

Spirit of Life

Roman Catholic Church

THE BEST WAY TO SPEND TIME: *EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION*

Amidst our busy lives, time seems to continuously elude us. Most of us have a ready to-do list of things we need to get done, but for which we never seem to have time. Faced with this quandary, the idea of committing to a weekly hour of Eucharistic Adoration can seem daunting if not impossible. And yet, carving time in our lives for Jesus is the most important aspect of stewardship. It's how we make Him central to our lives, how we find the strength to perform our duties and responsibilities, and how we are able to truly become His disciples.

"It is in that relationship that we are able to truly love others," says Director of Perpetual Adoration Deb Rath. "Prayer has to be an integral part of our everyday life. And when we come to the Chapel and spend time with God, He fills us with grace. He shines light into places that we usually don't see. Little by little, we receive revelations – little by little, we come to know ourselves, and we gain so much strength and peace."

Here at Spirit of Life, we are immeasurably blessed by the presence of our Perpetual Adoration Chapel. Founded on March 15, 2013, parishioners and guests alike are able to visit our Eucharistic Lord at any hour of the day, basking in His presence and drawing from His strength. To make this possible, however, one of our commitments as a faith community is that Christ never be left unattended. This ensures that he is always adored by the faithful and helps protect our Eucharistic Lord from harm or theft. That is why it is so important that we have committed adorers for every hour of every day.

"When Jesus is exposed in the Blessed Sacrament, we are committed to never leaving him unattended,"



At the Adoration Chapel's entrance, Msgr. Chad Gion has posted a sign reminding us not only to pray for our own intentions, but also to particularly lift up the Holy Father and his intentions, to pray for families, and to pray for an increase in religious vocations.

Deb says. "So, having two people committed per hour would really be a great blessing. Recognizing that things come up, however, we also have an extensive substitute list, and in the case of an emergency, my phone number is always posted. I live five minutes from the church and could always be there."

Though becoming a committed adorer does require sacrifice and sometimes a juggling of schedules, it is time that is well spent with our Lord. There, we can take a break from the hustle and bustle of modern-day living, allowing ourselves to become spiritually rejuvenated and to truly come to know the Person of Christ.

"Time with Jesus in the chapel is my peace, my strength, my hope, and my joy – and next to the Mass, it is the greatest gift in my life and to this parish," Deb says. "I think people just need to be open to God's grace and to trust that this type of

continued on page 5

HOW CAN WE MODEL THE FAITH FOR OUR CHILDREN?

The Church has made it clear that parents are primarily responsible for the spiritual and cognitive development of their children in matters of the faith. As the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, states, “Husbands and wives find their proper vocation in being witnesses of the faith and love of Christ to one another and to their children” (Chapter 4, Section 35). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* further emphasizes this vocation, by pointing out that the moral education and spiritual formation of children is not only the right, but the responsibility, of their parents: “The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable... Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children” (CCC 2221, 2223).

But how can we as parents create an environment in the home conducive to spiritual and moral development? As busy adults, how are we to disseminate the knowledge and understanding of the tenets of the faith to our children in the way that a trained and experienced catechist can? Furthermore, how do we strike a balance between teaching our children in the home and not interfering with the faith formation and sacramental preparation they are currently receiving through their parish school or religious education program?

The answer to all of these questions is stewardship.

Indeed, it is important that we reinforce the lessons that our children learn in school and at religious education classes by talking to them about the faith, reading Sacred Scripture with them, and spending time in family prayer. And there are several authoritative resources online that can help parents in this task, including Catholic Parents OnLine – www.catholicparents.org – which links parents to numerous websites and documents that can help them in talking to their children about the faith.

But the best way that we can teach our children is by serving as a living example to them of how to live as disciples of Christ. If we want our children to grow up as strong Catholics and to display a lifelong commitment to their faith, then it is important

that we ourselves live a committed faith life. This includes an ongoing commitment to our own faith formation as adults and active participation in the sacraments. It also includes the giving back of our time, talent, and treasure in service of our community in thanksgiving for the gifts that God has given us.

