



CENTRAL WASHINGTON CATHOLIC

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MAY 2013
Newsletter

Monsignor John Ecker: 'Like One of The Family'

By Christine Corbett Conklin

To countless Catholics in Central Washington, he's like one of the family. He's the one who's always there for life's milestones from Baptism through funerals, with other memorable moments – sprinkled with humor -- in between.

So, on May 5, when it came time to honor Monsignor John Ecker at a party for his 80th birthday, 25 years as Pastor of St. Paul Cathedral and 55 years in the priesthood, it came as no surprise that the gym of St. Paul Cathedral School was filled to overflowing with well-wishers.

For a "Hawaii 8-0" party (a takeoff on the TV show, Monsignor's age and his love for Hawaii) more than 400 people came together to express thanks to this one-of-a-kind pastor and Vicar General of the Diocese of Yakima. The program included everything from performances by a mariachi band, Cathedral choirs and the school band and choir; to speakers; a birthday skit; and a video presentation. Robert Roybal announced that the St. Paul School Foundation has been renamed the Monsignor John Ecker Educational Foundation. Shary Hanses was chair of the event, "with a marvelous, talented committee."

Among attendees, there were many fond descriptions of the ways in which Monsignor Ecker impacts individuals' lives.



Monsignor Ecker thanked the crowd of well-wishers at St. Paul Cathedral School.

Photo courtesy of Rick Baumgardner, Baumgardner Imaging

"He's all about people and making everyone welcome," observed Sandi Hays, who headed the decorations committee for the event. "He deserves this and so much more."

"He's my rock...there when I need him,"

added Cheryll Lover, a member of the St. Paul Cathedral choir who served for many years in the office of the Cathedral school. Lover recalled her first glimpse of the new parish priest, Father Ecker, who had just arrived from Boston in 1958. She and her eighth-grade friends were standing outside on school grounds after lunch when the smiling priest came up to talk. Lover remembered how one of the group had the nerve to make a joking comment. "Monsignor loves you enough to put you in your place when you need it," she added with a laugh.

"Monsignor has just been there for us our whole lives," noted Rita Yates, a St. Paul parishioner. "We love how he interacts with the kids so well."

Her sister-in-law, Amanda Yates, also a St. Paul parishioner, agreed.

"I'm really excited to be able to celebrate with him," she said. "He helped us with marriage preparation, baptized my husband (as an infant) and baptized four of our five kids. He's been a great support in my faith and in my children's faith."

Another St. Paul parishioner attending the event, Ken Martin, recounted how he had served as an altar boy with Monsignor Ecker, how Monsignor had married his parents, himself and his brothers, and baptized his three children.

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Part 2: Karlo Broussard Offers Advice for Spreading the Faith

By Christine Corbett Conklin

Editor's Note: Last month, we were introduced to Karlo Broussard, the "Cajun Super Apologist" who heads the Divine Child Institute in Wenatchee and speaks about the Catholic Faith throughout the Diocese. The entire article is available on the Diocesan website, yakimadiocese.org. Click "Offices," then scroll down to "Central Washington Catholic Newsletter" and select April 2013, in English or Spanish.

Each of us has a responsibility to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others! As Karlo Broussard, founder of the Divine Child Institute in Wenatchee, points out in Matthew 28:19, Jesus exhorts us to, "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations."

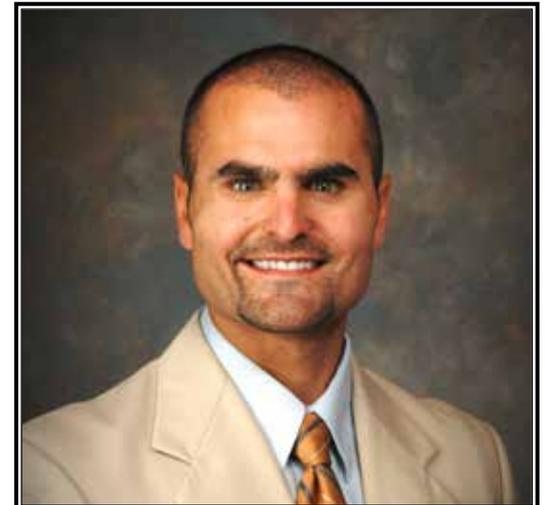
Given the condition of today's world, with secular values and teaching encroaching on virtually every aspect of our lives, this is not an easy task. However, Broussard also quotes the words of St. Paul in Philippians 4:13: "I

can do all things in Him who strengthens me."

