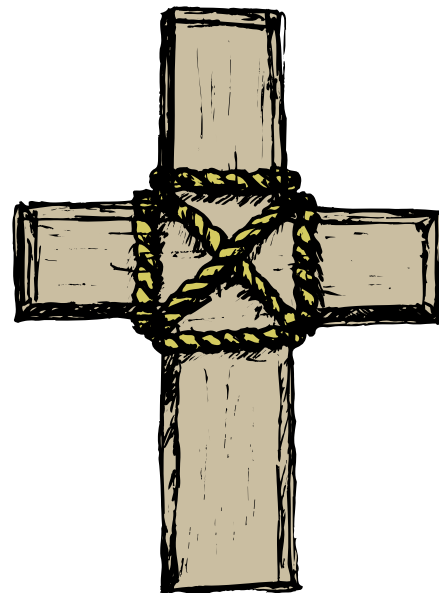
- 2 World Day for Consecrated Life
- 11 World Day of the Sick
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 15 BEET Applications Mailed this week
(See Office of Catechesis & Youth Ministry Article)
- 17 Ash Wednesday
- 21 Rite of Election and Call to Continuing
Conversion, Cathedral of St. Joseph, 3 p.m.
(See RCIA Article)
- 26 Day of Prayer and Penance for
Diocesan and Universal Church needs. (See "The Bishop
With His People," p.184. **Note:** This observance is the Friday
of the first week of Lent, not Friday after Ash Wednesday)

MARCH

- 12 BEET Applications Due
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 24 Day of Reflection - (Curia Offices Closed)
- 28 Palm Sunday

APRIL

- 2 Good Friday - (Curia Offices Closed)
- 4 Easter
- 5 Easter Monday - (Curia Offices Closed)



Diocese of La Crosse

Child Sexual Abuse Policy Information

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 any diocesan agent (employees, volunteers, vendors, religious or clergy). Anyone wishing to make a report of an allegation of sexual abuse should send that report to Monsignor Richard W. Gilles, Diocesan Administrator, at the Diocese of La Crosse, P.O. Box 4004, La Crosse, WI 54602-4004. The form is available through the Diocese of La Crosse Office of the Vicar for Priests or on the diocesan website at 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 the implementation of the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, please contact Father Joseph Hirsch, at 608-791-2666, or jhirsch@dioceseoflacrosse.com.

By Ann Lankford

Annual Catechetical Inservice

July 30-31, 2010

Holy Cross Diocesan Center, La Crosse

We are very excited to announce plans for the annual Catechetical Inservice on July 30th and 31st.



Catherine of Siena Institute

Equipping Parishes to Form Lay Apostles

Moreover, the workshop will have far-reaching effects. The mission of Catherine

Friday night and Saturday will consist of the *Called and Gifted Workshop* presented by the Catherine of Siena Institute. Presentations will include Church teaching on the laity and lay apostleship, the nature of charisms, call and vocation, and how to undertake the process of discerning each person's specific charisms.

In speaking with the staff of the Catherine of Siena Institute, I want to highlight a few of the many reasons why we chose the *Called and Gifted Workshop*. When we are assisted to discern (discover) where we are gifted, we then work within our charisms with confidence and joy. We are able to avoid frustration and quick burn-out which is a result of trying to do things we are not gifted to do. In recognizing, developing and using our gifts, we become excited about knowing our part in God's plan. This leads to greater participation in the parish in wanting to use these gifts, a further openness to evangelization, and a more intentional support of others in living the Faith.

If you take the *Called and Gifted Workshop*, you will have a chance to take the *Catholic Spiritual Gifts Inventory*, the first gifts inventory designed especially for Catholics. This will provide the opportunity to begin discerning personal charisms. Further, the workshop will teach you:

- The ancient teachings of the Church on how charisms of the Holy Spirit work in your life and in the life of your parish community.
- The five steps of discerning the charisms that God has given you.
- The signs and characteristics of 24 of the most common charisms of the Holy Spirit. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraphs 798-801)
- How discerning your charisms can change your own life.

of Siena Institute is about "Equipping Parishes to Form Lay Apostles." This mission stems from the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity promulgated at Vatican II: "Indeed, everyone should painstakingly ready himself personally for the apostolate, especially as an adult ... enabling each person to evaluate more accurately the talents with which God has enriched his soul and to exercise more effectively those charismatic gifts which the Holy Spirit has bestowed on him for the good of his brothers" (n. 30).

The workshop will also teach you:

- How discerning your charisms can change the world and help spread the Gospel.
- How discerning and using our charisms together can help transform and renew our parishes.

Friday afternoon, July 30th, will again feature the work and resources of the Diocesan offices which directly affect the Faith Formation Programs and Youth Ministry. Participating in both Friday and Saturday will be beneficial to both the person attending and the parish. If this is not possible, a representative from the parish is expected to attend the Friday afternoon session.

Mark your calendar and begin spreading the word in order to bring catechists, parents, and other adults to both Friday and Saturday. This two-day event will have a tremendous impact on each person and the parish. The pamphlet with all the details will be mailed out soon. If you would like further information on Catherine of Siena Institute and/or the *Called and Gifted Workshop*, go to www.siena.org.

“Healthy Youth Act”

Thank you for your cooperation in providing parents with Archbishop ListECKI’s letter and other information about the pending bill in the Senate regarding sex education in Wisconsin public schools. The Office of Catechesis and Evangelization worked in collaboration with the Office of Family Life to compile this mailing. With regard to the timing of the e-mail and mailing, we had to wait on a component from the Wisconsin Catholic Conference before we could contact you. This WCC handout was specifically referenced in Archbishop ListECKI’s letter. Further, we received word from Wisconsin Family Action, on the morning that we e-mailed you, that this bill could be voted on as early as Tuesday, Jan. 19th. Based upon what we have seen both at the state and federal level, action has been taken very quickly, that is followed by voting specifically to avoid a great deal of input and public reaction. We did not know exactly when the vote would be taken, but it is fair to say that it would be sometime soon and we wanted to be ready.

