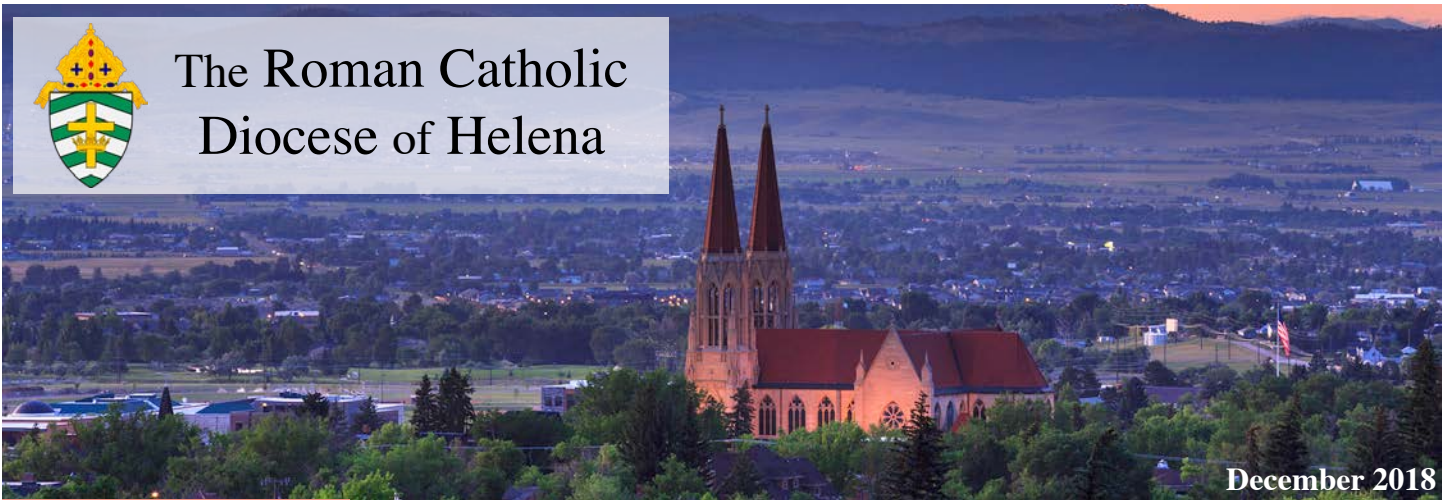




The Roman Catholic Diocese of Helena



December 2018

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Upon the Solemn Feast of Christmas

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Christmas is one of the Solemn Festivals of the Church that combines parish life, the domestic church of our households and our lived cultural experience in an extraordinary blending of grace, custom and, sadly at times, conflict. Upon reflection, one could say that was true of the first Christmas as well: The Holy Family, so blest through the Holy Spirit, and yet made to endure a mandated census which caused them to leave on a pilgrimage of Faith to a place that did not initially welcome them.

Once there, exhausted and expecting, yet filled with the wonderment of living out God's will, they were visited by a host of angels, a collection of shepherds and three visitors from the East. The compelling witness of their commitment to Christ is a path for us as we seek to genuinely celebrate the Incarnation. It certainly is worth remembering that hope does spring eternal and leads us to continue into the unfolding of our days.

The light of Christ and the grace made manifest in His nativity can seem distant when conflict enters our lives. Sin can prevent us from accepting what God proposes in grace, which is to come and adore the very author of life, Jesus Christ. We can feel that the expectations of others impose on our own hopes and desires. We may encounter the not so splendid isolation that can come into our lives and feel disengaged during the swirl of joyful activities and the hoped-for blessed peace of Christ. We may feel confused or betrayed by the times in which we live, or even by the Church itself that is meant to bring us God's constant help and protection. But we are given the grace to approach the light.