Parenting can be a tough vocation, and children deal with many influences in their lives that exist in stark contrast to the values that their parents often hope to instill within them. Fortunately for parents, the stewardship way of life provides a simple and effective model for teaching our children in matters of the faith. By living as stewards of God’s gifts and reaping the spiritual rewards that accompany this lifestyle, we are tangibly showing our children that sharing of our gifts and talents leads to a life of happiness and spiritual fulfillment. In doing this, we give them a good opportunity to follow in our footsteps and make their faith a top priority for the rest of their lives.



A LETTER FROM OUR PASTOR

THE WORD OF GOD: HOW DO WE HEAR IT? AND HOW DO WE RESPOND TO IT?

Dear Parishioners,

A few short weeks ago, we completed our Christmas season. We are now in what we call Ordinary Time – but before long, we will begin Lent. This is one of those rare years when Ash Wednesday is in March – so, Lent does not, of course, begin in February this year.

The Gospel of John begins with the statement, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” We speak often of the Word in the Church. As most of you are aware, the first part of our Mass is called the Liturgy of the Word. What does that mean to us?

Basically, there are four parts of our celebration of Mass: Introductory Rites; Liturgy of the Word; Liturgy of the Eucharist; and Concluding Rites. My focus in this reflection is that second part – the Liturgy of the Word. The main parts of that are a First Reading, a Responsorial Psalm, a Second Reading, the Gospel, and a Homily.

We draw on Holy Scripture from the Bible for



the readings. As Catholics, we do not consider that these readings are about God, or about the Church, or about our faith, or a history lesson, or a nice story from long ago. We consider them to be God speaking directly to us. Thus, our attentiveness to what is being proclaimed is important. Are we listening? Do we hear? And then, do we respond in our lives? All of those should be facets of how we approach the Word of God.

For us, the Word of God is the living Word. God is speaking to us as a community, and He asks us to be faithful to His Word. If we pay attention and

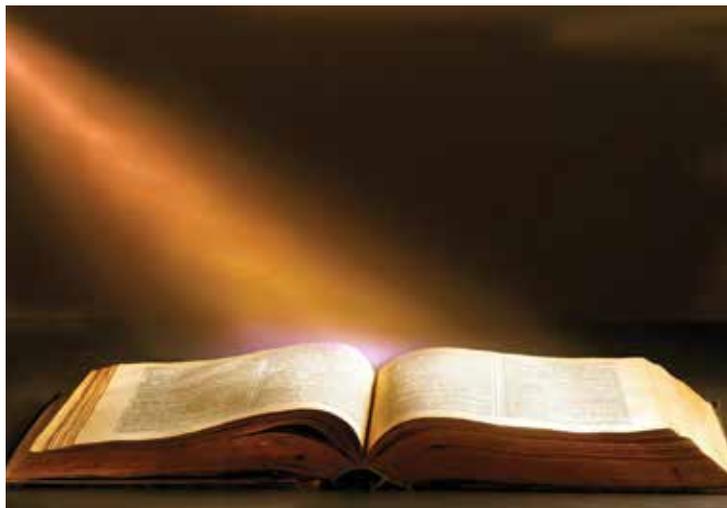
truly listen, God can nourish our spirit, and Christ can be more real and present to us. The Homily, the Responsorial Psalm, the Profession of Faith, and the Intercessions develop the Word further and complete it. The Profession of Faith is our acceptance of God’s Word.

However, the question for us is, how do we respond to the Word? Does it change our lives? Does it bring us to the conversion necessary to live lives of stewardship and service? It is not easy, I know. Being able to listen, to hear and then to act requires time, practice, commitment, and a desire to fulfill all of this. That is one of my prayers for us – that we can hear the Word, and that we can bring it to life in our own lives and in the lives of others.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Msgr. Chad Gion". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Msgr. Chad Gion,
Pastor



A PICTURE OF C CATECHESIS OF TH

Sometimes the accomplishments of children can take you by surprise.

Many of us have had an experience of being startled by the insight shared by a child, or amazed by something they're able to achieve, something we simply assumed was beyond them.