We just received word today (Monday, Jan. 25th) from the Wisconsin Catholic Conference that a vote will be taken by the Senate Education Committee on Wednesday, Jan. 27th.

On Thursday, January 28th, the “Healthy Youth Act” was passed in the Senate and then went back to the Assembly because an amendment was added. The bill also passed in the Assembly. The bill will now go to the Governor for signing.

Year for Priests

Enclosed is the Year for Priests Prayer Calendar for Feb. 14th through May 8th. Will you distribute the names of the priests so that the children and young people in the Faith Formation Programs and their parents may participate in this important year?

The ‘Year for Priests,’ Lent and the Sacrament of Reconciliation

The purpose of the “Year for Priests” is that priests would deepen their commitment to interior renewal for the sake of a stronger and more incisive witness to the Gospel in today’s world. The lay faithful are invited to reflect on the immense gift which priests represent through their lives of service and to thank and honor them, especially through prayer and through their own striving for holiness.

A sure way to grow in holiness is to receive the Sacra-

ment of Mercy. Let us promote the Sacrament of Reconciliation during the six weeks of Lent, a time of abundant graces.

Lenten Resource

Sharing Christ’s Priesthood, A 6-week, Bible Study for Catholics by Mike Aquilina is available from the Curriculum Library for \$6.50.

BEET Grants

BEET Grant applications and information will be mailed out the week of Feb. 15th. Grants will be due back on March 12th. The amount of money awarded this year will be less due to the recession. Grants must follow the guidelines to be considered.

Christopher West

coming to La Crosse and Stephens Point

DREs, CREs, Youth Ministers, and catechists are invited to participate, along with the Catholic School teachers, in this day of personal faith formation. This important event will be on April 22nd in La Crosse and April 23rd in Stephens Point and provides six of certification for Doctrine/Life in Christ. Cost for the day is \$41 and includes lunch. Day-long attendance is required to participate. Call Susan at 608-791-2658 to register.

Certification Opportunities

Life in Christ and Prayer

February 11 La Crosse

February 12 Stevens Point

Sacred Scripture and Prayer

March 25 La Crosse

March 26 Eau Claire

Sacraments and Prayer

May 5 La Crosse

May 6 Stevens Point

Full day participation is required, 8–3:30.

Cost is \$39; late registration/walk in is \$44.

Virtue Program

The virtues of justice, fortitude and temperance were mailed to the DREs, CREs, and Youth Ministers the week of Jan. 25th. The entire Virtue Program, “Understanding and Living the Virtues” is available on Web site: www-dioceseoflacrosse.com, click on Offices and Ministries followed by Catechesis. The entry is on the left side.

– By Sister M. Stephania Newell, FSGM

‘Called By Name’

Have you ever thought of a religious vocation? Are you open to the possibility of God calling you to be a religious or diocesan priest, brother, or sister? These are the questions that 70 young people were asked on Saturday, January 16th of this new year.

During National Vocation Awareness Week, the Church recognizes and encourages religious vocations throughout the world. Dioceses throughout the country hold various events such as Vocation Fairs, retreats, “Come and See Days,” and talks on religious vocations. This year, the Diocese of La Crosse held its first “Called By Name” retreat, closing the week’s activities in order to recognize individuals who may have a religious vocation. Diocesan priests, directors of religious education, and youth ministers throughout the Diocese were contacted to give the Office of Vocations and Consecrated Life names of young men and women who they thought may have a religious vocation. This request was done in early November. These names were given to Bishop ListECKI who sent them a personal invitation to the event. When the invitations went out, Bishop ListECKI’s appointment announcement came, but he still wanted to recognize these young men and women. He gave a message to Father Joseph Hirsch, Vocation Director for the Diocese, that he really did want to be with the young people, but was unable to do so because of his new responsibilities. Several priests and DRE’s from the Diocese submitted 431 names of young people. Seventy of these responded affirmatively and some came with their parents or families.

The event, held at Holy Cross Diocesan Center in La Crosse, began with Holy Mass with ten priests of the Diocese con-celebrating. Father Joseph Hirsch was the main celebrant and homilist. Several seminarians from Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary and Holy Cross Seminary House of Formation came to be with the young people. Three aspirants and three Sisters from Mater Redemptoris House of Formation also were present. We then moved to the dining room for a home cooked meal by the Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George feeding over 90 people. Priests, seminarians, religious, and aspirants were spread out among various tables in order to visit with the young people and families. After the meal, we heard vocation stories and received some wise and interesting advice. Monsignor Robert Hundt, Father. Greg Born, and Sister M. Stephania all spoke about their discernment journey and their enthusiasm for their vocation. Father Joseph Hirsch was the MC for the talks.

Most of the event was organized by Sister M. Chiara, FSGM, a novice on mission at Mater Redemptoris Con-

vent. Her assignment during mission, what she calls a “nun internship” is to assist Sister M. Stephania and Father Hirsch in their work with vocations. The event proved to be a success and will be an annual event during Vocation Awareness Week.

One of the many comments made during the talk was the emphasis on being open to God’s will and the joy of fatherhood and motherhood in a religious vocation. One can have a “sterile” way of living their vocation that excludes the paternal and maternal. After the three hour program, we had many of the young people “hanging out” and talking with the priests, seminarians, sisters, and aspirants. They were inspired to seek God in a new way. We pray that He may lead them to know the vocation He has created them so that they may love and serve the Church and find true happiness in following His Will.



Sister M. Stephania speaking about her discernment journey at the “Called By Name” retreat.

