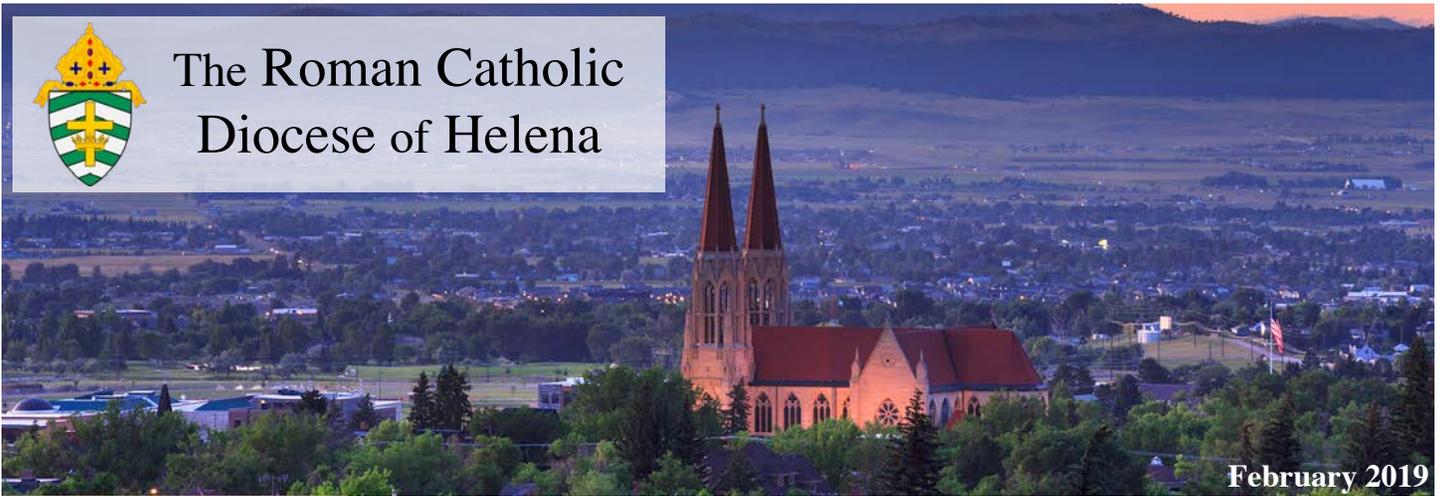




The Roman Catholic Diocese of Helena



February 2019

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Riches of Faith Found in the Liturgy

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As I write to you the Church has just begun to liturgically celebrate the First Week in Ordinary Time. Ordinary Time is the period of the Church calendar outside of other major seasons such as Advent, Christmas or Lent. In Latin, Tempus Per Annum or "time throughout the year", is a prayerful celebration of the entirety of Christ's person.

What a remarkable treasury of Faith we are given to break open and share through water and the Holy Spirit! It is a timely reminder that Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the One through whom we have come to be and in whom we will encounter eternity.

It is an opportunity to examine our life in Christ with heart and mind, soul and strength. What is so evocative in our relationship with him that generates a zeal for the Lord and rekindles the fire of God's love in the temple of our souls? How do we understand our personal accountability for seeking to do what the Lord asks of us? How do we engage faithful stewardship of time, talent and resource, and how are they prioritized in our daily lives? How do we answer the Lord's call in a holistic way and say that we have come to do his will?

The Liturgy is an indispensable way to answer these questions and to seek the Truth revealed in Christ. It is there that we encounter the living God as we petition, praise and adore. There we listen to the words of Sacred Scripture and receive the Body and Blood of the Lord with hearts, minds and souls contrite and humble. That being said, we should never underestimate the need for our active and prayerful presence and participation in this outpouring of mercy and love on the part of God, mercy and love that give hope for the unity and peace of the Church and for the world. How sad it is that our absence at Mass means that we forfeit so much of the inheritance of the victory of the Cross and the glory of the Resurrection!

And so, I extend an invitation to all the households of the diocesan family to seriously make ordinary your commitment to regular celebration of your Faith through Word and Sacrament. Please include in your prayer the needs of the entire Church, the challenges of the world of today and remember particularly to pray for the selection of our next bishop. May God's help and protection be with us in all days and in all ways. Blessings in the Lord!