However, here at Spirit of Life, in our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) program, these moments happen all the time. As a Montessori-based faith formation program, seeking to follow Maria Montessori's ideology, honoring the child's request to "help me do it myself," the atrium – "classroom" – is a place where children are invited and assisted in growing closer to Jesus, at their own pace.

As is the case with Montessori environments, the set-up is distinct from a traditional classroom. Level 1 (ages 3 to 6), and Level 2 (ages 6 through 9) atriums are each tailored to the specific developmental and learning needs of children in that age group. Rather than desks and a white board, the atrium is filled with small tables, mats to encourage "floor work," and nothing higher than a child's eye level. Rather than textbooks, children learn from handmade dioramas of Gospel stories, an altar and "Mass set" that is just their size, maps of Biblical locations, various practical life elements, and much more.

"Children that young are very sensorial, they need to not just hear, but touch and see," says Karen Eggers, our Director of Religious Education. "[In the atrium] they're working with materials, not just hearing things from a book – so, it engages them more. Everything about the atrium is designed for them to move and work, to help them understand."

CGS gives children the chance to begin their faith formation at a time in their life when studies show they are actually most attentive to learning about God and beginning a relationship with Him.

"Children are probably better than a lot of adults as far as entering that relationship," Karen says. "They are so joyful, they are all about giving and receiving love.

"[Ages 3 to 6] is really the best stage to start, because they're so sensitive to [spiritual] things,"



Alyssa Caya, who serves as a catechist, or "guide," shows two students a new work.

she adds. "The joy and awe and wonder that they have, we're all called to have that child-like approach to God."

The focus of CGS, from the very beginning, is inviting the children to experience and develop their own personal relationship with God, and from that, flows their longing to know more about Him.

"We often want to teach about the faith and then have them love it, whereas really, they should first love God and love the Church and then the desire to learn just comes," Karen says. "This setting is about letting the child just fall in love with God."

CGS catechist Becca Swenson has served with the program for the past five years, and loves the unique environment that the atrium provides.

"When I was in college and in high school, I volunteered as a traditional faith formation teacher and I found the crafts to be exhausting – even just trying to convince them to color week after week was difficult," Becca says. "[But in the atrium] it was so peaceful, the children could choose the lessons that were a need for them, in their little souls. They have all the lessons and materials right there for them that help them on their own."

Not only are catechists rewarded with astonishing glimpses into child-like faith, but they're also given the opportunity to find themselves diving deeper into the heart of God.

CHILD-LIKE FAITH

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

“It’s helped me grow in knowledge of the faith,” Becca says. “You’re presented the lessons as if you are a child, and it automatically puts you in a different posture than when you’re just trying to read Scripture at home or you’re at Mass by yourself. You’re forced to look at all of this much slower and make it more part of your everyday faith life.”

Karen encourages parents to consider CGS as an option for their young children, and to come visit the atrium.

“The ultimate goal of faith formation isn’t to ‘complete’ something, but to help you grow in faith and love God,” she says. “Why would you want to wait to do that for your child?”

“Many parents of young children think, ‘There’s no way that my child can do this,’” adds Becca, who has four young children herself. “But there is something about the peacefulness and the order of that environment – that’s the way it was designed and it’s how children thrive.”

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd sessions are available on Sunday mornings from 8:45 a.m. until 10:45 a.m., and on Wednesday evenings from 4-5:30 p.m. and 6-7:30 p.m. Currently, only Level 1 (ages 3-6) is available, however, our Level 2 atrium (ages 6-9) will open this fall. All children must be potty-trained to enroll in CGS. The annual cost for registration is \$40/child, and a sliding scale is available.

To register your child, please contact Director of Religious Education Karen Eggers at 701-663-1660 or karen@myspiritoflife.com. Registration for the current year remains open, and registration for the 2017-18 school year will begin this summer. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a CGS aide or want to help with the building of our Level 2 atrium, please contact Karen.

THE BEST WAY TO SPEND TIME: EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

continued from front cover

commitment will be so richly rewarded. There are so many people whose lives are a mess and they are feeling that emptiness – they try to fill it up with everything else, but nothing can fill our hearts like Christ.”