The first step in trying to share our Catholic Faith is to KNOW our Catholic Faith, Broussard suggests. He quotes 1 Peter 3:15, "Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is within you." If we are "well trained intellectually and spiritually," we can speak more convincingly and with more confidence.

Broussard recommends several resources to become better informed. To get to know Holy Scripture, try reading "The Ignatius Catholic Study Bible" published by Ignatius Press or "Catholic Commentary and Sacred Scripture" published by Baker Academic. Online, visit the Catholic.com website for short articles on many topics and audio presentations, too. On Broussard's own website, divinechildinstitute.com, there is a free, six-hour series on Catholics and the New Evangelization.

By being properly trained in the Faith, we



Karlo Broussard

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A Message from Bishop Tyson...

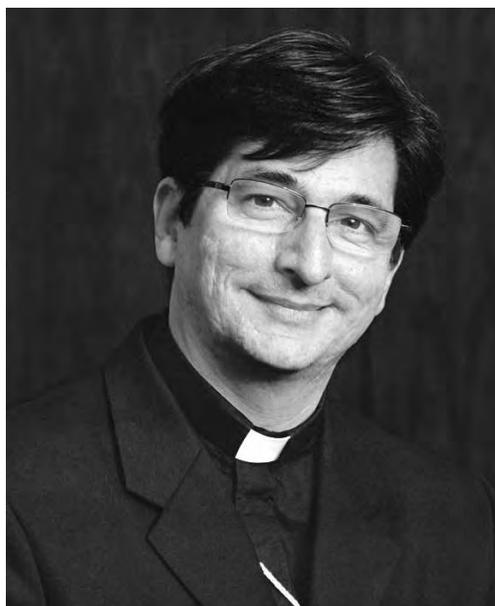
Dear Friends,

Many years ago, when my grandparents lived here in Yakima on 28th Avenue, off Nob Hill Boulevard, I would sometimes go for walks with my grandmother. Many times, she would remind me that education and faith were the only things that people could not steal from you.

My grandfather only went to school for four years, my grandmother a bit longer – until eighth grade. Their first language was German and they both learned English in grade school. On Saturdays, they had “German” school where they learned how to read and write in High German which – compared to their spoken dialect – was quite a bit different.

My parents were the first generation to go to high school, and I was the first to go to college. When I was in graduate studies at the University of Washington, my grandfather once remarked that he’d never even dreamed of being on a college campus. He was very happy for me, but he’d also shake his head in disbelief. What a vast difference of opportunities!

This issue of the Central Washington Catholic touches on the “unstealable” intangibles of education and faith from a variety of angles: Karlo Broussard – one of our local Catholic evangelists and educators – dedicates quite a bit of his ministry



Bishop Joseph Tyson

to the sharing of the Faith. Resurrection Parish in Zillah is the spiritual home to Jeff Charbonneau, whom President Barack Obama recognized as the “National Teacher of the Year.” Catholic Campus Ministry students in Ellensburg are uplifting the teachings of the Church on the sanctity of human life, and God’s plan for human sexuality. Our seminarians this spring and summer

will be uplifting this year’s newly redesigned Priest Retirement and Seminarian Education Collection. Our seminarians rely upon your generosity to help augment our national grants in paying their tuition bills. Our senior priests depend upon your help so that their needs can be met, even as many continue to pass on the Faith to younger generations.

The celebration of Monsignor John Ecker’s 80th birthday and 55 years of priesthood, as well as the feature on St. Joseph Parish in Sunnyside, speak to the reality of priests and their parishes dedicated to educating and passing on the gift of faith.

