

Michael Davis, Office of Lay Ministry & Planning



“Grant us, O Lord, to see everything now with new eyes.”

--Pedro Arrupe, SJ, *Hearts on Fire*

Greetings! On a recent journey to Spaulding Academy and St Michael's, I was told that that it was the first time in over one hundred years that a religious sister was not in residence in Greely County. It

was an occasion for me to reflect on the consecrated Christian woman who over the years so generously and lovingly witnessed Christ, God's Love, and the Holy Spirit in my life and who also helped form so many others in the faith.

Here is brief Litany

The Ursulines, who conducted joyful summer bible school at St. John the Evangelist in Stapleton.

Sister Blaise, who taught with passion, humor, and swift justice at the North Platte Catholic Schools.

Sr. Marietta, who assisted a young teacher with religious education resources from REMEX.

Sr. Patricia an Outward Bound retreat friend and co-worker in parish ministry.

Sr. Marcia a dear friend and mentor as a catechist.

Sr. Veronica a colleague and guide in diocesan ministry.

Sr. Sarah an inspiring model as a Pastoral Minister.

Sr. Doris an experienced pastoral planner.

Sr. Rosemarie pilot to Benedictine Spirituality.

The list goes on....

These remarkable women religious constitute a past, present and future living endowment of visionary lay ecclesial service to the people of Diocese of Grand Island. I am not alone in overwhelming gratitude and Christian affection for them.

Now in the sight of the present moment, to whom will the torch of Lay Apostolate be passed? We are a people of deep faith and in the tradition of the prairie are resourceful and confident as lay woman and men are being called forth to take their place as part of the ministerium of the local church.

These beloved sisters' faith, fellowship, and service brought and bring Christ's light into our life.

As Pope Benedict XVI so aptly reflects;

*“The goal and mission of the Christian people is to bring Christ to others. Not just a theory or a way of life inspired by Christ, but the gift of the very person.*

In my experience these sisters certainly accomplish this in ways both known and yet to be discovered.

**From Our Tradition . . .**

**Collaboration of the Laity Is Becoming More and More Indispensable**

In order to meet the contemporary demands of evangelization, the collaboration of the laity is becoming more and more indispensable. This is not only a practical need occasioned by a reduction in religious personnel, but it is a new, unprecedented opportunity that God is offering us. Our era could in some ways be called the era of the laity. Therefore, be open to lay people's contribution. Help them to understand the spiritual motives for the service they render with you, so that they will be the "salt" that gives life its Christian flavor, and the "light" that shines in the darkness of indifference and selfishness. As lay people faithful to their own identity, they are called to give a Christian inspiration to the temporal order by actively and effectively transforming society according to the spirit of the Gospel.

*Pope John Paul II, Address to the Oblates of St. Joseph, February 17, 2000*

Let us go forward in hope!

The Son of God,

who became incarnate two thousand years ago out of love for humanity, is at work even today: we need discerning eyes to see this and, above all, a generous heart to become the instruments of his work.

—Pope John Paul II

*Novo Millennio Ineunte, 58*

**One Future~Un Futuro Strategic Planning;**

**Parishes, Councils, & Deaneries**

Annual Reports are due July 1<sup>st</sup>; contact me as a resource to assist in the planning process.

*Contact information is on front page.*

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