



CENTRAL WASHINGTON CATHOLIC

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JANUARY 2017
Newsletter

Parish Outreach Coordinator Provides Link to Catholic Charities

By Christine Corbett Conklin

Parishioners, religious and clergy throughout the Diocese of Yakima have a new resource for information and referral.

Leanne LaBissoniere, a longtime Yakima resident, has been named Parish Outreach Coordinator for Catholic



Leanne LaBissoniere

Charities.

A former director of public relations at Perry Technical Institute and reporter and copy editor for the *Yakima Herald-Republic*, LaBissoniere says that her new responsibilities include updating those in our 41 parishes of the many services offered under the Catholic Charities umbrella.

“I hope to become the person they call when they don’t know who to call,” she said.

Since LaBissoniere began her job at the end of August, she has traveled to many parishes and visited with some 28 priests, explaining the range of social services available and learning of parishes’ individual needs.

“The priests wear a lot of hats,” she observed. “They run a business, counsel people and, in addition, have the whole spiritual element.”

The greater distance there is, geographically, from Yakima, the less

contact and understanding there may be for the spectrum of social services headquartered here, she suggested.

Catholic Charities provides assistance for pregnancy through early childhood, foster care, kinship (support and referral to relatives serving as caregivers), housing, mental health, clothing/household needs and volunteer services for elderly and handicapped individuals. Its three major divisions are Catholic Family and Child Service, Catholic Charities Housing Services and St. Vincent Centers. Catholic Charities offers services throughout central Washington, with offices in Yakima, Wenatchee and Richland.

“We are the social service arm of the Church,” LaBissoniere said. “My goal is to develop a relationship with them (clergy and parishes) so they understand what we do and we understand who they are... We want to tailor what we do to serve their needs. If we work together, we can do

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Honor and Respect The Sick, Our Everyday Heroes

By Sister Constance Veit, Director of Communications, Little Sisters of the Poor

Over Christmas, two of my family members were talking about a mutual friend who, though chronically ill, routinely does heroic acts of kindness for others. Though they get exasperated with her when she overextends herself, they realize that caring for others is what makes life meaningful. I thanked God that these women are kind enough to support their friend through both good times and bad, helping her to live a full life.

This incident came to mind as I read Pope Francis’ message for the World Day of the Sick, February 11, in which he reflects on St. Bernadette’s relationship to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our Lady spoke to Bernadette “as one person to another,” he says, treating her with great respect, even though she was poor and sickly. “This reminds us that every person is, and always remains, a human being, and is to be treated as such. The sick and those who are disabled, even severely, have their own



Sister Constance Veit

inalienable dignity and mission in life.”

In light of the expanding legalization of assisted suicide, Pope Francis’ insights are invaluable. Studies have shown that the majority of people who support assisted suicide do so because they fear the loss of personal autonomy and dignity

in their final days. Suffering, they say, is meaningless and should have no place in the human experience. It seems that the thought of having to go on living when faced with serious disability or illness is becoming unacceptable in our post-Christian society.

What I find most tragic in this exaltation of independence and personal choice is that this attitude denies the beautiful reality that we are made for community. Created in the image and likeness of God, who is a Trinity of Persons, we are inherently relational, not autonomous. Mutual dependence, rather than independence, is the true Gospel value, and so we should not be ashamed when we need the assistance of others. Our weakness or infirmity can be a graced opportunity for those who help us, as well as for ourselves, for as Saint John Paul II so often repeated, we can only find fulfillment through the sincere gift of self to others.

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A Message from Bishop Tyson...

Dear Friends:

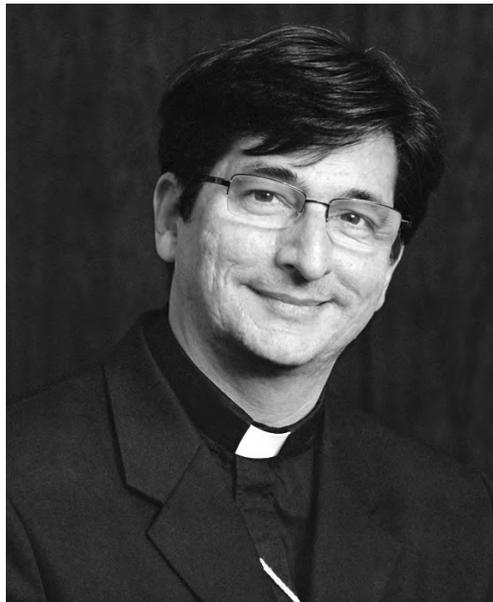
Last year on Valentine's Day, my mom called me so that we could talk on my grandfather's "name's day." My grandfather's name was Valentine and his birthday was on that very day – February 14th – hence his name.