As spring gives way to summer, I hope that these articles might inspire you to consider your summer reading, your own ongoing education and faith formation, and the ways you might further share your gift of faith come this fall, when so many parish programs cry for volunteers. Thanks for taking the time to read these articles and for the gift of faith you already are to those around you in your families, among your fellow parishioners and in your communities!

With every best wish and blessing,

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

Monsignor John Ecker: ‘Like One of The Family’ *Continued from page 1*

“He is always loving,” Martin said. “He exemplifies what a priest should be.”

For Dan Fortier, executive director of the Central Washington Catholic Foundation, the memories were just as fond – and touched with humor. Fortier recalled how, when he was a high school senior, a large group of classmates showed up at his home to party after a football game. Fortier’s parents weren’t home at the time, and Fortier wasn’t quite sure what to do. Uncannily, Monsignor Ecker showed up.

“Within about five minutes, the party broke up and he saved me the trouble of figuring out what to do,” Fortier said.

Monsignor has actually spent 33 years in service at St. Paul Cathedral. Following his ordination in 1958, he was assigned as Parochial Vicar at the Cathedral, becoming Rector in 1963. He remained there until 1966. He also served as Pastor of Queen of All Saints Parish in Warden prior to becoming a U.S. Navy Chaplain, including service with the First and Third Marine Divisions in Danang, Vietnam, from 1967-75. Before coming back to St. Paul’s, he was Pastor of both Holy Family Church in Yakima and Holy Spirit Church in Kennewick. He was named a Monsignor in 1996 and appointed as Vicar General of the Diocese of Yakima in 2002.

As Monsignor thought back to his 1958 arrival at St. Paul’s, he recalled how his reception there was “strengthening and empowering.” He just “fell in love with the place,” he said. Many of the people he met and worked with then were the grandparents of present-day parishioners, “My parish is my family,” he stated. “It’s really a joy to be able to help people and be part of so many families.”

For young men who may be considering the priesthood, he said, “I would recommend it to anyone to give it a try. It’s a marvelous, rewarding and rich life.”

Earlier that day, Monsignor told a morning Mass congregation, “People ask me, ‘When are you going to retire?’ When it stops being fun, I’ll think about retiring. You make it fun. You make it enjoyable. You challenge me.”

Thank you, Monsignor Ecker, for your years of dedicated service to the Diocese of Yakima!

Part 2: Karlo Broussard Offers Advice *Continued from page 1*

will not just be addressing the “moral sense” of the Bible – or how it applies to our lives -- but also better able to understand the “literal sense” (what the author meant to say), the “allegorical sense” (what it’s saying about Christ and the New Covenant) and the “anagogical sense” (what Scripture says about the future, the end time and Heaven), he says. It’s not enough to simply decide for yourself what the Bible is saying and speak of your opinions, he stresses!

To help bolster our Faith, it also is important to participate in the sacraments of the Church, including Holy Eucharist and Reconciliation, Broussard continues.

“The Mass is the highest prayer,” he says. “It is filled with Scripture and teaches us about what we believe.”

A good addition to this is praying the “Liturgy of the Hours” or “The Divine Office,” as it is sometimes called, which include psalms and Scripture to read at various times throughout the day. (This may be ordered through any Catholic book store or supply house.)

In approaching the young people in our lives, who may have turned from the Catholic Church or be questioning its teachings, it is key to take a positive approach, Broussard says.

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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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Vital Collection Scheduled for Senior Priests and Seminarians

Some have been there for you and your family for many years. Others are the hope of the future for our Church. A special collection which began May 18 and will continue through August 4 is crucial to help both the senior priests and the seminarians of the Diocese of Yakima.

On a rotating schedule throughout the Diocese, a seminarian will visit each parish to speak at weekend Masses, explaining the importance of this collection, including information on the high cost of seminarian education. Whenever possible, he will be accompanied by a senior priest.

A letter from Bishop Tyson, to be included in bulletins, will explain more of the details of how these funds are carefully managed. Last year, through generous donations from parishioners across the Diocese, more than \$167,000 was raised.