Vocation Events from the Offices of Vocations and the Houses of Formation

OFFICE OF VOCATIONS

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2010

For more information and to register, please contact Father Joseph Hirsch at jhirsch@dioceseoflacrosse.com or call the Office of Vocations at (608) 791-2667 Discover Priesthood at Ministry Weekend at University of

St. Mary of the Lake
Mundelein Seminary, Chicago, Illinois
April 16-18

Ministry Weekends are retreats designed to help men of college-age discern God's call to diocesan priesthood. Through a weekend of prayer, discussion, presentations on diocesan priesthood and social opportunities, a man begins to better understand God's movement in his life.

So, what is God calling you to do with your life?

Vianney Visit: Another special opportunity for young men of high school (15+) or college-age to spend several days visiting St. John Vianney Seminary. The visit is three days in length, from Thursday to Saturday. On Friday visitors can attend several classes with the seminarians.

St. John Vianney Seminary is on the Campus of St. Thomas University in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Thursday, February 11 at 5:30 p.m.-Saturday, February 13, after lunch

Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary Information Weekend:

Another special opportunity for young men of high school (15+) or college-age to visit Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary. The visit is three days in length, from Friday to Sunday. On Monday they can attend some classes with the seminarians. Come for all or part of the visit.

Immaculate Heart of Mary Seminary is on the campus of St. Mary University in Winona, Minnesota.

Saturday, March 6 at 3:00 p.m.-Monday, March 8, after lunch

John Paul the Great; Young Adult Discernment Retreat

- For: Young Adults throughout Wisconsin
- When: March 5-7
- Where: The Lions Club, 3834 County Road A, Rosholt, WI 54473
- Contact: Phil Lawson 715-344-6115 or lawphil@gmail.com for flyer and registration form

Holy Cross Seminary House of Formation:

- "Come and See Days"* – February 12-13
- Friday, Feb. 12th arriving at 4:30 pm and concluding at 3 pm on Saturday, February 13th
 - Students in 6th-11th grades (2009-2010 school year) are invited to come and see what it's like to be a high

school seminarian

- Free – no charge
- For more information, please call Father Sam Martin 608-788-9095 or e-mail: smartin@dioceseoflacrosse.com

Mater Redemptoris Convent and House of Formation:

"Lenten Come and See Day" - Saturday, March 20, 9:30 am-4:00 pm

- Theme: "Behold, I make all things new" – take a peek into the aspirancy at the House of Formation and learn more about the mission God has for you.
- For 4th – 6th grade girls
- Free – donations accepted
- For more information and to register, contact Sr. M. Stephania, FSGM at 608-788-4530 or snewell@dioceseoflacrosse.com

Institute on Religious Life Conference – Friday, April 9-11

- Theme: For the greater glory of God – visit with about 100 religious from all over the country! Learn about the spiritual and apostolic legacy of Father John Hardon, SJ
- Where: Mundelein Seminary, IL
- Who: 17-25 year old young men and women
- Cost: \$175 per person (includes all conference fee, travel, and food)
- Transportation provided – please contact Sr. M. Stephania at snewell@dioceseoflacrosse.com
- Hurry, spaces are limited!!!
- Web site: http://www.religiouslife.com/meetgs_spec.html

Veni si Amas Discernment Retreat – April 16-18

- Theme: "Come if you love!" – Do you love Jesus? Do you desire to give Him everything? Do you long to know the deepest desire of your heart? You are invited to come and join other young women encounter the Heart of Christ and His love for you!
- Where: St. Francis Convent in Alton, IL
- Cost: \$30 (includes all meals and transportation) – please make checks payable to Sisters of St. Francis of the Martyr St. George
- Transportation available – please contact Sr. M. Stephania at snewell@dioceseoflacrosse.com
- Please complete the forms found on the Web site and mail them to Sr. M. Stephania by April 5th
- Web site for forms: www.materredemptoris.org
- Web site for Community: <http://www.altonfranciscans.org/Default/vocationmain.htm>

By Jeff Heinzen

- ✦ Valentine's Day
- ✦ Celebrating the Sacraments
- ✦ Lent and Marriage Enrichment



As you receive this issue of *LaCrosseRoads*, Valentine's Day should be just around the corner.

Here are some marriage enrichment ideas for your valentines.

- ♥ Write a love letter
- ♥ Create a coupon for a five-second hug EVERYDAY. Put it on the refrigerator as a reminder.
- ♥ Go to www.foryourmarriage.org
- ♥ Commit to a date night every 4-6 weeks; just you and your spouse.

CELEBRATING SACRAMENTS

Family Style

A recent article in the *Catholic Register* reminded me of the opportunities that we have each year to celebrate our faith, especially as a 'domestic church.' The article was on Baptism and it made me think ... *how many of us have taken that long narrow box out of the dresser drawer or china hutch and unwrapped the tissue paper off our Baptismal Candle and lit it again?*

So I have decided to take the next issues of the *LaCrosseRoads* and write on how we might celebrate each of the sacraments as a family. Certainly we have done this well with Marriage as we would NEVER (well most of us...) forget our Wedding Anniversary, but what about the other Sacraments. So let's begin with Baptism.

Celebrate Your Birthday in the Church

By Joseph Pronechen (edited for reprint)

When it comes to birthdays, we can rattle off the date without thinking. Most birthdays are marked with some celebration, too, whether simple or elaborate.

But how many of us can recite off the top of our heads the date of our baptism?

Monsignor Ernest Esposito, director of the Respect Life Office for the Diocese of Bridgeport, Conn., can. And he enthusiastically promotes the importance of **celebrating baptismal anniversaries**.

"Children and adults love to celebrate anniversaries of personal significant events," he says, listing personal ones like birthdays and marriages ... All somehow mark new beginnings. But one tops them all: **our baptism**.