For if ever there was a time of year for us to come to Him when we are heavily burdened and weary that He may refresh us in mercy and love; a time to learn from Him who is gentle and humble of heart, it is Christmas! It can truly be a time when our souls can find rest through prayer, fasting and forgiveness, even as we ourselves are forgiven. All of this is done with a firm purpose of making ready the way of the Lord into our souls. What better gift can be given or received than to share, in Faith, the truth that Jesus is the way to eternal life, and to do so with hearts contrite and humble and spirits glad and rejoicing in their God?

Remember the light of Christ entrusted to you at your Baptism must be kept burning brightly so that nothing, and no one, may dissuade or distract you from the Lord. Remember the promises you made to live as a child of God, a child of Resurrection light and glory. Remember to ask the Holy Family to bless you with the graces that filled their hearts and warmed their hearth: the graces of Faith, Hope and Charity. Remember to be not afraid to go to Jesus Christ who calls you to celebrate His coming so that no one is ever lost through doubt or conflict or despair because of His victory over sin and death that began with His holy birth.

I will remember you in prayer at the Christmas Masses at the Cathedral and with gratitude in my heart for the blessing you are in the Lord!

Msgr. Kevin O'Neill
Diocesan Administrator



**Sr. Rita McGinnis, SCL
Returning to Leavenworth**

Cody Tredik

Sr. Rita McGinnis, SCL, retired November 15th. Her warmth, wisdom and astute leadership have graced the Diocese of Helena for a total of 19 years. She most recently served as Director of Chancery Services and Pastoral Planning

She graduated Washburn University, took her final vows as a Sister of Charity of Leavenworth in 1965, and began her first assignment teaching speech and drama at Bishop Hogan High School in Kansas City, Mo.

"I enjoyed speech because when kids came, they were adamant that they couldn't do it. I would tell them: You're my job security! And I know you can! I also loved what theater did for kids. It was a place that they could get applause that wasn't either academic or sports. Even if they were pulling the curtain, they got to be a part of something bigger than themselves."

She continued teaching, including work at Montana Catholic High Schools in both Billings and Butte. Sr. Rita's approach to education created a lasting impression on her students, many of whom still keep in touch.

After earning an administrative certificate, she began as principal of Bishop Ward High School in Kansas City. After 10 years there, she felt ready for a new chapter.

"You just know when it's time. I wasn't sure what the next step was, but I wanted to find out. I talked to a friend of mine to see what I could do, if there was anything they could see that would be a good fit. That's when I came to the Helena Chancery for the first time in 1993."

Sr. Rita brought her experience to bear in the Office of Pastoral Ministry for the Diocese. Her expert leadership attracted the talents of many as she orchestrated initiatives in social justice and spirituality. She then returned to Leavenworth for 6 years of service on the SCL Community Council.

Bishop George Leo Thomas was aware of Sr. Rita's outstanding work. He reached out in 2005, with an eye toward building pastoral leadership in the diocese.

"One day, I got a call from Bishop Thomas asking if I would come back to the Diocese to run Pastoral Planning. I thought, well I've

never done that before, but I've always said that everything I've ever done has prepared me for everything I've ever done. And that's true for all of us. You just drag along all that experience; change it, massage it. All of those experiences come with you. So, I told him that I would be charmed."

While directing Pastoral Planning, Sr. Rita championed the work of the Diocesan Pastoral Council bringing incredible talent around the table and leading the development of two comprehensive Pastoral Plans.

"It was always about invitation and starting with the parishes. The Church out here really tries to get its arms around who the folks in the pew are. What are your challenges? What are your gifts? What do you need? And there was always an openness to collaboration. That collaborative sense, which is sometimes hard to find, has been the really lovely part of working here. I get a lot of energy from people who are willing to come together and grapple with problems and possibilities."

Her journey will continue at the Motherhouse in Leavenworth, and she's ready for the next step.

"Sisters never really retire, and I would be bored out of my mind with nothing to keep me busy, so I will be looking for something to challenge me when I get there. I know there will be something calling my name, there always has been."