Msgr. Kevin O'Neill
Diocesan Administrator

Helena Rally for Life, Young Adult Witness

Briana Morgan is a Carroll College Student and member of Carroll's Saints for Life club. She assists with Religious Education at the Cathedral of St. Helena and spoke at the Rally for Life on January 18th. Over 250 people gathered at the state Capitol where Catholics were well represented. Fr. David Severson lead the opening prayer and Fr. Christopher Lebsock addressed the crowd as well as Sen. Al Olzewski. The local Knights of Columbus provided hot beverages on the windy winter day and a group of students from St. Andrew School attended.



Well, I stand here today to tell you my friends, that the children they describe were me and my dearest brother. As a child who suffered from the neglect of an alcoholic parent, as a child who grew up in poverty after my parents' divorce, and as a child who had to care for her disabled brother who to this day cannot care for himself, I lived the life that pro-abortion advocates say ought not to be. And I can tell you right now, my life is full, complete, and beautiful, and I thank God every day for my life! No amount of suffering would ever change that.



Briana Morgan (L) with young adults at the rally

The following is taken from Ms. Morgan's address at the rally.

Today I would like to share with you all why I am pro-life. I grew up in a small family. It was me, my brother and my mom and dad, who early in my life divorced. I grew up in Denver, Col., and attended public schools. Throughout my education and discussion with peers I would often hear that if a child were to grow up in a place where they are not loved or not cared for properly, that it is better for them to have not been born.

I'm here to tell you that despite what abortion proponents may say I was destined to, I am neither dependent on the state nor am I miserable or depressed. God has blessed me and preserved me and will care for me forever! And if anyone ever questions the value of the life of a person with disabilities, let me tell you this: There is nothing in my life that has taught me better to love, through thick and thin, or to serve without restraint and without reward. I know what it is to will the good of the other, as

other, because of the life I have lived with my brother.

And I can look at each and every one of you here today and ask, what have you suffered through? I'm sure every person could give a unique and tragic account, and I would sigh with relief that I did not have to live through that. Every life, through whatever suffering we all may endure, is worth living! And that is what we are here to march for! For everyone to have that chance to live!

So, we are here. To fight for the rights of those who cannot speak and to elevate life in every stage. To every person who is listening, hear this; Your life is valuable, at every stage of your life you have so much dignity and worth! The disabled, the poor, the vulnerable, nothing will ever take away your value to this world!



Students from St. Andrew School in Helena

We do not march here today, and in D.C. tomorrow, for some small cause. We march for life and especially the lives of those who cannot speak, the littlest of God's creation. These are the poorest and the most vulnerable. This cause for which we stand is not a mere difference of opinion. The right to be born, is a matter of life and death.



"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



"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

REGISTER NOW!



SEEK Conference Impacts Young Adults/Students

Fr. Kirby Longo
St. Anne Parish, Butte

This January, 18 college students from across our diocese joined well over 17,000 students and young adults in Indianapolis, Ind. for the SEEK conference hosted by Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS). Fr. Marc Lenneman and I were there and surprised to find many old friends among the 450 priests.



Group attending SEEK from across the diocese

At this difficult time in the Church, it was powerful to see thousands of young people wanting nothing more than to give their lives completely to Christ and his Church. Mary Heaton, of St. Matthew Parish in Kalispell, put it beautifully saying "It felt as though we were a mighty church, but I came to the realization that it is not a feeling but rather the fact that we are a mighty church."

The many graces of solidarity were not lost on the young people of our diocese.

Riley Dowdy, from Carroll College, commented, "Each conversation I had this weekend was an answer to questions I've been asking God for a long time. There is no other explanation to this than the power of God." Along with new relationships, many students mentioned the graces they received in adoration of the blessed sacrament, which was available at all times except when the room hit fire code capacity (surprisingly often). A parishioner at St. John Paul II in Bigfork, Veronica Farrier, said, "Several speakers mentioned the importance of being vulnerable with God, so it was great to have adoration where I could sit with the Lord."