He was a union organizer for the bakery union for many years, covering an area roughly the size of the Diocese of Yakima. As a young boy during school-break visits to Yakima, I'd often ride along with him to bakeries across Central Washington

I once asked him how he did what he did. He told me he listened to what people wanted but then focused on their needs. How wise – and how often we confuse the two. In the rush of a consumer culture, we often believe that what we "need" is simply what we "want."

But what we really need can be summarized in one simple word: Love. It's this need for a deeper understanding of love to prepare for marriage that drives our Engaged Encounter weekends. Retrouvaille is meant to help reignite love between married people whose marriages have faced serious stress and tension. Magnificat classes on catechesis are meant to magnify and echo God's love. PREPARES is our Church's clearly marked expression of love for the unborn and their families.

Catholic Charities here in the Diocese of



Bishop Joseph Tyson

Yakima takes its name from the Latin word for love – Caritas. For more than 10 years now, Charities' Volunteer Chore Services has put love into action by providing boxes of food and basic supplies on Valentine's Day, this year to more than 70 low-income elders and the disabled.

This month, we also feature Leanne LaBissoniere, who joined the organization last summer as the new parish liaison, help-

ing to connect the work of Catholic Charities with the life of our local parishes. She's been a joy and a gift for me as bishop in these first few months. She and her ministry will be a gift for our parishes as the months and years unfold.

Taken together, I hope this issue of the *Central Washington Catholic* helps you see the many expressions of our Church's love for our people here in Central Washington.

This Valentine's Day, I'll be thinking and remembering in prayer my grandfather, who only had four years of grade school education and knew no English when he showed up for his first day of class, and yet with the help of his Catholic Faith learned what was needed to love others.

Whose name will you remember? Who has shown you an example of love?

Ultimately, I hope this issue also inspires you to see your mission of love to those closest to you and see in the names and faces of those around you people whose fundamental need is love – a love we see most fully and clearly in God personified – our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

With my every best wish and blessing,

Most Reverend Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

Parish Outreach Coordinator Provides Link *Continued from page 1*

more."

Individual parishioners are welcome to call LaBissoniere with their questions, at (509) 367-5291. From day to day, she may field inquiries on anything from how to help a friend suffering from depression to

assisting homebound elderly parishioners to navigating the legal system for those wishing to gain custody of a young family member.

"My Faith is a very important part of my life," said the new Parish Outreach

Coordinator, who was raised Presbyterian and became a Catholic when she married her husband, Jeff, in 1980. "Not many people can 'marry' their Faith with what they do in their career. I'm so fortunate to be able to do that."

Honor and Respect The Sick *Continued from page 1*

This is why Pope Francis is asking us to honor the sick by helping them to share their gifts and abilities. "Let us ask Mary Immaculate for the grace always to relate to the sick as persons who certainly need assistance," he writes, "but who have a gift of their own to share with others."

St. Bernadette turned her frailty into strength by serving the sick and offering her life for the salvation of humanity. The fact that Mary asked her to pray for sinners, the Pope writes, "reminds us that the infirm and the suffering desire not only to be healed, but also to live a truly Christian life."

Social media has allowed me to become acquainted with numerous heroes who go on giving in the midst of tremendous suffering. If you are looking for inspiration

just google Zach Sobiech or Lauren Hill, young adults who made a difference in the world while dying of cancer; J.J. Hanson, president of the Patients Rights Action League, who triumphed over a brain tumor; or O.J. Brigance, a former professional football player who inspires thousands though he is completely paralyzed by Lou Gehrig's disease.

I am sure that you have unsung heroes in your midst in the person of sick, disabled or elderly individuals who enrich your life despite their own trials. This year, as we celebrate the World Day of the Sick, let's honor these everyday heroes by letting them know that we admire them and are there for them in their moments of need, and by asking them to pray for us!

If you have been abused or victimized by a member of the Catholic clergy, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out.

The Yakima Diocese has a sexual abuse hotline for those who wish to report some incident concerning that issue as regards a bishop, priest, deacon or diocesan employee or volunteer. (888) 276-4490

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Magnificat Classes Offer Faith Enrichment

There are still numerous opportunities to join in on the series of Magnificat classes about the faith, creed and doctrine of the Catholic Church.