"In similar manner, and even more so," he affirms, "on the anniversary of our baptism we should celebrate accordingly, with deepest joy, gratitude and renewal the reality of our baptism – the event that established our life in Christ and which is the seed of eternal glory."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church notes that baptism marks the beginning of life in Our Lord: "Holy baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit" (No. 1213). "Thus the whole organism of the Christian's supernatural life has its roots in baptism" (No. 1266).

Christ's baptism was the first act of his public life, so Pope Benedict XVI reminded the audience during his Angelus address on this feast in January 2009.



"**This is a stupendous thing**," Benedict said, speaking of baptism. "Through baptism the human person is brought into Jesus' unique and singular relationship with the Father, in such a way that the words that are spoken from heaven about the only begotten Son become true for every man and woman who is reborn from the water of the Holy Spirit: You are my sons and daughters, my beloved."

So how can we Celebrate our Baptism?

- † Mark their Baptismal date on the calendar just like you do with your children's birthdays.
- † Take your child to the church where they were baptized or to your local church. Show them the Baptismal Font and share the story of that day with them.
- † Attend mass on that day if possible.
- † Light the Baptismal candle at breakfast or dinner with the family and renew the baptismal promises.

Some families already celebrate baptismal days. Mark and Martina Erste do with their two teenage sons in their Bloomingdale, Ohio, home. "We always strive to make celebrations simple but profound," Martina says. "We do a simple thing. We light their baptismal candles, and then they'll renew their baptismal promises at dinner."

Martina says there's great benefit in celebrating this anniversary. She explains that with the renewal of the baptismal vows you're saying, "I am continuing my faith each year. I agree to this. I will fight against Satan and do what it takes to live my faith."

"We see that as a grace to continue their faith in a personal way," she continues. "It's personal, but also communal, because they say this at the table in front of everyone."

The Erstes also talk about what happened at each son's baptism and the celebrations that followed. For instance, one son was fully immersed, but at a different parish, the other wasn't. Every few years the family watches videotapes of the two baptisms, which leads to talking about what baptism means.

Younger children are also able to recognize the specialness of the day.

Already, David and Jennifer Miller in Manassas, Va., celebrate with their two children, who are 2 and 6. The family, who enjoys living the liturgical year in their home, goes out to celebrate with family on baptismal anniversary days.

The Millers display and light their child's baptismal candle – and that's not the only day. "I bring out the baptismal candle on the birthdays, too," says Jennifer. "The baptismal candle goes next to the birthday cake."

"It's your birthday," she explains. "But more important is your birthday into the Church. That's a more important occasion I want to remind them of on their birthday."

Once the children make their first Communion, the Millers plan to add the renewal of the baptismal vows.

Already benefits shine. Jennifer describes how the boys, although very young, want to hear all about their baptisms. They ask questions like: "Who was there? What did you

do? What did I do? Who was the 'father,' and what did he do?" The children see the priest who baptized them regularly at Mass, and they like to see the baptismal font.

"They're very interested," emphasizes Jennifer. "It has made a major impression on them, and it's making an imprint of memories with them."

It's never too early, or too late, to learn the importance of recalling this sacrament. "Dear friends," said the Holy Father, "how great is the gift of baptism! If we make ourselves fully aware of it, our life will become a continual 'grace.'"

That's why Monsignor. Esposito strongly encourages celebrating baptismal anniversaries. "If anything should be celebrated," he says, "it should be that: *eternal glory!*"

(reprinted with permission from the National Catholic Register/ www.ncregister.com)

Lent & Marriage Enrichment

During Lent we often choose to work on some aspect of our life that has caused us some discomfort or even strife. Often it's a habit that we want to eliminate (e.g. eating unhealthy) sometimes it's a habit we want to add or improve (e.g. prayer life). I would like to suggest that this would be a good time to work on our marriage.

Some thoughts on what to do for the six weeks of Lent:

- ♥ Add the following link to your favorites; www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/marriage and check it each morning for the marriage tip of the day.
- ♥ Participate in a Marriage Encounter or help your parish arrange for a Marriage Enrichment evening for couples.
- ♥ Talk with your Pastor about having one weekend a month where at all the Masses he asks those celebrating their wedding anniversary to stand and receive a blessing.
- ♥ Get a DVD on Marriage that you could view with a small group and talk about what you learned or how it might improve your marriage. RESOURCES are available by contacting the Office of Family Life (see below)
- ♥ As a couple take a few minutes each evening before you head to bed to say a prayer of thanksgiving and to ask God's blessing on your marriage.
- ♥ And as always remember the five-second hug ... it's lifechanging.

HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Telephone: 608-791-2673, e-mail:

familylife@dioceseoflacrosse.com

Web site: www.dioceseoflacrosse.com/marriage

Continued from Page 1

diocesan pilgrims came the next day, when we prayed at the entrance of a Planned Parenthood abortion mill in downtown Washington, D.C. How sobering it was for our teens to see the women rushed in and out of the clinic by abortion “escorts” whose job was to keep them from noticing our prayers and the pleas of pro-life leaders who called out: “Tell them to show you an ultrasound!” For many teens of our diocese, who had never seen an abortion clinic, this encounter changed abortion from an abstraction to something tragically real.

After all, abortion thrives on being shrouded in darkness, propaganda and slogans. The answer, as our group saw and heard, is to keep speaking the truth in love and to provide a prayerful witness. This can have an impact even on clinic employees, as I learned from Will Goodman, who belongs to the Servants of Our Lady of Guadalupe and who organized the prayer rally at Planned Parenthood. He told me that several of the abortion escorts commented on how peaceful and prayerful the pro-life youths from Wisconsin were. He said that at one point the police were called by the clinic – for no good reason, only as an intimidation tactic – and a few of the escorts objected, saying, “Why did we call the police? These people are just being peaceful and praying.” Will told one of the escorts that we were praying for him by name, and the escort responded positively, saying he could use all the prayers he could get.