Of her time in Montana, she said, "It's all been absolutely delightful. I've gotten to work with the very best people. Montana has been very good to me. It is a beautiful place, but it forms people who are extraordinary as well."

With gratitude for Sr. Rita, and her wonderful work, we in the Diocese of Helena pray that God's abundant blessings remain with her always.



Fr. Bart Tolleason speaks at Sr. Rita's Retirement Party Nov. 15th.



"God has a big role in my life and seeing so many other people with the same fire within them about God is thrilling"
-Sophomore



"I chose convention over my role at state basketball because convention is so much fun and more important."
- Junior



EXPERIENCE THE YOUNG CHURCH

"I knew it would be a great way to experience my faith with other Catholic youth."
- Freshman



42nd Annual Diocese of Helena
**CATHOLIC YOUTH COALITION
CONVENTION**

**March 22-24, 2019
Carroll College
Helena, MT**

DOHYOUTH.ORG

REGISTRATION OPENS JAN. 1 2019



Vocations Retreat Draws Campus Ministry Students

Fr. Cody Williams
Christ the King Parish, Missoula
St. John the Baptist Parish, Frenchtown

Most people think of a vocations retreat as something only for people who are discerning a call to some form of religious life. In other words, only those who are discerning a vocation to religious life or priesthood need to participate. I believe this approach falls far short of what a vocations retreat is meant to do. I find it sad when we take the consumerist mentality of "I need to find my vocation," and apply it to retreats. By contrast, our goal with the vocations retreat this year was to focus on building relationships rather than to enter into discernment, or make a decision.

The reality of all vocations in the Church is that they must build off each other and support each other through relationships and the Sacramental Life of the Church. I was awestruck as this was so clearly captured in a moment when Sr. Mary Catherine, S.V., was holding and taking care of Renee and John Barnes' newborn son while they presented at the retreat. This image speaks to the core reason for this retreat, and I am clear about this with the campus ministry students when I say, "You are not here because I assume you have a religious vocation or you know your vocation. You are here to meet people who are daily living their faith in real and life-giving ways who can support and encourage you in your life of faith."

Students attended from campus ministries at Carroll College, Montana State University, the University of Montana and UM Western. It was a great chance for students to meet each other and accompany one another in faith through the experience. The retreat is intentionally a Friday through Sunday event. This makes it a weekend

Sheila McShane Retiring as Guatemala Mission Coordinator

Dcn. Micheal Seipp
Guatemala Mission Director

Sheila McShane, after 30 years of service to the Guatemala Mission and the Diocese of Helena, has decided to begin a new chapter in life, passing along her responsibilities as the Mission Coordinator. Sheila began work at Clinica Maxeña in 1966 - at its inception - and worked at the clinic until



Vocations Retreat group gathered after Mass at the Cathedral of St. Helena

away and helps give a prayerful focus. We spent time in prayer and fellowship and most importantly celebrated Mass together. The sacramental life of the Church is the core value of all our vocational paths as Christ strengthens and guides us on the great adventure of our life's journey.

This year, the retreat began on Friday night with a talk on discernment. "Talk" really isn't the right word, as the format encouraged a rich discussion. I felt that the plethora of experiences of the priests, religious, and students needed to be part of the larger topic of discernment: how do I know what God wants me to do? Saturday began the "day of talks" and each vocation had a one-hour slot. Br. Vittorio from the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal talked about men's religious vocations. Sr. Fiat, Sr. Mary Catherine, Sr. Josephine Rose from the Sisters of Life and Sr. Margaret Hillary from the Dominicans talked about women's religious vocations. John and Renee Barnes spoke on the vocation to married life. Deacon Bob and Karen Fishmen spoke on the permanent diaconate, married life, and lay orders, along with Fr. Bart Tolleson who talked about third orders. Lastly, Fr. Marc Lenneman, Direc-

tor of Vocations for the Diocese of Helena, talked about diocesan priesthood.