All classes are free, with a goodwill offering optional.

Classes will be held at Holy Spirit Parish, 7409 West Clearwater Avenue in Kennewick; St. Pius X Parish, 805 North Central Avenue in Quincy; and St. Paul Cathedral School, 1214 West Chestnut Avenue in Yakima. All sessions run from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturdays.

The upcoming English-language schedule begins February 11 at Holy Spirit. That day, Maria Elena Trevino will make a presentation on **Ministries**; Bishop Joseph Tyson will discuss **Ecclesiology** (theology as applied to the structure and nature of the Christian Church); and Deacon Tom Huntington will review **Catechesis** (the teaching of the Faith).

The identical classes will be offered February 18 at St. Pius X and February 25 at St. Paul Cathedral School.

Next, on March 11, three classes will be presented at Holy Spirit. Bishop Joseph Tyson will speak on **Liturgy**; Jeff Thompson will discuss **Anthropology** (the study of people in past and present societies); and Father Jacob Davis will make a presentation on **Ethics & Christian Morals**.

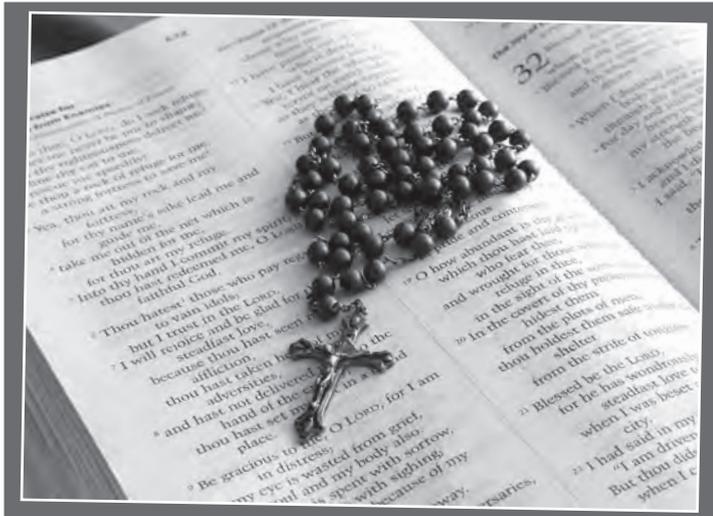
These three sessions will be repeated March 18 at St. Pius X and March 25 at St. Paul Cathedral School.

Finally, three additional classes will be offered April 22 at Holy Spirit. They include a talk by Father Michael Brzezowski on **Mary and The Saints**; a presentation by Bishop Joseph Tyson on **Christology** (the study of Christ); and a discussion of **Spirituality** by Jeff Thompson.

All three talks will be repeated April 29 at St. Pius X and May 6 at St. Paul Cathedral School.

To wrap up the year, a certification ceremony will be held for those individuals who have completed the full series of classes. This is scheduled for May 20 at Holy Redeemer Parish in Yakima.

For more details on the Magnificat schedule, call the diocesan office at (509) 965-7117 or visit magnificat@yakimadiocese.net.



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February 22	St. Rose of Lima School, Ephrata
February 23	St. Joseph Parish, Kennewick
March 2	St. Joseph Parish, Wenatchee
March 9	St. Joseph Parish, Yakima
March 29	St. Andrew Parish, Ellensburg

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NEWS

From Around the Diocese

Area Schools Celebrate Catholic Schools Week —

National Catholic Schools Week will be celebrated January 29 to February 4. This year's theme is "Catholic Schools: Communities of Faith, Knowledge and Service."

The annual observation includes Masses, open houses and other activities for the school communities. It's a time to recognize the value of Catholic education.

Check out the activities for Catholic schools in your area and plan to attend.

Our diocesan schools include: St. Paul Cathedral School and St. Joseph/Marquette School in Yakima; Christ The King School in Richland; St. Joseph School in Kennewick; and St. Joseph School in Wenatchee. La Salle High School is in Yakima. Tri-Cities Prep in Pasco, a school of the Spokane Diocese, also draws students from our Diocese.

"The Catholic school presence in Central Washington boasts a hundred-plus year history," observed Bishop Joseph Tyson. "As we celebrate Catholic Schools Week, we are reminded of the tens of thousands of students, of all faiths, who have passed through the doors of our Catholic schools ... students who went on to become community leaders, social activists, dedicated volunteers, and successful professionals ... individuals who have helped to transform our community. Indeed, Yakima is a better place because of the very presence of our Catholic schools."