Parishioner Brett Eckert was raised in a non-denominational church and describes himself as anti-Catholic for many years. He came to the University of Mary, and there he met his future wife who was Catholic. After attending Mass with her, going to adoration with her, reading and studying about Catholicism, he attended RCIA at Spirit of Life, and came into communion with the Catholic Church in December 2013.

“I attribute all of the blessings and trials in my life to the Lord, but more importantly to my time in the adoration chapel,” Brett says. “My faith life has grown so much

because of what has happened to me, because of what I believe is my time with the Lord in adoration. He helped break away the hardness that I had in my heart and helped me to see His truth and bring me closer to Him. It has been amazing to see my faith and the faith of my family flourish because of simply saying yes to adoration.”

Currently, there are many slots in need of committed adorers. If you are seeking a way to deepen your relationship with Christ or to fill that spiritual void, please consider signing up for one of these hours. It truly will be time well spent. And even if you aren’t quite ready to commit to a regular hour, the Adoration Chapel is always available to parishioners and guests alike.

To sign up to become a committed adorer, or to simply learn more information about the Perpetual Adoration Chapel, please contact Deb Rath at 701-663-1660.

VALENTINE'S DAY

THE FEAST OF A CHRISTIAN MARTYR

Candy, flowers, romantic dinners, and excuses for wooing are the common traditions we associate with the once-pagan holiday known as Valentine's Day.

Dangling cupids, candy "message" hearts, and faux long-stemmed roses clutter every card store, waiting for that last-minute purchase.

The question is—how did this over-commercialized holiday really begin?

There are a few stories surrounding the history of Feb. 14 and St. Valentine himself, all dating back to the Roman Empire. The 14th day of February was a day set aside to honor the goddess Juno, queen of the Roman gods and goddesses. The following day, Feb. 15, began the feast of Lupercalia – a fertility festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture, as well as to the Roman founders Romulus and Remus.

As part of the festival traditions, there was a name drawing among the young people. The names of young Roman women were written on slips of paper and placed into a jar. Each young man would draw a young woman's name from the jar, and the two would be partners for the duration of the festival. Sometimes the pairing lasted an entire year, and often, the couple would fall in love and later marry.

At the time, Emperor Claudius II was involved in many bloody and unpopular campaigns, and he was having a difficult time recruiting soldiers to join his military leagues. Claudius believed that soldiers were reluctant to join because they did not want to leave their loves or families.

With this in mind, Claudius decreed all marriages and engagements cancelled in Rome. During this time, St. Valentine was a priest in Rome, and he and St. Marius secretly married young couples. For this, St. Valentine was apprehended and dragged before the Prefect of Rome, who sentenced him to be beaten and then executed by beheading. He suffered this martyrdom on Feb. 14, around the year 270 AD.

Before his death, it is said that St. Valentine left a note for the jailer's daughter, who had become his friend, and signed it "From Your Valentine." Although the truth behind the St. Valentine's legend

is murky, the stories certainly emphasize his appeal as a sympathetic, heroic and, most importantly, romantic figure. It is no surprise that by the Middle Ages, Valentine was one of the most popular saints in England and France.

Over time, Feb. 14 became a time for lovers to exchange sweet messages, making St. Valentine the patron saint of lovers. The date was often commemorated with the sending of poems and simple gifts. During the Middle Ages, it was commonly believed in France and England that Feb. 14 was the beginning of the avian mating season, which added to the idea that the middle of February – Valentine's Day – should be a day for romance.



“WHOSE HANDS WILL BE HOLDING THIS ROSARY?”

SPIRIT OF LIFE’S ROSARY GUILD

In 1983, Marlene Magilke’s aunt gave her a hand-made rosary as a “thank you” gift. At 92 years old, Marlene’s aunt still makes a rosary a day.

“What a rewarding feeling it is to make a rosary and know that someone is going to use it to pray,” Marlene says. “The Rosary is a very powerful prayer. Our Blessed Mother is our advocator, benefactress and mediatrix.”

