



WEEKLY MEMO from BMW

Date: May 22, 2014
From: Bishop Michael W. Warfel
To: Clergy, Religious, Lay Ecclesial Ministers et al

This is a brief reminder to continue to promote the **Care and Share Catholic Appeal**. It is important to do so.

Four same-sex couples filed a suit against the State of Montana on Wednesday, May 21st challenging Constitutional Initiative 96, passed by a 2/3 majority in 2004. The Initiative states that “Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state” (Mont. Consti. Art. XIII, § 7). Though I have not made a public statement on this particular challenge as yet, I have written on the issue of “same-sex marriage” a number of times over the years. There obviously are changing attitudes among many people throughout the US regarding the nature of marriage. Notwithstanding this cultural change nor what a particular judge may say about the definition of marriage, it cannot change what marriage actually is. This is not just a religious statement but one from natural law.

Earlier this week, the schedule for confirmations and first communions were completed. It is wonderful to know that there are so many young people to have received these sacraments and know the spiritual support of their parishes.

There are obviously a number of graduations coming up. Remember to pray for the graduating seniors!

Darren Eultgen is continuing to facilitate listening sessions in parishes in the Diocese. There is one scheduled for St. Anthony’s in Laurel this weekend. He just completed one for Forsyth and Hysham earlier this week.

I will be celebrating Baccalaureate at St. Labre on Thursday, May 22nd and then participate in their graduation later in the evening. I will celebrate all the Masses at St. Anthony’s Parish, Laurel this weekend, May 24th and 25th and then celebrate the graduation Mass at Billings Central Catholic High School Sunday evening, May 25th. The weekend of May 30th, 31st and June 1st will have me on Engaged Encounter in Great Falls and later that Sunday morning at Great Falls Central Catholic High School for Mass and graduation. I will be at a Catholic Rural Life meeting in St. Paul, MN on June 3rd and 4th.

A particularly special event for the Diocese coming soon is the ordination of 9 men as permanent deacons. This will be at St. Patrick's Co-Cathedral on Saturday morning, June 7th at 11:00 AM.

Please pray for continued healing for Fr. Randolph Graczyk, Fr. Michael Guinan and Fr. Dale Yurkovic.

Looking ahead, the US Bishops are again sponsoring the **Fortnight for Freedom: Freedom to Serve** from June 21st to July 4th. Given the attacks around the world against Christianity as well as challenges within our own country to be free to practice our Catholic faith fully, I encourage all parishes to participate in this initiative. Please go to www.Fortnight4Freedom.org which provides parish guides, liturgy aids and helpful suggestions.

Blessed Memorial Day, remember to pause and pray for those that gave their lives and those that currently serve so that we may enjoy our freedom!!