Is Your Marriage Hurting? —

A Retrouvaille weekend is planned for couples who would like to rediscover their marriage and improve communication.

Scheduled for February 10-12 in Spokane, the weekend is designed to help troubled marriages, allowing spouses to "reawaken the love, trust and commitment that originally brought them together". Couples who have already separated or divorced also may find reconciliation.

For confidential information or to register, call (509) 520-4118 or (800) 470-2230, or visit www.retrouvaille.org.

Collection Benefits Native Americans —

On the weekend of February 18-19, Catholics in Central Washington will be given the opportunity to support the Native American people in our Diocese through the Black and Indian Mission Collection.

For the last 131 years, this collection has changed the landscape of evangelization and education efforts for Native Americans, Alaskan Americans and African Americans throughout the United States, noted Bishop Joseph Tyson. The Black and Indian Mission Office helps to operate schools, parishes and other missionary services in Native American, Alaska Native and Black Catholic communities.

Each year, the Black and Indian Mission office provides a grant to assist in ministering to Native Americans in our Diocese. Father Bill Shaw, pastor of St. Mary Parish in White Swan, and Father John Shaw, a senior priest of the Diocese, help lead those efforts.

"History tells us that lasting change to a community can come through faith, hope and charity," noted Bishop Tyson. "Just as the Jubilee Year of Mercy has opened the door to the faithful to experience God's unfathomable mercy, your financial commitment opens the door of faith to these Americans."

Engaged Encounter Weekends Scheduled —

Catholic Engaged Encounter weekends are scheduled for April 7-9 and June 23-25 at the Lazy F Retreat Center in Ellensburg.

Either weekend offers engaged couples the opportunity to learn better communication techniques and to discuss key issues with which they will deal in marriage. It helps to heed Pope Francis' call for marriage preparation to be a kind of "initiation" to the sacrament of Matrimony, providing couples with the help they need to receive the sacrament worthily and to make a solid beginning of life as a family (Amoris Laetitia, #207).

For more information and/or to register, call Paul or Pegi Ackerman at (509) 575-4931 or send an e-mail to yakimae@yahoo.com. More information is available at the Engaged Encounter website, ecentralwa.org.

Make St. Valentine's Day More Meaningful —

You can add more meaning to St. Valentine's Day this year by helping those in need.

Volunteer Services of Catholic Charities in Yakima will again be distributing some 70 boxes of food and supplies to low-income elders and adults with disabilities.

Contributions of canned tuna, peanut butter, cereal, toilet paper and paper towels are particularly welcome, said Lou Ann Desgrosellier, program coordinator. Cash donations to pay for fresh produce and other needed items including postage stamps also are encouraged. The deadline is February 6 for February 14 delivery.

"Especially this year, it's been colder...heating bills go up," Desgrosellier observed. "If you have to pay more for heat, you have less for food and such."

For more than a decade, Volunteer Services has made the rounds of the upper Yakima Valley with Valentine boxes. This year, deliveries will be made from Naches to Moxee, Yakima, Ahtanum and Tappico.

Catholic elementary schools, La Salle High School and other area organizations assist with everything from donations to delivery of the boxes. La Salle students, who handle delivery, later discuss their experiences as part of an annual retreat, Desgrosellier said.

It's a community project that can be very fulfilling for everyone who joins in.

"People are generous. They give to a lot of causes for children. Sometimes, we kind of forget our elders," Desgrosellier pointed out.

This year, in the loving spirit of St. Valentine, it's possible to help this group of individuals who have so little.

Donations of food and paper products may be brought to the front desk of Catholic Family & Child Service at 5301 Tieton Drive, Suite C, in Yakima. Be sure to label the items for Volunteer Services and please limit your contributions to the specific, requested items so that boxes taken to those in need may be uniform.

Checks may be sent to: Lou Ann Desgrosellier, Volunteer Services, Catholic Charities, 5301 Tieton Drive, Suite C, Yakima, WA 98908.

Just think, the money you might spend on a single box of chocolates could really brighten the day of the less fortunate. (And it's much healthier for you!)



Each year, volunteers help to sort and pack items for boxes.



Photo courtesy of Tom Kelleher

The Life Teen group of St. Paul Cathedral joined in a gathering at Millennium Plaza following the annual Walk for Life through downtown Yakima on January 14.