In addition to talks and discussions, we celebrated Mass on Friday and Saturday and prayed the Liturgy of the Hours - Morning, Midday, Evening, and Night prayer - including a holy hour with Solemn Benediction. The retreat ended with the 11 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral. Over the course of the weekend between 35 and 40 students came to the retreat, 19 of whom stayed the entire weekend.

The retreat was generously hosted by Ss. Cyril and Methodius Parish, and made possible by the support of the Foundation for the Diocese of Helena and the Annual Catholic Appeal.



Informal conversations were a key part of the retreat

1983. She returned in 2005 and assumed the role of clinic director in 2006. Sheila continued as the Director of Clinica Maxeña until 2016 and has served as the Mission Coordinator until present day. Sheila is first and foremost an advocate for the people of Santo Tomás la Union and surrounding area. Her concern and dedication for their well-being was widely known. Sheila was also the consummate host for the multitude of groups visiting the mission throughout the years.



We thank Sheila for her tireless work, service, advocacy and dedication to the people of Guatemala.

Openness to Life Through Open Adoption

Dan Bartleson
Communications Services Director

On Nov. 20th, in a packed Capitol Building Rotunda, eight families finalized adoptions. Catholic Social Services of Montana served two of the families on their journey to adoption. Their stories show that each adoption is as unique as the families and children involved.

When Adam Stoll called his wife, it's no surprise that Sarah was in the mountains of Nevada. The couple spends plenty of time enjoying the outdoors hiking and camping. The spring break of 2018 was a little different though. They were apart, with Adam back home in Helena, and by the time Sarah was home, they would be parents. Bethany had just come into the world and Adam was driving to meet her, so of course, he asked Sarah "Guess where I'm going."



The Stoll's with Governor Steve Bullock (L)

Bethany's Birth Mother had selected the Stoll's from among several profiles of potential adoptive families. Profiles include thorough background information and evaluations by child-care authorities and experts. For Bethany's Birth Mother, the personal information and letter to expectant parents made the difference. She liked that they had no other children and that they love the outdoors, so she contacted Jan Petek with Catholic Social Services just prior to giving birth. Jan called Adam with the news that there was a baby to pick up, Adam called Sarah, and the Stoll's adoption journey suddenly had an end, and a new beginning, in sight.

After trying to conceive for several years and considering In Vitro Fertilization they pursued adoption. Sarah said, "We looked at the cost of IVF and couldn't see how we

could do it when there are kids just waiting for families." Adam and Sarah placed their hopes for a child in God's hands, with Sarah adding, "We see it as God's providence, that we're supposed to be Bethany's parents." The timing of an open adoption (where birth parents and adoptive parents are known to one another) is a tricky business with layers of moving parts. The intersection of the lives of adoptive parents, expecting parent(s) and adoption requirements are carefully coordinated by case workers like Jan. In her work she sees adoptions that unfold over months, don't come to fruition or, in the end, develop quickly.

Their sudden final step meant Adam would meet Bethany and her Birth Mother for the first time that day. Sarah would meet them a short time later, and they would keep in touch with Bethany's Birth Mother. Adam spent two days in the hospital before Bethany would come home and, with Sarah, they would start their new life together. Sarah said, "It was totally worth the journey, God's timing is perfect even though it's not how we would have planned it." Bethany will be hiking and camping and enjoying the outdoors right away. With Sarah's roots in Spokane, Wash., Bethany will very likely "run" her first Bloomsday fun-run in the spring.

Chris and Tracy Grabowska were very happy after adopting their daughter, Bristol, in 2011. Busy as teachers and coaches, and grateful for all they had, life was full. Seven-year-old Bristol had other ideas however and wanted a brother or sister. The family prayed and considered how to live selflessly and to provide the very best childhood for Bristol. Ultimately, their decision for open adoption led them to Paisley and to extend their family in a way only God could have foreseen.

