

# Spirit of Life

Roman Catholic Church

## SACRAMENT SERIES: *Anointing of the Sick:*

### ANOINTING OF THE SICK: A SACRAMENT OF HEALING GRACES

Unlike highly anticipated sacraments such as First Holy Communion and Matrimony, Anointing of the Sick tends to be one that we Catholics shy away from. Associated with times of sorrow and death, we push it away from our minds as a reminder of our imminent mortality. Yet, rather than being a beacon of doom as it is sometimes portrayed, this Sacrament of Healing is in fact one of hope and comfort — one that strengthens a person during times of suffering, grants them courage during their final hours and, most importantly, unites the sick person to Christ as they prepare for eternal life.

“The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is one of the seven sacraments of the Church, and its purpose is the healing of the body and spirit,” says Mari Jo Sigl, Outreach Ministry coordinator. “It should not be feared, but rather welcomed as the person receiving the sacrament is blessed with many special graces.”

These graces include spiritual health and unity with Jesus Christ, strength in bearing the burdens of illness or old age, and occasionally the complete restoration to health through God’s healing grace. This is why Pope Francis stressed during a 2014 General Audience that we should never avoid or view it as “bad luck” to call a priest when someone we love is sick or suffering. For, says the Holy Father, the priest comes to “help the sick or elderly



*continued on back cover*

## Stewardship

# LIVING IN LOVE

“God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God in him” (1 Jn 4:16). As Christ’s disciples, we are called to live lives of love. When asked which commandment is the most important, Jesus answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.” He immediately followed this command with, “Love your neighbor as yourself. No commandment is greater than these” (Mk 12:29-31).

The life of a Christian is, essentially, all about love! This doesn’t mean that Christ preached an abstract Gospel, or that we need to love simply because “it feels good.” The reality is quite the opposite. Indeed, Christ’s Gospel of love is one of dramatic action, and living in that love calls each of us to action.

What is this love, then, of which Christ speaks? How are we to live it out today?

Christ, the God who, as John tells us, “is love” Himself, came to Earth out of pure love for us. So that we might have everlasting life, Christ took the punishment for our sins. He, the Lord of all creation, was mocked, scourged and ultimately murdered on the cross to atone for the sins that we, His creatures, have committed. Now, that’s love! And it is the love that we are called to imitate throughout our lives.

Notice the selfless nature of Jesus’ act. He gained nothing in return for what He did, and He calls us to love in the same manner. How do we do that here and now? Do we die on our own personal crosses? The answer, in a way, is “yes.” We don’t necessarily die on the wood of the literal cross as Christ did,

but we must die to self for the sake of others. That is the love of Christ, and that is the love He calls us to every day. If we want to truly love God, we must love others. God Himself showed us the reality of this need when he commanded that we love our neighbor just as we love Him. And then Christ explained, “Whatever you do to the least of those, you do to me.” If we are called to love God, then we are called to love our neighbor, for Christ resides in each one of us. It must be a love like Christ has shown us – one of selflessness. We should want for nothing more than the good of our neighbor.

There are many ways that we can show our love to others, particularly through prayer and service. Here at our parish, there are many ministries that offer us the opportunity to serve our neighbors. If we offer a little bit of time, we can help out in the parish office doing seemingly menial yet important tasks, such as stuffing inserts into the bulletins so that fellow parishioners are aware of news and events within the parish. Those of us with an appetite for teaching may be called to serve others through RCIA or our Religious Education program. There is also always a need for more lectors and Eucharistic Ministers to aid the priest in bringing Christ to other parishioners at Mass.

These are but a few of the countless opportunities we have to serve our parish and local community. However we are called to do so, one thing is for certain: the love of Christ calls us to action. How will we show our love for God this year? Remember, “Whatever you do for the least of those, you do for me.”

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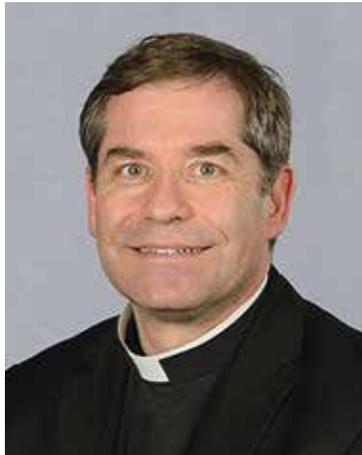
**A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR**

# **A BEGINNING AT SPIRIT OF LIFE**

Dear Parishioners,

**A**s I begin my time here with you, I have had the opportunity to meet some of you and have appreciated your warm welcome. I look forward to meeting more of you in the next few weeks.

By way of an introduction, my family is from the Beach and Golva area, and I grew up a block from Assumption Abbey in Richardton. As we all know, God works in mysterious ways, and it was while I was at NDSU in Fargo that I had the first stirrings of a vocation to the priesthood. After graduating from NDSU, I was still discerning God's purpose for me and had a year left in my enlistment with the North Dakota National Guard, so I applied and was accepted to



law school at UND, and it was there that my vocation was confirmed.