The consecrated life was on full display at SEEK and the joy of those consecrated men and women was contagious. This could not but open our young people to the call of Christ to total abandonment. The two best keynotes (my opinion) were from consecrated women; Sr. Bethany Madonna, S.V. and Sr. Miriam James Heidland, SOLT. They spoke powerfully not only to the consecrated life but to the powerful, intimate and providential love of God in every vocation.

As we know in our own lives, God's gentle love manifests most powerfully in mercy and reconciliation. As a priest, it was moving to see half-mile lines each morning and afternoon as I walked into the confessional for two-hour sessions. A full night of the conference was dedicated to reconciliation and adoration. Regarding the evening, Msgr. Jim Shea, President of the University of Mary, wisely pointed out, "Everything

else is just pretext and context." In a single night, over 5000 young people received the sacrament of Reconciliation.

We are facing difficulties both in the Church and in battling a secularized culture. SEEK reminded me we cannot back down from the challenge, but instead look to the fullness of the truth that is present in the Church. Many times, these large conferences sit at surface level while appealing to as many as possible. Instead, the speakers at SEEK faced every difficult issue in the Church and culture head-on and the young people responded in kind.

God is bringing about renewal in the Church. For our young people who sometimes feel alone at our universities or living as young adults in small-town Montana, it's powerful to gather 17,000 strong in the name of Jesus Christ to be renewed and formed in their mission. Amy Eickert, a young adult from Kalispell, said, "Jesus reminded me at SEEK to be not afraid, to have courage and depend on Him in seeking the lost, reclaiming the truth and rebuilding the Church. It starts now." The mission is to be a saint and to renew the Church and it was clear to me that our students heard the call.



Seminarian Profile: Deacon Nathan Scheidecker

Cody Tredik
Communications Staff

As he prepares to enter into his final semester of seminary, Deacon Nathan "Ned" Scheidecker is polishing the final draft of his thesis on sacral vernacular and the benefits of our current English translation of the liturgy. He took some time out to reflect on his time at St. John Vianney Theological Seminary in Denver, and look ahead to his upcoming ministry in the Diocese of Helena.

"I'm extremely excited to finish up here, not only to complete my studies, but also to move into the ministry I've set out to do," Scheidecker said.

Scheidecker grew up in Butte where he was active in parish youth ministry and diocesan youth events. He was a camper and then served as a counselor at Legendary Lodge, the diocese-run Catholic summer camp. Although his response came a bit later, Ned first heard the call to the priestly vocation sometime after his freshman year at Carroll College.

"Thinking back, I know that's when the Lord began tugging on my heart, though honestly I wasn't paying too much attention. It was in the year just after I graduated from Carroll that my discernment began in earnest, and saw all of the graces he had been working in my life thus far."

Upon completing seminary studies, including written and oral comprehensive exams,

Sheidecker will be on-track to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders this June and become a priest for the diocese. He is excited to begin the service and ministry that he has been preparing for.

"Everything I've been doing is for my eventual ministry, and though it's a little daunting, I'm eager to get to work sharing the message of just how much the Lord loves us, and how much He desires us. Partly due to my thesis work, which is currently fresh on my mind, I'm also very passionate about the Mass and I can't wait to help people get to know it better."

Please keep Nathan, and the rest of our seminarians, in your prayers as they continue their studies and formation.

Your Catholic Voice at the Capitol, Montana's Catholic Conference

Matthew Brower
Director, Montana Catholic Conference

On January 7th, Montana legislators convened in Helena for the beginning of the 66th regular legislative session. Throughout the session, the Montana Catholic Conference (MCC) will once again be deeply engaged at the Capitol striving to bring a Catholic voice to the legislative process. With bills addressing issues of criminal justice reform, religious freedom, poverty, human trafficking, abortion, child welfare, healthcare, the death penalty, immigration related matters and much more, the conference will work diligently urging lawmakers to craft public policies that protect human life and dignity and promote the common good.

Not surprisingly, effectively weaving principles of Catholic social teaching into the lawmaking process can be challenging. However, simply being present to lawmakers through conversations and sharing of testimony during committee hearings offers an opportunity for the Catholic Conference to share the Catholic perspective on issues and the rich tradition of social teaching we're blessed to be able to draw upon. It serves as a good reminder that the work of the conference really is the work of evangelization and it's a work to which all Catholics, by virtue of baptism, are called to passionately engage.