As is so often the case, we cannot know the ultimate outcome of many of these encounters. But where seeds of love and prayer are sown, we must have faith that God’s grace can bring them to fruition. The much-publicized case of Abby Johnson is an example. She was the director of a Planned Parenthood clinic in Bryan, Texas, until she resigned after watching an ultrasound of an abortion. She had witnessed the prayerful witness of the “Forty Days



Some of the students and chaperones from the Diocese of La Crosse, who participated in the March for Life pilgrimage are shown here at the concluding Mass at St. Patrick’s Church in Mauston, Wis.

of Life” group outside the clinic for years, and when she finally saw clearly the horror of abortion she knew they would receive her with love.

Another profound experience for many of the young pilgrims (and we who had the privilege of chaperoning them), was a visit to the Holocaust Memorial Exhibit. The parallels with abortion are striking, except that the current holocaust of billions of our unborn brothers and sisters in the last decades is an even larger, though more hidden, genocide. Somehow the cry “never again” rings hollow and ironic in the face of the contemporary scourge of abortion.

One of the tragic parallels between the Jewish Holocaust and the holocaust of abortion is the seeming willingness of entire populations to look the other way, even when the evidence is before them. There was one Nazi-occupied nation that refused to cooperate with the persecution of its Jewish citizens, and that was Denmark, whose heroism is recognized today. I trust the youth going through the Holocaust Memorial got the obvious message: that it is possible to coexist with great evil in order to avoid being threatened or made uncomfortable. But that is the coward’s path, and God will be the judge and history the witness. We must be signs of contradiction, as was Jesus himself, even if it means carrying our cross. And so, during and after the pilgrimage, which did have its share

Continued on Page 10

of fun (nothing wrong with that) the young people were challenged by us and by some wonderful pro-life speakers not to let this fade into the background, but to be bold witnesses for the sanctity of life even when it would be easier to be silent.

We are fortunate that our smaller communities do not have abortion clinics, but it could happen even here unless we continue to speak up for life. In addition, a year ago it was announced that late-term abortions were going to begin at the Madison Surgery Center, which is affiliated with the UW Hospitals and Clinics. A huge public outcry resulted, thanks to which, not a single late-term abortion has yet taken place. For this we have to thank our State pro-life organizations (Wisconsin Right to Life and Pro-life Wisconsin) and many active pro-lifers who have protested, written letters and threatened to receive their medical care elsewhere. Another big rally is scheduled for Saturday, February 6, and it will likely be over by the time this issue of *LaCrosseRoads* is in people's hands. We hope to recruit a busload of pro-lifers to attend that rally.

As has been the case for the past 37 years, the March for Life pilgrimage was ably organized and led by Sr. Stephania Newell, Director of the Office of Consecrated Life. She was assisted in this effort by Chris Rogers of

the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. Deacon Matthew Ludick of the Office of Ministries and Social Concerns also lent his help in arranging for special speakers. And we were blessed to have six of our high school chaplains along to provide their witness and to celebrate daily Mass: Fr. Sam Martin from Aquinas in La Crosse, Fr. James Krzynski from Regis in Eau Claire, Fr. Victor Feltes from Columbus in Marshfield, Fr. Robert Letona from Pacelli in Stevens Point, Fr. Jim Altmann from Assumption in Wisconsin Rapids, and Fr. Justin Kizewski from McDonnell in Chippewa Falls (Fr. Hector Moreno brought pilgrims separately from St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Necedah).

I can safely say that we adults who helped chaperone were every bit as blessed as the young pilgrims who are the future of the pro-life movement. Much work remains for all of us if we are to transform the culture of death into a culture of life. But in these fine young men and women we see the signs of a new springtime. They must witness to their peers and to the larger community. We will be enlisting their help, along with that of all the faithful, as we continue to seek protection for the unborn, whether in healthcare reform or other legislation, and whether in Wisconsin or Washington, D.C.

Loving Our Neighbor in Haiti

"I've never seen anything like this."

These were the words of Ken Hackett, President of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), after surveying the damage and the relief efforts in the wake of the January 12th earthquake that devastated what was already the poorest nation in the western hemisphere.

The people of the Diocese of La Crosse have responded to this tragedy with great generosity. Special collections have been taken up in all the parishes, and so far \$122,181 has been sent to CRS to assist their efforts, with money continuing to come in from the parishes.

We can all be very proud of the work of CRS, which is the U.S. Bishops' charitable agency devoted to international relief efforts. Even before the earthquake struck, CRS already had a team of 340 staff there, since they have been involved in assisting that impoverished nation for 55 years. It seems they were away from the epicenter

when the quake struck, and all are accounted for. They are working feverishly to supply food and hygiene kits to the people, many of whom are in a makeshift camp on the grounds of a golf course in Port-au-Prince.

I encourage you to read about the CRS Haiti Relief efforts at www.crs.org, where the situation is vividly described in stories and pictures. You will come away inspired.

Those who are teachers (and anyone wanting to have greater insight into Haiti) should consider visiting <http://education.crs.org/resources/haiti-lesson-plan.pdf> for a helpful lesson plan for middle and high school students.

Contributions to Haiti relief will continue to be welcome for many months. It is best to make them payable to the local parish, with "Haiti" in the memo line, and then they are sent on to the Diocese to be sent to CRS.

Faith Alive! Perfect for Lent

This is a great time for parishes to form Faith Alive faith-sharing groups for Lent. Visit the diocesan website (www.dioceseoflacrosse.com) and click on the Faith Alive

links on the front page for sample bulletin inserts/sign-up forms and to order books. If you have any questions,

feel free to contact me at cruff@dioceseoflacrosse.com or 608-791-2667.