As we enjoy the rest of the summer and transition into the fall season, we will be presented with more opportunities, blessings and some challenges, but also the assurances of God's presence and assistance. Know of my prayers for all of you and I look forward to being with you.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Fr. Todd A. Kreitinger". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Fr. Todd Kreitinger  
Pastor

# **ST. KATERI COMMUNITY BLOCK PARTY**

**Saturday, Sept. 8th, 2018 • 5 p.m. to 10 p.m.**

**COMPLIMENTARY FOOD • LIVE MUSIC • CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES**

*All proceeds go to benefit the Mother Teresa Outreach.  
Please bring a non-perishable food item to donate.*

Volunteers are needed. Please contact the parish office if you would like to help.

**• ALL ARE WELCOME •**

## THE LITURGICAL ENVIRONMENT MINIS

When you walk into Spirit of Life Parish, you walk into a truly holy place — one that houses the very Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Christ. Thanks to the work of the Liturgical Environment Ministry, our church is a refuge of serenity and prayer for all those who long for God’s presence.

“In our day and age, it is so important to have our parish be a beautiful and spiritual environment, which encourages people to pray,” says Deb Rath, parish sacristan. “This is what our ministry tries to do. We want to help people to worship God in a reverent, participatory way, and give Him great honor and glory.”

The Liturgical Environment Ministry helps to bring to life the vibrant message of the liturgical seasons in various ways. For instance, they protect the life of prayer in our community in practical ways.

“A lot of people want quiet time for prayer, especially before Mass begins,” Deb says. “So we close the doors to the church beforehand. Then people know that when they open the doors, they are in a sacred space. This helps people prepare for what is about to happen at Mass, and get into the right frame of mind.”

They also set out decorative religious items that enhance the meaning behind each liturgical season. For example, during Advent, they decorate with the solemn color of purple. During the Christmas season, they set up an elaborate manger scene and Christmas trees, as well as poinsettias. During Lent, they usually place dead branches and a crown of thorns out to encourage all to reflect on Christ’s Passion. In preparation for Good Friday, following exposition of the Blessed Sacrament on Holy Thursday, they help cover up all of the statues



## ISTRY: STEWARDSHIP OF GOD'S HOUSE

in purple and extinguish the candles. In honor of Easter, they set out colored lilies and azaleas.

"We do whatever we can to draw people's minds into the liturgy, and help them reflect on what each liturgical season is about," Deb says. "That is our whole purpose. Jesus comes onto the altar at our parish. Our church is a very special, holy place. We want the décor, music and colors in the parish environment to help people feel comfortable and engaged. People are drawn to color, so we try to use colors that liven and brighten things up."

The ministry is fulfilled by Deb, along with the help of Cheryl Hansen and a number of faithful volunteers who step in when needed. They find their service to be an inspiring expression of their stewardship commitment to the community.

"Being a sacristan and helping with the Liturgical Environment Ministry has kept me connected to God and has drawn me to the Mass in a deeper way," Deb says. "I really love the Mass and I love to help make it a special experience for others. I am so grateful I can help others participate in the great experience of the Mass."



*Those who would like to help with this ministry may contact Parish Administrator Cheryl Hansen at 701-663-1660.*



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## UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF SACRAMENTALS IN OUR FAITH

Most Catholics are familiar with the idea of *sacraments* in the Church, of which there are seven. Sacraments are the foundation of the spiritual life for an individual and the Church. Sacraments are sources of grace — God’s very presence in our lives and unmerited favor from God. They are signs of God’s love, and these signs make present what they signify. Although a person benefits — receives the gift of grace — from the sacraments regardless of whether he or she is well disposed to them, one must cooperate with what the Spirit is doing in the sacrament to receive its full benefit.

*Sacramentals* are different. These are also sacred signs that can build holiness, but they do not work on their own. One must be aware and fully conscious of the sacred action. Sacramentals sanctify us to get the most benefit from the Sacraments (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1667). Sacramentals are given to us to make holy certain actions in life and life’s circumstances. There are many such sacred signs that are reminders to us of God.

The sign of the cross is perhaps one of the most fundamental of these signs, and for Catholics, this invocation is done at the start of every sacred action and prayer. Holy water is a sacramental, as it reminds us of our Baptism. By dipping our fingers into holy water and making the sign of the cross, we are combining two foundational symbols of the Christian life and the Paschal Mystery — the passion, dying and rising of Christ — and bringing them to life in us.

The exchange of peace in the Mass — and at other Catholic rites — is another example of a sacramental. By making some kind of meaningful sign of peace, we are giving the peace of Christ to another person. The chalice and other sacred vessels at Mass also are sacramentals, as they remind us

of what they are to contain — the very Body and Blood of Christ.