Envelopes will be available in the pews of each parish, so that contributions may be put in the collection basket or sent by U.S. mail. Checks should be made out to your individual parish, with a notation on the check that the funds are to go to the **Special Collection for Priest Retirement and Seminarians**. In addition, there will be the option of making a donation with a credit card.

For questions on the special collection, contact Alma Benitez, director of stewardship and development at (509) 965-7117 or email alma.benitez@yakimadiocese.org. Thank you in advance for your participation in this vital effort!



Our senior priests and seminarians are visiting parishes throughout the Diocese, explaining the need for this year's special collection.

Part 2: Karlo Broussard Offers Advice *Continued from page 2*

"Don't say, 'You're wrong. The Church is right. Just accept it,'" he recommends. "Instead, show the beauty behind what the Church says, for example how we say 'yes' to God's plan for human life and human sexuality. Help them to understand the reason for the 'yes.'"

With young people, we have to argue from an intellectual approach: What does reason teach us? What will give us – or not give us – human happiness? It also is useful to begin teaching children from an early age of the threats to the Faith which they may encounter in the world

When sharing our Faith with those of other Christian religions, we can often use Scripture, the inspired Word of God, because they may be more willing to accept that, Broussard said. This can help us to reveal the "full truth" offered by the teachings of the Catholic Church.

For those wanting to learn about the Catholic Church, you might recommend "Map of Life" by Frank J. Sheed (a very basic but profound introduction to Catholicism) or "Catholicism and Fundamentalism" by Karl Keating (about the Biblical basis for Catholic teaching).

When someone cites an example of a Catholic or group of Catholics who have done wrong, and tries to dismiss the entire Church, what can you do?

"I always tell people this," Broussard says. "There will always be a Judas. You don't leave Peter because of Judas."

And what if the task of sharing the Faith just seems to be too big, too hopeless?

"Jesus said to go forth," Broussard reminds us. "He didn't promise it would always be effective. The command is to go forth and teach."

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NEWS

from Around the Diocese

Eucharistic Adoration Events Planned June 2-

Catholics in the Diocese of Yakima will join their brothers and sisters around the world to spend an hour in Eucharistic Adoration on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ, Sunday, June 2. Pope Francis will lead the celebration at 5 p.m. Rome time (8 a.m. PDT).

Saint Paul Cathedral Parish in Yakima will hold Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at the same time, between the 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. Masses. Other parishes throughout the Diocese are encouraged, as much as is possible, to join the Holy Father in Eucharistic Adoration as well.

At noon the same day, all are invited to take part in a Eucharistic Procession from Holy Rosary Parish in Moxee to Holy Rosary Cemetery, a distance of about 1-1/2 miles. The prayerful walk will follow gravel and farm roads through picturesque Moxee farmlands. Visitors may park at the Square Dance Hall on Charron Road.

CWU Students Stand for Life

Earlier this month, Central Washington University's Catholic Campus Ministry (CCM) and Students for Life took action on behalf of the sanctity of life. These students stood up for their values in the midst of a University event called "Sexapalooza," which focused on various perspectives of sexual relations.

Students set up a dramatic display of 3,300 white flags on the lawn of the University's Science building. Each flag represented a child who is killed by abortion in an average day in the United States. This effort was led by David Meyers, president of Students for Life at CWU and CCM pro-life peer minister. The flags were donated by the pro-life group at St Andrews Parish in Ellensburg.

In addition, CCM representatives had a table at the University event where they handed out information and talked to students about the Catholic teachings on sex. The CCM group invited students to a presentation at the Catholic Campus Ministry house on Theology of The Body.

Resurrection Parish Schedules Festival

Resurrection Parish in Zillah is conducting a talent search for family-friendly entertainment including musical groups and individuals to be showcased during its annual Family Festival, noon to 6 p.m., Sunday, July 21.

If you would like to donate your talent to this summer celebration, please call the parish office at (509) 829-5433 and ask for either Blanca or Mario Rodriguez, or email office@resurrectionparish.us before July 1.