The Faith Alive books (*Discipleship Series*) are being used by more and more parishes and dioceses around the country. Here is some of the feedback I have received:

“These are resources that really take people where they are in their lives and bring them to a deeper relationship with Christ and greater enthusiasm for service. After we finished the first book, everybody wanted to do the second one. We got the same people back, plus more. They keep telling me how much they enjoy the discussion questions, because they connect the Scriptures and the stories to their daily lives.”

Allen Simmons
St. Florian’s Parish, Chicago, Ill.

“I had the occasion of teaching the diaconate candidates in our diocese on Catholic social teaching over a period of days. I decided to use one of the sessions of the *Discipleship Series* as a prayer/reflection component to the formation days. The candidates found the event very moving and formative. The discussion generated from the readings and reflections was powerful and stimulating, and the experience motivated the men even further to the commitment of service so essential to the vocation of the diaconate.”

Jude Huntz, Director, Human Rights Office,
Diocese of Kansas City, St. Joseph

“I led a group of young adults through ‘The Greatest of These is Love,’ and they responded with much enthusiasm. There was such a good balance of Scripture, stories, Catechism quotes, discussion, prayer and focus on service, and the program was very do-able for busy people. The members of our group found many thought-provoking connections to their daily lives. They especially liked the stories that brought the Scripture themes to life. Everybody really looked forward to coming to the meetings!”

Eileen Mueller, Nativity of Our Lord Parish,
St. Paul, Minn.

“The *Discipleship Series* is a wonderful tool that appeals to a broad range of participants. Drawing from the lives of the saints, Sacred Scripture, and Church teachings, it stimulates discussion that not only enlivens faith and inspires reflection, but asks that we put what we have gained into action. Long after our noon faith-sharing group at Catholic Charities has finished, I’ve seen two and three gathered continuing a discussion or sharing additional thoughts. The action component brings forth the “fruit” of Faith Alive – for what good is faith if it does not prompt us to serve one another?”

Deacon Richard Sage,
Executive Director, Catholic
Charities, Diocese of La Crosse

“The *Discipleship Series* books are approachable, accessible and inviting, and the program is fostering both prayer and charity in our parish. We have six groups in our parish of 650 families, and the facilitators come together to pray for an hour each week for the parish’s intentions. Then they go to a nursing home and lead faith-sharing with the residents there.”

Fr. Peter Manickam, Pastor
Sacred Heart Parish, Marshfield

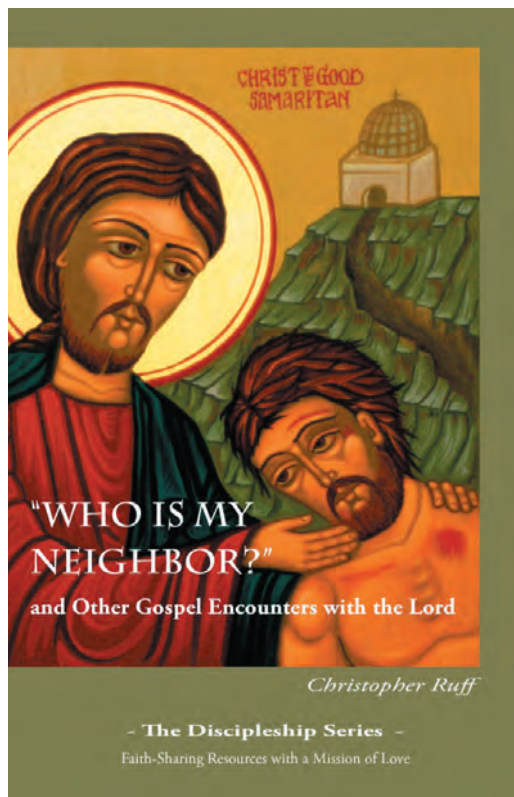
“In our small parish we had four groups. The participants became so connected that they want to keep meeting and to maintain the service commitment. There is a lady in the diocese who takes food to the poor

in a park in Grand Rapids every Saturday. We decided to make bagged lunches for her to give away, and later we involved students in preparing these meals. It was a beautiful opportunity for everyone.”

Jeannie Wernet, Catechetical Leader
St. Edward’s Parish,
Lake Odessa, Mich.

“In our parish, adult education has been challenging, but this book was extremely interesting and easy to do. We had steady attendance, without the usual drop-out rate. We look forward to doing the next book!”

Deacon John McKinley
St. Elizabeth’s Parish, Gooding, Ind.



Rite of Election

The Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion will take place at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph the Workman on Sunday, February 21, at three o'clock in the afternoon. It will be celebrated both for the catechumens who are to receive the Sacraments of Initiation this Easter and for the candidates who are to be received into the full communion of the Roman Catholic Church. A light reception will follow in the Cathedral Undercroft.

All catechumens and candidates for reception into full communion – together with their families, sponsors, godparents and catechists – are welcome and encouraged to attend the celebration at the Cathedral on February 21.

A form requesting numbers of catechumens, candidates, and guests has been sent directly to RCIA coordinators. More detailed instructions about the Rite itself will be mailed to participating RCIA coordinators closer to the event. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Sacred Worship (608-791-2674).

Rites of the Period of Purification and Enlightenment

As catechumens and candidates enter into the final period of preparation into the full communion of the Catholic Church, the RCIA provides a number of rites to assist them. “This is a period of more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction, and is intended to purify the minds and hearts of the elect as they search their own consciences and do penance. This period is intended as well to enlighten the minds and hearts of the elect with a deeper knowledge of Christ the Savior. The celebration of certain rites, particularly the scrutinies and the presentations, brings about this process of purification and enlightenment and extends it over the course of the entire Lenten season” (RCIA, n.139).

Please see the supplementary material for a list and description of the various rites that belong to the Period of Purification and Enlightenment.

Qualifications of Godparents and Sponsors

As we approach a time in the liturgical year that sees an increased number of baptisms and confirmation, the Office of Sacred Worship receives a number of questions about

qualifications for godparents and sponsors. These can be found, among other places, in the Code of Canon Law.