Throughout this session, MCC will again be utilizing an electronic advocacy alert network to facilitate political engagement by Catholics around the state. This sophisticated grassroots advocacy tool allows Montana Catholics to join their voices with those of our bishops in promoting policies

that aim to safeguard the vulnerable and reflect authentic justice. You can sign up to receive network emails by visiting www.montanacc.org/takeaction.

The Montana Catholic Conference is meant to serve as a resource on matters of public policy. If you have questions about specific legislation, advocating on specific bills or issues, or questions about the legislative process, please don't hesitate to contact MCC.

Most importantly, please keep our lawmakers, government officials and the work of the Montana Catholic Conference in your prayers.

For more information about MCC or to join the conference's Advocacy Alert Network, contact MCC Executive Director, Matt Brower at (406) 442-5761 or director@montanacc.org.

Catholic Mother and RN Speaks in Support of Bill SB 100

On the morning of February 1st, Darbi Courtney, a registered nurse, wife and mother of two girls, gave testimony before the Montana Senate Judiciary Committee in support of Senate Bill 100 (SB 100).

SB 100 is sponsored by District 3 Republican, Sen. Keith Regier, and proposes that abortion providers give a pregnant woman the option to view an active ultrasound and hear the fetal heartbeat prior to an abortion.

After graduation from Carroll College's Nursing Program, Darbi began work as the Nurse Manager at Options Clinic in Helena. Providing support for women with unplanned pregnancies fit her passion to protect life. She was deeply frustrated by the celebratory tone of lawmakers when New York State's aggressive late-term abortion law recently passed. She was compelled to act, saying, "I gave testimony because I see that we need to fight for life, especially in a way that is productive."

The text of Mrs. Courtney's testimony on behalf of the Montana Catholic Conference is below.

To: Montana Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Darbi Courtney, RN, on behalf of the Montana Catholic Conference
Re: Testimony in support of SB 100

Madam Vice-Chair and members of the committee, my name is Darbi Courtney. I am a registered nurse and I speak today on behalf of the Roman Catholic bishops of Montana. I am here today to voice our strong support for Senate Bill 100.

This bill represents a natural extension of our state's interest in ensuring informed consent as it applies to abortion, furthering a legitimate good that persons on both sides of the abortion issue should support.

This bill does not require that an ultrasound be performed before every abortion procedure. It simply requires that a pregnant woman be offered the opportunity to see her unborn child through an ultrasound. By doing so, Senate Bill 100 empowers her to make a more informed decision about whether or not to continue her pregnancy.

Not all women will choose to view an ultrasound and some who do will choose abortion. However, as someone who has personally performed over 400 ultrasounds, I can attest that countless women, when viewing an ultrasound for the first time, have expressed shock and wonder that they are already able to see the flicker of their unborn child's heartbeat just before six weeks gestation. They are surprised to see that their baby already has the ability to move at week nine, or that at just ten weeks they are able to see the silhouetted profile of their baby's body complete with tiny hands and feet.

Some of these women leave that experience believing abortion is not the right choice for them and are grateful for having had the opportunity to witness firsthand what was going on within their body at that very moment.

In any number of other medical procedures, women are offered the opportunity to see their sonogram and mammogram images, chest and bone x-rays, etc. Abortion providers should routinely do the same. This bill helps to ensure that ultrasound information, which can help to inform clinical decision-making, is made readily available to every patient. When making such a significant and irreversible medical decision, it is not unreasonable to ensure that a woman has the opportunity to rely on her own mental and sensory perception, without outside bias or interference. Providing pregnant women the option of viewing an ultrasound says that we respect women and their dignity by trusting them with their own medical information. Women deserve nothing less.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on this important piece of legislation. Senate Bill 100 helps empower women to make fully informed decisions. What good is having a choice if it is not a fully informed choice?

Madam Vice-Chair and members of the committee, on behalf of the Montana Catholic Conference, I strongly urge a "do pass" and thank you for your time.

Restoring Sight and Quality of Life at Guatemala Mission

Cody Tredik
Communications Staff

A team of 11 Ophthalmologists, nurses, and scrub technicians from Los Gatos, Calif. volunteered their time and talent for a week at the Clinica Maxeña in the Guatemala Mission in November.



