



WEEKLY MEMO from BMW

Date: February 28, 2014
From: Bishop Michael W. Warfel
To: Clergy, Religious, Lay Ecclesial Ministers

This week end, March 1/2, is the beginning of the 2014 Catholic appeal (Care & Share) within the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings. You should all have received the CD that you have been asked to show at your parishes. Having viewed the video, Judy Held did an incredible job in putting it together. It is quite inspirational but also truly makes the case for why we have Care and Share. Please take time to view before you show it to your parishioners. I believe you will agree that it will be very helpful in making the case of the appeal.

The Season of Lent is quickly approaching with Ash Wednesday being on March 5th next week. Please invite your parishioners to enter into the season and see it as an opportunity to recommitment themselves to their life in Christ. The USCCB has a helpful resource page at www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-resources/lent/. There is a helpful explanation of the disciplines of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We “give up” material things that are superfluous to our basic needs. We “take up” charitable habits that are directed to helping and caring for others. We “lift up” our sisters and brothers who are in need through giving alms, praying and participating in devotional practices.

Lent also is a great season to encourage people to receive the Sacrament of Penance. As with previous years, I would encourage all priests to have a specific weekday evening whereby you would be available for an hour or so for individual Confessions. “The Light is On for You” Campaign is a good way to provide for this as well as inviting people to stop in for a visit to pray before the Blessed Sacrament.

As a special for those preparing for initiation into the Church at Easter, please remember all the Elect in a special way and ask your parishes to remember them as they prepare for the Easter sacraments. Likewise, pray for Candidates seeking full communion with the Catholic Church.

A National Training Conference is being sponsored by ChristLife (which is a mission for Evangelization) March 26-28 in Linthicum, MD. Should any members of your parish be interested, their website is ChristLife.org/Conference. The focus of the conference will be training on how to develop and organize a parish team for evangelization. Should anyone be interested, I have a few brochures at my office or you can just check out their website.

Reservations for the **World Youth Day Pilgrimage in Krakow, Poland** with the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings is now available on the Diocesan Website. The brochures can be downloaded and printed out from the site. The dates are July 19 through August 1, 2016. Cost of the pilgrimage is \$3800 if departing from Great Falls. Mandy Bell from Glasgow is organizing the trip for the Diocese. Please begin promoting it in your parishes and/or considering joining the pilgrimage yourself.

While it is yet early in the week, the first of the Marian prayer services at St. Ann's Cathedral, leading up to the consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, was very well attended. For those entrusted with a parish, I urge you to consider consecrating your parish. My purpose for doing this is to seek the intercession of the Blessed Virgin because of the serious challenges we have coming our way this year in the diocese. The prayer I'll be using is a hybrid off of what Pope Francis used in October last year:

Consecration Prayer to the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Holy Mary, Mother of God, with renewed gratitude for your maternal presence, we join our voices to that of all the generations who call you blessed. We celebrate the works of God that are in you, who never tires of looking down with mercy upon humanity, afflicted with the wound of sin, to heal it and save it.

Accept with the compassion and love of a Mother the act of consecration that we perform today with confidence. Most Holy Virgin, we consecrate our Diocese of Great Falls-Billings, our parishes and schools, our families and communities and ourselves to your Immaculate Heart and we recommend to you all the people of our diocese and all the people of our world.

We are certain that each of us is precious in your eyes and that nothing of all that lives in our hearts is unknown to you. We let ourselves be touched by your most loving regard and we welcome the consoling caress of your smile.

Hold our lives in your arms: bless and strengthen every desire for good; revive and nourish faith; sustain and enlighten hope; awaken and animate charity, guide all of us along the path of holiness. Teach us your own preferential love for the little and the poor, for the excluded and the suffering, for sinners and the downhearted.

Accept this act of consecration. Watch over us and protect us from all evil. Soothe the wounds of those who have been hurt through the sinful actions of others. Kindle in our hearts and homes the love of purity, the practice of a virtuous life, an ardent zeal for souls and a desire to pray the Rosary more faithfully.

We come with confidence to you, Mother most holy. In flame us with the same Divine Fire which has inflamed your own Immaculate Heart. Make our hearts and homes your shrine, and through us, make the Sacred Heart of Jesus triumph in every heart and home. Bring everyone in Eastern Montana under your protection and entrust everyone to your beloved Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

I'll be doing a significant amount of traveling in the next several weeks. On March 10th, I'll be in Washington DC for the Priorities and Plans meeting at the USCCB offices and then on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 11th and 12th, I'll be attending the Administrative Committee for the USCCB. A couple of days after my return, I depart for Zambia on Sunday, March 16th and am scheduled to return on Saturday, March 22nd. The Zambia trip is with a delegation from Catholic Relief Services.