Concerning the Sacrament of Baptism:

Canon 872: Insofar as possible, a person to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who assists an adult in Christian initiation or together with the parents presents an infant for baptism. A sponsor also helps the baptized person to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it.

Canon 873: There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each.

Canon 874 §1: To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must:

1. be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;
2. have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;
3. be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;
4. not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
5. not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.

§2: A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the baptism.

For Confirmation:

Canon 892: Insofar as possible, there is to be a sponsor for the person to be confirmed; the sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament.

Continued on Page 13

Canon 893 §1: To perform the function of sponsor, a person must fulfill the conditions mentioned in Canon 874.

§2: It is desirable to choose as sponsor the one who undertook the same function in baptism.

Reception of Children – with Confirmation?

The rites surrounding initiation of adults and children are often confusing. Once such case is the reception of children who have attained the use of reason, about the age of seven. When a pastor or chaplain baptizes one at or beyond this age or receives one already baptized, he *must* confirm the child:

- “By universal Church law, the pastor or chaplain can and must administer the sacrament of confirmation to those persons who are no longer infants and whom he baptizes. (cf. Cann. 530, 1°; 566, §1; 882; 883, 2° and 885, §2; *RCIA*, Nos. 14, 24, 215 and 305)
- “By universal Church law, the pastor or chaplain can and must confirm those persons who have attained the use of reason but already have been baptized in another church or ecclesial communion, when they are received by him into full communion with the Catholic Church. (cf. Cann. 883, 2° and 885, §2; *RCIA*, No.481; NSC, No.35)

In short: do not delay a child’s confirmation until he would be the age of a Catholic candidate; that is, 13-16 years old!



Office of Sacred Worship

By Christopher Carstens

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, February 17

Lenten Regulations are as follows:

1. Catholics who have celebrated their 14th birthday are to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday, all Fridays in Lent, and Good Friday.
2. In addition to abstaining from meat, Catholics who have celebrated their 18th birthday, until they celebrate their 59th birthday, are to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Those who are bound to this regulation may eat only one full meal. Two smaller meals are permitted if necessary to maintain strength according to one’s needs, but eating solid foods between meals is not permitted.

Preparations for First Holy Communion

In a March 2006 letter to pastors, Bishop ListECKI issued some guidelines regarding First Holy Communion. He says:

“In many parishes, the well-intentioned leaders want each child to have a specific role at Mass so that the children feel a greater sense of being part of the celebration. However noble this intention may be, this desire for each child ‘to do’ something at Mass improperly forms children and is not the way to approach coming to the table of the Lord for the first time. I encourage you to help your Catholic School teachers and catechists to teach the proper sense of active and conscious



participation in the Mass as taught by the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council in the document *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. For your reference, I draw your attention to *Redemptionis Sacramentum* #40, which speaks to the matter at hand [see below].

Furthermore, the reader for the Liturgy of the Word is a ministerial role. This designated role of reader should be the commissioned individuals who have been properly trained to proclaim the Word of God. Breaking up the reading into sections to be read by several children is to be avoided.”

Redemptionis Sacramentum – “On Certain Matters to Be Observed or to Be Avoided Regarding the Most Holy Eucharist” – is a 2004 document called for by Pope John Paul II and given by the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. On the topic of “active participation,” number 40 states:

Nevertheless, from the fact that the liturgical celebration obviously entails activity, it does not follow that everyone must necessarily have something concrete to do beyond the actions and gestures, as if a certain specific liturgical ministry must necessarily be given to the individuals to be carried out by them. Instead, catechetical instruction should strive diligently to correct those widespread superficial notions and practices often seen in recent years in this regard, and ever to instill anew in all of Christ’s faithful that sense of deep wonder before the greatness of the mystery of faith that is the Eucharist, in whose celebration the Church is forever passing from what is obsolete into newness of life: “*in novitatem a vetustate*”. For in the celebration of the Eucharist, as in the whole Christian life which draws its power from it and leads toward it, the Church, after the manner of Saint Thomas the Apostle, prostrates herself in adoration before the Lord who was crucified, suffered and died, was buried and arose, and perpetually exclaims to him who is clothed in the fullness of his divine splendor: “My Lord and my God!”

Conferences

The Glory of Catholic Architecture: Shadow, Image and Reality

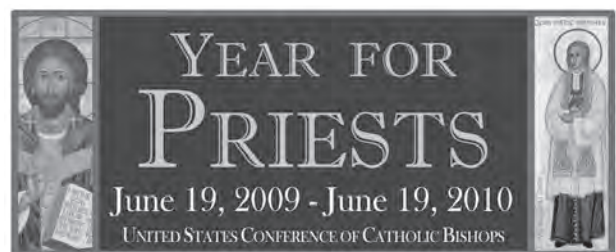
The Liturgical Institute, Mundelein, Ill.
April 30, 2010

A day with the Liturgical Institute’s own Dr. Denis McNamara teaching how the Fall is undone in the victory of Christ and how it finds expression in liturgical art and architecture. Learn how the Garden of Eden, the Temple of Solomon, the Heavenly Jerusalem and the notions of ordained and baptismal priesthood inform the theoretical and practical elements in the design of Catholic churches. Perfect for priests, church building committees, bible study groups, liturgy committees, architects, artists and all who love Catholic art, architecture and beauty.

For more information, contact the Liturgical Institute at (847) 837-4542 or bnield@usml.edu.

Liturgical Calendar

- February 2 (Tuesday): World Day for Consecrated Life.
- February 11 (Thursday): World Day of the Sick.
- February 17: Ash Wednesday.
- February 21 (Sunday): Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, Cathedral of St. Joseph, 3:00 p.m.
- February 26 (Friday): Day of Prayer and Penance for Diocesan and Universal Church needs. (See “The Bishop With His People,” p.184. Note: This observance is the Friday of the first week of Lent, not Friday after Ash Wednesday.)