Ophthalmology Procedure in the Treatment Center

The group is a part of Seeing Again-Eye Care Guatemala, a non-profit organized by two Ophthalmology teams. One is led by Joseph Kupko, MD, of Missoula, and the other by Martin Fishman, MD, MPA, of Los Gatos. The organization makes two trips to the Clinic per year, once for each team.

Dr. Fishman's California team visited last November. The group consisted of licensed Ophthalmologists, Stanford Ophthalmologists in residence, nurses, and scrub technicians. Between the 10th and 18th, they saw 269 patients and performed 72 surgical procedures. They performed cataract surgeries, eyelid surgeries, laser treatments and treatment for pterygia, which affects people who

have excessive sun exposure. For some of the team, this was not their first journey down to the clinic, and many signed up for the Fishman Team's next rotation in two years.

"It's a joy to go down and see what we can do for the people of Santo Tomás and the outlying area, and wonderful when we can give people back their sight,"

Dr. Fishman said. "And I love to take people down, especially other Ophthalmologists and Stanford residents because it's very important for medical professionals to see there's a world beyond our own, and we can affect it, and make a difference."

This marks the 14th trip that Dr. Fishman has made to the clinic with a group of volunteers. He's been co-managing the program since 2005 after meeting Keith McKenzie, who originally hosted the program in Nuevo Progreso on the Mexico-Texas border. At that time, patients needed to be transported from Guatemala to receive treatment. Eventually, Keith met Sr. Mary Waddell of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who served as the Director of the Clinica Maxeña from 1986-2006. Sr. Mary convinced Keith to move the operation down to Santo Tomás and expand the Clinica Maxeña to include the space and resources necessary for eye care. Over the years equipment and supplies have been donated to the organization.

"We're now stocked incredibly well," Dr. Fishman said. "We have state of the art



Patients Gathered for Eye Surgery and Treatment

microscopes and lasers. A great deal of our support has come from the Rotary Clubs of Los Gatos and Santa Cruz, as well as from individual donors. We can do so much for those in need so easily. The equipment is incredible, the staff down at the Clinica Maxeña works wonderfully. The hardest part, honestly, is the surgery itself!"

Seeing Again-Eye Care Guatemala will return to Clinica Maxeña in late March, when Dr. Kupko's Team will provide surgical care and treatment. With sight restored, another group of patients will be able to return to their lives as they are gifted a quality of life that is otherwise inaccessible.



Ophthalmology Team with Clinica Maxeña Staff

Women's Conference Coming in April

Cody Tredik
Communications Staff

The fourth annual Catholic Women's Conference "Spa Day for the Soul" is coming up on April 27th and will be held at the Delta Hotels Colonial by Marriott in Helena. The event invites all women from around the diocese and beyond to a day of prayer, speakers, music, fellowship, and more. This year's theme is The Family, God's Masterpiece.

"We're very excited to come together again this year. It is all about encountering Christ together as women, and the community and unity of the conference is truly powerful," Roxy Nistler, a conference's leaders and co-

founder, said.

Nistler has been working alongside Velma Burnett of Living Water Parish in Seeley Lake for the last four years to put on the conference.

"We're happy this year to have the Sister's of Life from New York joining us, as well as a talk geared towards our young women, and young at heart, which will focus on the centrality of women in the family. Amy [Eickert] and Caitlyn [Van Horsen] presented at last year's conference, and this talk will be a wonderful one as well."

Another exciting new addition this year is a special Mass on the eve of the conference. At 6:00pm on Friday, April 26th at the Cathedral

of St. Helena, all women, men, and children are welcome to join in this special family liturgy. Fr. David Severson will preside, and will offer the Mass for the strengthening and celebration of families. The Sister's of Life will also be there to lead the Rosary.

Nistler, a Cathedral of St. Helena Parishioner, wants Mass for the event to be inclusive. "It's so important to know that this Mass is open to all! We want to pack that Cathedral on Friday night to honor and pray for families across the world."

For more information on the upcoming conference, and to register, go to www.helenacwc.com. Registration is \$45 before March 15th, and \$55 afterward. Registration closes April 15th.



The Roman Catholic
Diocese of Helena

NEWSLETTER

February 2019

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