



WEEKLY MEMO from BMW

Date: April 23, 2014  
From: Bishop Michael W. Warfel  
To: Clergy, Religious, Lay Ecclesial Ministers et al

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## Christ is risen! Indeed, Christ truly is risen!

I would like to note again, that a series of mini-conferences will be offered in each of the five Vicariates on the importance of stewardship for revitalizing and energizing parishes. It is to the advantage of each parish that our parishioners learn about stewardship which essentially is about discipleship and evangelization. **Please make an effort to attend as well as encourage staff and other parishioners to attend.** I want to emphasize that this is not about fund raising! The dates and locations are; Holy Spirit Parish, Great Falls on April 30<sup>th</sup>; Sacred Heart Parish, Miles City on May 2<sup>nd</sup>; St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Billings on May 7<sup>th</sup>; St. Jude Thaddeus Parish, Havre on May 21<sup>st</sup>; Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Poplar on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The presenters are members of the Diocesan Stewardship Council and are excited to share the eye-opening information they have learned from attending the Northwest Regional Stewardship Conference last September in Vancouver, Washington.

The **Care and Share Catholic appeal** has been going well in its early stages but **there is yet need for pastors and administrators to continue to promote it. Please do so!** I suggest that you review the CD that was created for the appeal. A number of people have said that it is very effective and makes the case for the appeal. Of course, this very much includes providing a Church for the future for our children.

The Catholic Rural Life conference will be at St. Benedict's in Roundup this Saturday. It's not too late to decide to attend. The lineup of panelists for the conference is a good one as is the topic. Two members from St. Mathias in Ryegate Leonard and Mary Ann Schladweiler, will be receiving the Edwin V. O'Hara Catholic Rural Life Award. The couple have lived on a medium-sized ranch their whole adult lives while raising their family. Both are Lay Leaders of Prayer at the Church as well as Communion Ministers.

Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II are being officially canonized this coming Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, Divine Mercy Sunday in Rome. In honor of their canonizations, I will be celebrating a Mass of thanksgiving at St. Ann's Cathedral on Thursday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 PM. All priests are invited to concelebrate.

## **Official Announcements**

After consultation with the Priest Personnel Board, Bishop Michael Warfel makes these assignments effective July 1, 2014 (unless otherwise noted).

*Any additional changes or adjustments will be announced at a later date.*

### **Retirements**

Rev. Lothar Krauth, Pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes to retire after 41 years of priestly ministry. Bishop Warfel expresses his deep gratitude to Rev. Krauth for his many years of service as he enters into retirement status.

Rev. Marcel Vogel, Pastoral Administrator of Sacred Heart in Cascade and St. Ann in Fort Shaw to retire after 25 years of priestly ministry. Bishop Warfel expresses his deep gratitude to Rev. Vogel for his many years of service as he enters into retirement status.

### **Ordinations**

Deacon David Wilkins, who is scheduled to be ordained a priest on June 24, 2014, at St. Ann Cathedral in Great Falls, is assigned Parochial Vicar at Holy Spirit Parish in Great Falls with Holy Spirit Parish providing Pastoral Ministry at Sacred Heart in Cascade and St. Ann in Fort Shaw.

Deacon Garrett Nelson who is scheduled to be ordained a priest on June 26, 2014, at St. Patrick Co-Cathedral in Billings is assigned to continue his studies at Holy Cross in Rome, Italy.

Carlos Malaver-Parada who is scheduled to be ordained a transitional deacon on May 17, 2014, at St. Ann Cathedral in Great Falls is assigned to a pastoral year at Corpus Christi in Great Falls

### **Assignments**

Rev. Dick Schlosser, Vicar Forane, Pastor of Holy Spirit in Great Falls to additionally become Pastor of Sacred heart in Cascade and St. Ann in Fort Shaw.

Rev. Michael Schneider, Pastor of Immaculate Conception in Forsyth and St. Joseph in Hysham, is assigned as Pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes in Great Falls.

Rev. Jose Marquez, an extern priest from the Diocese of Newark, NJ, Pastoral Administrator of St. Leo in Lewistown, and Holy Family in Winifred, is assigned as Parochial Vicar at Mary Queen of Peace in Billings.

Rev. Samuel Spiering, Parochial Vicar of Sacred Heart in Miles City and Sacred Heart in Terry, is assigned Parochial Administrator of St. Leo in Lewistown and Holy Family in Winifred.

Rev. Doug Krings, Parochial Vicar of St. Benedict in Roundup, St. Theresa of the Little Flower in Broadview, Our Lady of Mercy in Melstone, St. Mathias in Ryegate, and St. Aloysius in Winnett is assigned Parochial Administrator of the same churches. Fr. David Reichling is relieved of his role as canonical pastor.

Rev. Arumugam Ananda Kumar, an extern priest of the Heralds of the Good News (Mary Queen of Peace Province in India), is appointed Pastoral Administrator of Immaculate Conception in Forsyth and St. Joseph in Hysham, and Sacramental Minister of St. Margaret Mary in Colstrip effective on or about July 1 depending on his final approval from the U.S. Department of Immigration.

