



WEEKLY MEMO from BMW

Date: January 19, 2015
From: Bishop Michael W. Warfel
To: Clergy, Religious, Lay Ecclesial Ministers et al

I would like to thank those who participated in the Assembly gathering in Billings last week on the diaconate. I think it was helpful in coming to a better understanding of the ministry of the deacon and how diaconate will serve the faithful in Eastern Montana. Of course, one of the prime reasons why we have assemblies is not just to come to a better understanding of an issue or to become better educated in a specific area, but to join together as servants of the people of God. Pope St. John Paul spoke and wrote about the essential communitarian element in ministry, specifically priestly ministry. Given the competing demands that we have on our time and other responsibilities, it does require us to make a commitment to come together, so I want to thank those of you who did participate. It is not just what we may happen to take away from a meeting that is important, but also what we bring in support of each other. We are “little words of God” who embody the one Word of God in our various ministries throughout the Diocese.

This coming week, I will be at the Our Lady of Florida Retreat Center in Palm Beach, Florida in order to preach a directed retreat to about 40 Navy and Marine Corps Catholic Chaplains. I was in the seminary with one of the chaplains and thus, received the invitation to direct the retreat a couple of years ago. It is a relatively short retreat (five days) so I'll be back in Montana this coming Friday.

The week of January 26th is Catholic Schools week. Looking at my calendar, I'll be traveling extensively around the Diocese for that week in order to celebrate Mass at all the Catholic schools. Please support Catholic schools and remember to pray for our children and youth.

The **new Safe Environment Program for Adults** is slated to roll out in our diocese on **February 1, 2015**. Local Coordinators will receive training the week of January 19th and be able to assist employees and volunteers. The new program is entitled Safe & Sacred and offers many advantages over the previous program, including, (1) all requirements are completed online; (2) the program includes audio, video and interactive aspects; (3) employees and volunteers input their own background check information which eliminates the need for a paper document; (4) the program takes approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to complete; (5) Child Protection Policy and Code of Pastoral Conduct adherence are completed online eliminating the need for paper documents; (6) a Certificate of Completion is issued to each participant once the training is complete and background check completed; (7) no paper work needs to be sent to the diocesan offices for audit purposes; (8) training is required annually – no monthly bulletins to read. Additional information will be forthcoming regarding implementation in parishes and schools.

As a reminder, the **special appeal for the Church in Latin America** is scheduled nationally for the weekend of January 24/25. Please remember to mention this to parishioners. The Church in Latin America is large in numbers but has scarce financial resources to serve the faithful.

Mary's Pilgrimage continues on through the Diocese. The current status of the pilgrimage through February is as follows:

January 24 thru February 7	St Benedict's, Roundup (two weeks)
February 7 thru 14	St Pius X, Billings
February 14 thru 21	Mary Queen of Peace, Billings
February 21 thru 28	St Bernard's, Billings

As noted, Fr. Ryan Erlenbush has been facilitating the schedule. If you have not yet done so, I urge your parish or school to take a turn so that it is a prayer by which all the faithful are united in faith. You may use the following bulletin announcement in promoting it in your own parish:

Following the encouragement of Pope Francis, Bishop Warfel has begun a "Pilgrimage" in which a statue of Mary will travel through our Diocese from October 2014 to October 2015. As the statue moves from parish-to-parish, we are invited to gather to pray the Rosary and offer other acts of devotion. This extends the consecration of the Diocese to Mary (which Bishop Warfel made February 2014) to every parish, home, and heart.

*We ask our Lady to protect the Diocese from all evil, to bring healing to those wounded by abuse, and to give us all conversion of heart. The statue will be coming to our parish on the weekend of ***** and will remain with us through the week. We will have a daily Rosary and other devotions at ***** in the church. ALL ARE WELCOME!!!*

I draw your attention again to the following:

Montana Catholic Conference Legislative Alert Network Newsletter

Each Friday during the upcoming legislative session, the Montana Catholic Conference sends out an electronic newsletter to all those who have joined the Alert Network. To receive a hard copy of the newsletter, simply call the Conference at 442-5761 to submit your name and mailing address.

The newsletter **summarizes** the weeks' events, **highlights** the bills the Conference is actively working on or is following, **lists** the hearings of interest scheduled for the upcoming week and **provides** contact information for the legislators. If there is an issue the Conference needs assistance with, a **Call to Action** Alert is sent out. The Alert will

identify the bill, the committee members and include contact information. You must subscribe to the Network to receive the newsletters. Join the Network by clicking on the following link <http://www.montanacc.org/takeaction?vsrc=%2fRegister> or going to the Montana Catholic Conference website and clicking on the Events page. You may opt out at any time.

Please pass on this information to the members of your parishes. Being informed and involved is an important way to maintain a Catholic voice in our legislature.