Three weeks before Paisley's birth, her Birth Mother chose the Grabowskas, inviting them to an ultrasound that same day. This first sign of her profound commitment to open adoption was a lot to take in. Tracy was fearful of beginning to love the child of a stranger who might not let go when the time came. "I went with a lot of trepida-



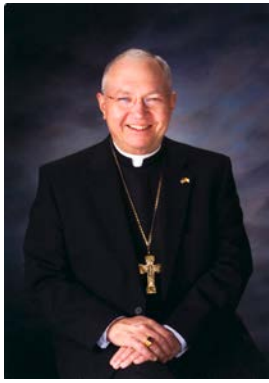
Chris, Bristol, Tracy and Paisley Grabowska

tion," She said. With encouragement from Chris, they heard Paisley's heartbeat for the first time and had their first contact with Paisley's Birth Mother. They left with ultrasound pictures of Paisley and a tremendous new hope.

Next, it was Paisley's two families at dinner to get to know each other. Tracy and Paisley's birth mother hit it off, leading CSSM Caseworker, Jan Petek, to jokingly ask if they were certain they didn't already know each other. Throughout the process, Paisley's extended birth family was very present too. Tracy began to pray that they would be accepting of Bristol who isn't close to her Birth Mother. The two families got to know each other better and, in an answer to Tracy's prayer, Bristol calls Paisley's Birth Grandmother Grandma with great affection.

Ever faithful to her powerful commitment to Paisley, her Birth Mother invited Tracy to attend the birth. Tracy was in the delivery room and was the first to hold Paisley as soon as she was born. Shortly after, the Grabowskas received her in their own room on the maternity ward. Before the adoption celebration at the Capitol, it was the Grabowska's turn to invite Paisley's Birth Mother to attend an event that impacted both of their families.

The complex but worthwhile child-centered approach to open adoption speaks volumes about the powerful mission of Catholic Social Services of Montana. As we welcome Christ in the manger this Christmas, Adam and Sarah Stoll's last-minute miracle at the birth of Bethany, the Grabowska's openness to new life and Paisley's Birth Mother's profound commitment to her daughter are inspiring examples of welcoming Him in the midst of all we experience.



In Memoriam,
Bishop Robert C. Morlino
Dec. 31, 1946 – Nov. 24, 2018

Robert Morlino was born December 31, 1946, in Scranton, Pennsylvania. An only child, his father, Charles, died while he was in high school, his mother, Albertina, in 1980. He was raised in Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, graduating from the Jesuit-run Scranton Preparatory High School.

He entered seminary for the Maryland Province of the Society of Jesus, and was ordained to the priesthood for that Jesuit Province on June 1, 1974. His education includes a bachelor's degree in Philosophy from Fordham University, a master's degree in Philosophy from the University of Notre Dame, the Master of Divinity degree from

Fr. Kansanziki Incardinated in the Diocese of Helena

Fr. Pascal Kasanziki grew up the youngest of seven children in Rwanda. After completing his B.A. in Education, he joined the Xaverian Missionaries, a Religious community dedicated to mission ad extra (outside of one's country of origin and culture). In 1989 he made his first profession and was sent to Cameroon for Theological training. He completed his training and was ordained on August 15th, 1994, the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Immediately after ordination, he studied English in London and was sent by the Xaverian Missionaries to serve in Sierra Leone and Guinea in West Africa.

After the mission experience in West Africa, Fr. Pascal was sent to Rome to pursue a specialization in Theology. Next, to the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, earning a certificate in spiritual direction, a certificate in human development and a master's degree in spirituality. In 2013 he completed his time in Chicago with a doctorate in ministry.

Upon completion of his post graduate studies, Fr. Pascal's sought to serve somewhere that was in great need of priests. After read-

the Weston School of Theology in Cambridge, Mass., and a doctorate in Moral Theology from the Gregorian University in Rome, with specialization in fundamental moral theology and bioethics.