“What’s Next?”

By Chris Rogers

Recently, I took my son Noah to his first Confession. He was a little nervous and during the drive over he was asking questions such as, “Can the priest tell you what I say?” and “How much should I tell him?” I tried to be reassuring and put all his fears to rest. When it was his turn to enter the confessional, his demeanor almost reminded me of the Cowardly Lion in *The Wizard of Oz*, in that his steps were heavy as if he had concrete blocks on his feet. However, the look on his face when he came out of the confessional was very peaceful. He was even smiling, and he said to me, “Can I go again next week?” Because of his positive experience, he is now looking ahead to what’s next in his faith journey.

I see scenarios like this played out in youth ministry all the time. Such as:

At the Immersion Retreat, there are many teens who are “made” to attend by their parents and they come in with a negative attitude. Then, by the end of the retreat they are not only glad they came, but looking ahead to the next event.

This month we took 200 teens and adults to the March

for Life in Washington, DC. Many of them began the journey thinking this was a one-time event, but by the end of the trip, they were looking to see other ways they could experience their faith in the immediate future.

It is so important for us as youth ministers to have an answer to their question, “What’s next?” While these large scale events, such as the Immersion Retreat and the March for Life, are great events, the most important aspect of youth ministry is the consistent weekly, bi weekly, or monthly opportunities we provide them in the parish. It is easy for us to look ahead to the large events and focus our efforts on getting to them, but if we are not providing opportunities for the youth on a regular basis, the fire that is lit in the hearts of the young people at these large scale events will ultimately burn out because there is nothing to sustain it. I am convinced that youth ministry can happen in any parish. It is just a matter of finding what works in that parish.

The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry is here to help you sustain your parish youth ministry program. We provide training for adults and parents, resources, and ongoing support. Know that we are here for you.

BEET Grants

The BEET Grant information will be mailed out the week of February 15, 2010. Please know that the deadline to return the applications to us is March 12, 2010. Information will also be on the diocesan Web site. If you have any questions you may call Susan Skemp at 608-791-2658.

*Please check our Web site
for details about the following events!*



Elk Mound Youth Rally

When: February 27

Who: Students in 1st-12th grade

Where: Elk Mound High School, 405 University St.
Elk Mound, WI 54739

Cost: Preregistration - \$10 in advance, \$15 at the door;
\$25 max per family

John Paul the Great Young Adult Retreat

When: March 5-7
Who: Young Adults from throughout Wisconsin and Beyond
Where: The Lions Camp in Rosholt, WI. 3834
County Road A, Rosholt, WI 54473
Cost: \$60 per person

Steubenville Rockies

When: July 13-19
Where: Denver, Colorado
Cost: \$415 per person

To register for this event, please contact Pat Brueggen @ 608-526-4424

Heavenly Plunge

When: March 21 9:45 am - 8:00 pm
Who: Students in 6th -12th Grade
Where: Action City, Eau Claire
Cost: \$25 per person

Adventure Camp

*There are still spots open for Week 1 (June 20-25, 2010) and Week 3 (July 11-16, 2010)

Leaven2Heaven

When: August 14
Where: Holy Cross Diocesan Center
Who: All youth in grades 7-12
Cost: TBA

Round Hill Youth Rally

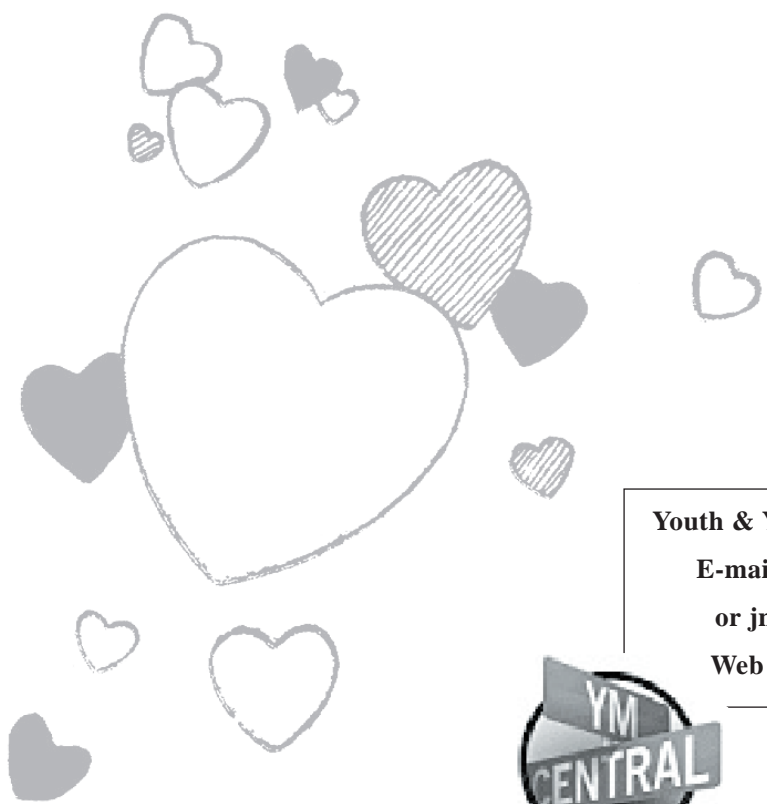
When: May 2
Who: All students in 6th - 12th grade
Where: Round Hill
Cost: Free

Necedah Retreat

When: May 22
Where: St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, Necedah
Cost: TBD

World Youth Day 2011

When: August 15 - 21, 2011
Where: Madrid, Spain



Youth & Young Adult Ministry ~ 608-791-0161

E-mail: crogers@dioceseoflacrosse.com

or jmickschl@dioceseoflacrosse.com

Web site: www.dioceseoflacrosse.com