Rev. Philip Chinnappan, , an extern priest of the Heralds of the Good News (Mary Queen of Peace Province in India), is appointed Parochial Vicar of Sacred Heart in Miles City and Sacred Heart in Terry effective on or about July 1 depending on his final approval from the U.S. Department of Immigration.

There are quite a number of celebrations for completion of the sacraments of initiation this spring. Upcoming dates and locations for Confirmation and First Communion next weekend and following week is as follows:

- Saturday, April 26<sup>th</sup> at St. Raphael, Glasgow (with Queen of Angels, Nashua (Fr. Peterson));
- Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at St. Benedict, Roundup (with St. Mathias, Ryegate and St. Teresa, Broadview) (Bishop); then at St. Leo's Parish, Lewistown (with Holy Family Winifred, Sacred Heart, Hobson, St. Anthony's, Denton, St. Rose of Lima, Stanford) (Bishop);
- Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Great Falls (Fr. Krauth);
- Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup> at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Poplar (with St. Anthony, Culbertson) (Fr. Peterson)
- Monday, April 28<sup>th</sup> at Immaculate Conception Parish, Wolf Point (Fr. Peterson);
- Tuesday April 29<sup>th</sup> at St. Matthew's Parish, Sidney (with St. Bernard's, Charlie Creek, St. Catherine's, Fairview, St. Michael's, Savage, St. Theresa's, Lambert) (Fr. Peterson);
- Wednesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at St. Joseph's Parish, Plentywood (with St. Patrick's, Medicine Lake and St. Philip's, Scobey) (Fr. Peterson).

On June 19, 2014, there will be a March for Marriage event on the Mall in Washington DC. People can participate in this event by signing up to be a part of a Virtual March. The website for this is [www.marriagemarch.org](http://www.marriagemarch.org).

For those who may be interested in traveling south, there will be the third World Apostolic Congress on Mercy in Bogota, Columbia from August 15 to August 29 of this year. For more information, visit their website at [www.wacomcolumbia.org](http://www.wacomcolumbia.org).

On occasion, I have found that people like to know what the bishop is thinking about and what he is saying in his preaching. In light of this, I am providing the homily I offered for Easter Sunday:

### **Easter Sunday 2014 Bishop Warfel**

A number of years ago, there was a story in the news about a woman who had been found stumbling along the road. She was picked up by the local police because of her obvious disorientation. They quickly determined that she had amnesia. Examiners guessed she had had some type of traumatic experience causing her loss of memory. In many ways, she could function well and seemed as normal as anyone but she was completely unaware of her identity – who she was and where she had come from. I recall how one of the national morning TV programs had her on their show in hopes that someone would recognize her. It was obviously a painful experience for her. I believe her family was able to identify her and bring her home, but I never found out if she ever recovered her memory.

Knowing who we are is important. But, do we really know who we are? When someone asks, “Who are you” what comes to mind? I’m John or Sally Smith? I work in an office or a hospital? I’m a parent of three children? I’m Catholic? All good answers, but in light of this Easter morning we might take a page out of the play book of Pope Francis and go a bit deeper! The Holy Father gave an interview in the Fall of 2013. He was asked by the interviewer: “Who is Jorge Borgoglio?” He answered: “I’m a sinner. This is the most accurate definition. It is not a figure of speech, a literary genre. I am a sinner.”

To emphasize his point the Pope referred to a famous painting by Caravaggio housed at the Church of St. Louis of France in Rome titled, “The Calling of St. Matthew.” The Pope had often visited that Church prior to his election as Pope to reflect on the painting. It depicts a key moment in Matthew’s life in which Christ calls him to be a disciple. (Remember: Matthew was a despised tax-collector, viewed as a traitor and scoundrel.) In the scene, Matthew is among his friends who are looking down, counting their money. They are not even aware of Christ’s presence. Jesus brings light into the scene and points to Matthew, calling him to leave his dark world of greed and selfishness and to follow him. Matthew points to himself, partly in disbelief (You want *me*, a sinner to follow *you*?) and partly in fear (What is this going to mean for me? What is this going to cost me? What am I going to have to give up?)

The Pope says, “That finger of Jesus, pointing at Matthew. That’s me. I feel like him. Like Matthew. It is the gesture of Matthew that strikes me: he holds on to his money as if to say, ‘No, not me! No, this money is mine.’ Here, this is me, “says the Pope, “a

sinner on whom the Lord has turned his gaze. And this is what I said when they asked me if I would accept my election as pontiff... 'I am a sinner, but I trust in the infinite mercy and patience of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I accept in a spirit of penance.' The Pope remembered not only who he was, but who he was in Christ and what Christ had done for him. As a result, he knows what Christ has called for him to do. I'd like to reflect briefly on these three points.