In 1981, Father Morlino became a priest of the Diocese of Kalamazoo and served there as Vicar for Spiritual Development, Executive Assistant and Theological Consultant to the Bishop, as Moderator of the Curia, and as the Promoter of Justice in the Diocesan Tribunal. He served as administrator of a number of parishes, and as rector of St. Augustine Cathedral in Kalamazoo.

Scheduled to begin a full-time faculty appointment as professor of theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, Pope John Paul II appointed him the Ninth Bishop of Helena where he was ordained bishop and installed Sept. 21, 1999. Bishop Morlino was appointed the Fourth Bishop of Madison on May 23, 2003 and installed on August 1, 2003.

Msgr. Kevin O'Neill, currently Helena's Diocesan Administrator, served as Vicar General during Morlino's tenure. He summarizes the late Bishop's ministry with a Scripture passage from Ephesians 3:14-19:

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in

ing about the great distance that priests in Montana often travel to minister, he asked his Superior to reach out to the Diocese of Helena.

"Bishop George Leo Thomas very graciously welcomed me in Helena. While I was still discerning with my Superior General, he sent a letter to Rome showing his readiness to



welcome me. The agreement was to allow me to work in the Diocese under the supervision of Bishop

Thomas for five years, after which a final decision to either become a diocesan priest or to return to the Xaverian community would be made."

Fr. Pascal started in the diocese in 2013, serving at Saint Patrick, Saint Joseph and Immaculate Conception Parishes in Butte. He then spent a year at the Cathedral of St.

heaven and on earth is named, that he may grant you in accord with the riches of his glory to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner self, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Msgr. O'Neill went on to say, "Bishop Morlino's great devotion to the Holy Eucharist and his invitation through the Eucharist to taste and see the goodness of the Lord was the hallmark of his episcopal ministry. His homilies, regularly given at the 11:00 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of St. Helena, were delivered to a full church that was attentive to his words.

Even though the congregation did not always agree with his conclusions, when they approached him with concerns they were greeted with charity, attentiveness, and a joyful invitation to continued discussion.

In his life, he answered the directive of the Blessed Mother to do whatever the Lord tells you. We commit him to God's loving mercy and will assist him with our prayer."

Helena and a year at Saint Matthew's Parish in Kalispell before his current assignment at Saint Rose of Lima Parish in Dillon.

In February of 2018, Bishop Thomas officially incardinated Fr. Pascal Kasanziki as a priest of the Diocese of Helena.

Although this news was partly overshadowed by the announcement of Bishop Thomas' assignment to Las Vegas, the people of the Diocese of Helena rejoice as we are truly blessed by Fr. Pascal's presence. We look forward to many years of his joyful and pastoral ministry.

Fr. Pascal said, "I thank God for this missionary experience and pray the Lord to grant me abundant life to continue to shepherd His people with wisdom, kindness and joy."

Fr. Kasanziki kindly submitted the information for this article. More information is at: www.diocesehelena.org

Correction

The October Newsletter stated the incorrect time for weekday Eucharistic Adoration in Trinity Chapel at Carroll College.

The correct time for weekday adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is from noon to 10:00 p.m.



The Roman Catholic
Diocese of Helena

NEWSLETTER

December 2018

Prayer for Vocations

*Father, you call each one of us by name and ask us to
follow you.*

*Bless your church by raising up dedicated and generous leaders from our families and friends who
will serve your people as Sisters, Priests, Brothers, Deacons, and Lay Ministers.*

*Inspire us as we grow to know you,
and open our hearts to hear your call.*

*We ask this in Jesus' name
Amen.*

Men in priestly formation for the Diocese of Helena



Dillon Armstrong



Matthew Christiaens



Tyler Frohlich



Dcn. Nathan Scheidecker



Kyle Tannehill