Inspired by her aunt’s steadfast devotion to making rosaries, Marlene contacted Our Lady’s Rosary Makers and ordered 10 rosary-making kits. A group of three women began meeting every week to watch a video and learn how to make wire rosaries.

“Our Lady’s Rosary Makers sends out a newsletter sharing where rosaries are needed around the world,” Marlene says. “We send them to missions in India and Uganda. The sisters here give them to fallen-away Catholics who come to the parish.”

The kits that Our Lady’s Rosary Makers provide include all the supplies necessary to make a rosary – wire, beads, pliers, and a crucifix. In the beginning, Marlene worked for about six months to learn how to make a rosary. Each bead has to be strung, and each link has to be bent with the pliers.

Now Marlene can make a rosary in merely a few hours, and it was entirely worth the time it took for her to learn.

“While you’re making this rosary, for me, I am wondering who will be praying on those beads,” Marlene says. “Whose hands will be holding this rosary? What enjoyment it will bring to that person? And what a reward to us for doing it! How Mary must be smiling.”

Those who make the rosaries gather every week on Tuesday evenings at the home of one of the members. They work together during this time, and



Spirit of Life’s Rosary Guild, (from left) Carol Doll, Diane Leingang, Marlene Magilke, Gladys Thomas and Marlene Helbling

also on their own throughout the week.

“It is a very relaxing hobby, but it is also rewarding in that we can spread world peace with our rosaries that go overseas,” Marlene says. “We can spread the Gospel, spread the Word of God, by sharing our time and our talent.”

continued on back cover

“The Rosary is a powerful prayer. Making rosaries can turn spare moments into gifts of hope for others, and the people who receive these rosaries pray for us. That is pretty special.” – Marlene Magilke

801 1st Street SE | Mandan, ND 58554
Phone: 701-663-1660 | myspiritoflife.com

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., Latin Mass at 5:30 p.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.

“WHOSE HANDS WILL BE HOLDING THIS ROSARY?”

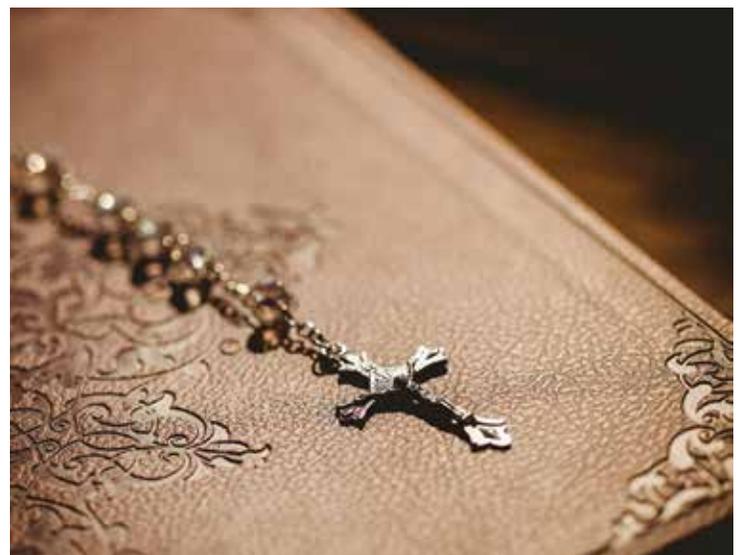
continued from page 7

All are welcome to come learn how to make rosaries with Spirit of Life's Rosary Guild. The ministry members are happy to teach others and to spread the devotion to the Rosary.

“There was a generation when the Rosary was not talked about very much, and hopefully we can get our young people back into saying the Rosary,” Marlene says. “Padre Pio said, ‘Recite the Rosary, and recite it always and as much as you can.’”

Come enjoy fellowship and learn how to make rosaries, how to spread the Gospel by using your talents.

“The Rosary is a powerful prayer,” Marlene says. “Making rosaries can turn spare moments into gifts of hope for others, and the people who receive these rosaries pray for us. That is pretty special.”



*If you would like more information about Spirit of Life's Rosary Guild,
please call Marlene Magilke at 701-667-2846.*