It might be helpful to organize the types of sacramentals into categories, as author Michael Pennock lists in *This Is Our Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*:

“*Actions* (blessings; genuflections; the sign of the cross; bowing one’s head at the name of Jesus; church processions); *Objects* (candles; holy water; statues and icons; holy pictures; blessed ashes; palms; rosaries; relics; incense; vestments; scapulars; church buildings; crosses; religious medals); *Places* (the Holy Land; Rome; Fatima; Lourdes; the National Shrine in Washington, D.C.; and other places of pilgrimage; chapels, retreat centers, and even Catholic cemeteries); *Prayers* (short prayers we say throughout the day; grace before and after meals; prayers at rising and going to bed; praying the rosary, praying a host of other traditional Catholic prayers and devotions); *Sacred Time* (liturgy; holy days; feasts of saints; your saint’s name day; special days of prayer; fasting and abstinence; retreats, etc.)” (*This Is Our Faith: A Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 176-177).

“Sacramentals...prepare us to receive grace and dispose us to cooperate with it” (CCC 1670). In a word, sacramentals, through the prayer of the Church, bring us to holiness in Christ. All devotions of piety, including sacramentals, should point us toward the liturgy of the Church, a connection to a local parish community, and to the Eucharist (CCC 1675).

The Church, through Christ’s passion, death and resurrection, has given us these sacred signs to lead us in holiness, and to better recognize an authentic Christian life. How many sacramentals can you recognize in your life? Probably more than you think.

# ONE + ONE = LOVE

BY SHELLY PRESZLER

I have somewhat of a rebellious heart. I particularly cringe at the thought of a bunch of needless rules or even regulations. Which is why we live in Mandan, where the West begins and golf carts roll randomly through our neighborhood streets. I recently told my friend Geri, “Frivolous rules are meant to tempt me.” We both laughed.

However, when it comes to my faith walk with God and his Church, I find the rules somewhat comforting. He’s like a father laying down ground rules to protect his family from outside harmful forces. Our Heavenly Father has our best interests at heart. He longs to live beside us, stirring a desire in our hearts to serve Him and our fellow man.

There have been many times He has placed tasks upon my heart to accomplish. Sometimes, I listen patiently and if it feels like His request fits into my schedule, I will do the task or errand. But, if it seems too difficult, or too much of an inconvenience, I’ll shy away from the responsibility like a teenager shoving dirty laundry under the bed. I’ll wait until later, I tell myself. I’m busy today, anyway.

But, there have been those times, few and far between, where I happily do what He’s asking of me — even joyfully skipping through the task’s completion. He asked me recently to give a coat away. I questioned if He was serious. He assured me I had two, and since I couldn’t wear them both at once, to give one away. He told me who to give it to and to let her choose. I did. She chose the one she liked and I smiled and haven’t missed the coat since.

He also asked me to fast for a loved one. He knows how much I love food and how at times



it’s almost an idol for me. He knew it would be a sacrifice for me! Must be why it seems to work for His plan of greater good. I did the fast but He asked for more — along with prayer, He wanted almsgiving too. He asked me to buy something special for someone He placed on my heart. This task was done very lovingly. I hope the person will receive the gift with the sheer joy of the giver at heart.

It seems in the end when I’m obedient to God with my “yes” and do the task He sets before me with a docile heart, it turns into Love. Because One + One = Love.

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Change Service Requested

## LITURGY SCHEDULE

### Spirit of Life

Monday: 8 a.m.

Tuesday - Thursday: 7 a.m., 9 a.m.

Friday: 7 a.m., 9 a.m.,

Saturday: 9 a.m., 5 p.m.

Sunday: 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 6 p.m.

**CONFESSIONS:** Sunday: 8-8:30 a.m.

Saturday: 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Wednesday: 7-8:30 p.m., and 20 min. before  
weekday Masses except Mondays

### St. Martin's Parish

Even Months: 9 a.m.

Odd Months: 11 a.m.

### St. Anthony's Parish

Even Months: 11 a.m.

Odd Months: 9 a.m.

## ANOINTING OF THE SICK *continued from front cover*

person,” bringing with him hope, help and the forgiveness of sins. And in so doing, it reminds the recipient that they are being supported by the entire Church family, as they are drawn closer to our merciful Lord.

“The Anointing of the Sick is administered to bring spiritual and even physical strength during an illness, especially near the time of death,” Mari Jo says. “It is important because it conveys several graces and imparts gifts of strengthening in the Holy Spirit against anxiety, discouragement and temptations. In addition, it conveys peace and fortitude.”

Thus, Mari Jo says, although the Anointing of the Sick is often received during a person's final days, it is not reserved exclusively for such times.

The sacrament can also be received by anyone suffering from what the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* refers to as “grave illness,” including those with long-term illnesses, the elderly, and even persons preparing for a serious surgical procedure (CCC 1514). People can also receive the sacrament more than once, much like the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, so as to continue benefitting from its healing graces.

Though illness and death are never easy, Anointing of the Sick helps remove its sting by reminding us of the hope of the Resurrection and, in the words of Pope Francis, by “allow[ing] us to touch God's compassion for man.” Let us, then, be vigilant in seeking out the graces of this sacrament, both for ourselves and our loved ones.

*To learn more about Anointing of the Sick or to schedule its reception,  
please contact the parish office at 701-663-1660.*