First of all, remembering who we are is so vitally important. I believe the Lord wants us to recall that we are like Matthew. We are like Pope Francis. We are sinners - but offered salvation through the death and resurrection of the Lord! We, like the Pope, may be sinners, but we are not just sinners. We are beloved in the Lord. From eternity we have been in the mind of God and from eternity God has loved us. God has loved us into being so that we could know life with God. When sin entered human existence, it became a barrier to this life and God sent a Redeemer.

In and of ourselves, there is no way out of sin and the consequences of sin which is death. The stories from John's Gospel that were proclaimed on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent remind us that God sent a remedy for the sin. The characters in the stories are caricatures of ourselves. The Samaritan Woman at the well needed Jesus to quench her spiritual thirst. The man born blind at the pool in Siloam needed Jesus to provide insight for the man born blind. Jesus' friend Lazarus needed Jesus to raise him from death. It was a harbinger of resurrection. We need Jesus to forgive our sins and reconcile us to God. We cannot do so on our own merits. It cannot be bought. It cannot be earned. It can only be received as the precious and pure gift it is. The Pope said this about it: "... in order for this salvation to enter into us we need a humble heart, a docile heart, an obedient heart like Mary's."

The Scriptures remind us that it is through Jesus that our sins are forgiven and that we are reconciled to God. This was proclaimed specifically in the passage from Romans at the Vigil of Easter: "Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live newness of life" (Romans 6:3-4). When we know this in our heart of hearts and believe this in the depths of our being, it completely colors our lives: our thoughts and our behaviors. But too often we have a kind spiritual amnesia and we forget who we are in the Lord and the incredible gift we receive through his dying and rising. It's why prayer is so important. It is why worship is so important. We not only honor God in our prayer and worship but it keeps us focused.

So, secondly, not only is it vitally important that we remember who we are in the Lord, but that we remember it is the Lord who has accomplished salvation for us. On Good Friday, we celebrated his passion and death on a cross. On the cross, Jesus took on the sins of all the world of all time. And then, on the third day after his death, he rose from the tomb to overcome sin and death once and for all. Because of his dying and rising we have hope in life beyond the worst that our world can throw at us. And this certainly means life beyond the physical death we all must one day encounter. As this

hope is so often expressed in the Eucharistic Prayer at funeral Masses, for the Christian death is not an end, but a transformation.

There is a word about remembering in the Eucharistic Prayer although it means much more than remember. The word is *anamnesis*. It's a Greek word and refers to what we often refer to as the memorial acclamation: *We proclaim your death O Lord, and profess your resurrection, until you come again*. It is brief profession of faith in the Paschal Mystery, i.e., that Christ died on a cross and was buried to overcome sin and death for all who believe in him, that he rose from the dead in order to provide us the hope of eternal life within a great Communion of Saints and that Christ will come again in the fullness of time to judge the living and the dead and restore all of creation to holiness. We are a part of this great story of salvation. Our truest identity, as daughters and sons of God, is discovered only within this story. The destiny for which God has created us is life within a Communion of Saints.

When we acclaim the *anamnesis*, we are not just remembering a past event or expressing a future hope, but professing a present reality. *Anamnesis* is a profession of faith in which we affirm that Christ is truly and fully present and available to us now. He is risen from the dead! It is what we celebrate in the Eucharist! It is why Easter Sunday is such a joyful celebration and why joining together for the Eucharist is so central to Christians! Christ is not dead, nor are we when we are in Christ – ever. We celebrate this Easter Sunday because in Christ we share a hope in eternal life. It is why we must remember who we are! It is why we must remember what Christ did for us.

Finally, when we remember who we are in Christ and realize what he has done for us, we know what to do with our lives. To actually live as a disciple means that we pattern our lives on Jesus' life: what he taught, how he lived, what he valued and how he reached out to others. We become other Christ's! It is through Jesus' disciples that others know and are invited to salvation from sin and death. This is God's plan as laid out in the New Testament! The accounts of resurrection demonstrate a consistent pattern in that those who encounter Jesus went to share the One whom they encountered! As Jesus' disciples, we must remember that we share a responsibility for his mission! Each of us has a definite and unique role. Within the concrete circumstances of our lives, we are both to witness and to invite others to Christ. In part, this means we support and assist one another within our own faith community. The journey to heaven, after all, is a shared journey. At the same time, there are many in our world who have yet to receive Christ into their lives. By the way we model our life in Christ and are open to opportunities to share who Christ is to others, we further the Lord's mission.

Pope Francis recently released an Apostolic Exhortation called *The Joy of the Gospel*. In it he writes: "I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting him encounter them: I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day" (EG#3). Jesus waits with open arms to forgive our sins, to heal our wounds, to walk with us through life, to use us as instruments of his Gospel. The Lord wants us to experience the joy of true living, the

joy of being liberated from the sins which trap us in self-centeredness, the joy of knowing who we are in him and the joy of sharing him with others. It is Easter that gives us this joy.

May we always remember and always proclaim that we are an Easter people and that Alleluia is our song!