All are welcome to attend this festival which will be held on the grounds of the church at 704 Schooley Road in Zillah. The event will include food, music, raffle drawings and dancing. There is no admission charge.

Zillah Parishioner is Teacher of Year

Perhaps you have heard that Jeff Charbonneau, a parishioner at Resurrection Parish in Zillah, was named National Teacher of the Year. He received the honor from President Barack Obama in a ceremony in the White House Rose Garden in April.

Charbonneau is a chemistry, physics and engineering teacher at Zillah High School. A 1996 graduate of the school, he's been working in this position for his entire 12-year teaching career. With his new honor, he will take off one year to travel and visit a variety of groups.

Charbonneau has a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a Masters of Education, both from Central Washington University. He has received numerous awards, including business donations and grants to support the Zillah High School Robot Challenge, of which he is founder and director. He is the son of Marc and Darline Charbonneau of Moxee.

St. Joseph Parish, Sunnyside: 'A Place With a Big Heart'

By Christine Corbett Conklin

The city is small, with only about 16,000 people. Yet, St. Joseph Church in Sunnyside, with its more than 3,000 families, is known as a place with a big heart.

"Our people are so diverse. Many have taken tremendous risks and made great sacrifices to be where they and their families are today. I say this not only of the immigrants, but also of those who have stayed here throughout the turbulence of Sunnyside's decades of change," said Father Thomas Bunnell, S.J., pastor.

"Sunnyside is a challenging context for all. I am inspired by the people's devotion, holiness and faith. I love their growing understanding of who they are, who they can be, and the new identities emerging," he said.

Although the simply styled church building – which Father describes as "a concrete square box built as a social hall for the previous church" – seats only about 300 people, six weekend Masses can bring in 1,500 to 1,600 attendees a week.

"The rumor is that the church was built (to resemble) an ark," adds parishioner Tom Gehlen. In any case, there is a strong drawing power.

Because an estimated "33 to 40 percent of people here meet the guidelines for poverty, it makes us closer. We have to work together to do things," Gehlen noted.

"There's a beautiful, tightknit, I'm-there-for-you spirit," agreed Mary Arthur, a parishioner since 1985 who moved to Sunnyside from the Everett-Lynnwood area. "(On the west side) I didn't know the people next to me in the pew," she said. "Here, it's marvelous. I know the names of the people. I know their children. I know the sports they're in."

Many parishioners are involved in some way in the farming industry.

"We put the food on people's tables," observed Father Bunnell. Other parishioners work in professions ranging from medicine to education and retail trade, he said.

A year-round schedule of church events helps to build community here. Activities include a bazaar, Mardi Gras celebration, Spring Fest, Marian concert festival, Mexican Independence Day celebration, Halloween dance, Day of the Dead celebration and Virgin of Guadalupe observance.

Father Bunnell credits the Hispanic parishioners, who make up the vast majority of the parish, with having a refreshing outlook on spirituality.



Parishioners celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe last December, in the Activity Center.

"Part of their mind and heart is always in Heaven. Jesus, Mary, and the saints are active in their lives, conversations, and prayers," he noted. However, all of the parish groups, including those who help to run the religious education program for some 620 students play a vital role, he believes. (From 1963 until 2001, the parish had its own elementary school.)

Parishioners give credit right back to their pastor.

"Father Tom is trying to get as many people as possible involved in all the things that need to be done in a parish," said Carol Johnson, a parishioner for 55 years.

"He seems to have a talent in bringing out the best in people," concurred Mike Heitstuman, a parishioner for 38 years. "It's nice to see people in both cultures melting into one."

Founded in 1936, St. Joseph Parish held its first Masses in the Masonic Hall. The parish experienced one of its most "creative" chapters from 1944 to 1956, when Father H. A. (Hans Ansgar) Reinhold was pastor. Having escaped from Germany as hostilities grew, he brought with him some interesting ideas.

"He was pushing the envelope a bit," said Deacon Kerry Turley, who along with Deacon Bernie Alvarado from Toppenish, assist Father Bunnell. "In the 1950s, there were some Masses in the vernacular (English) and facing the people, before Vatican II." Father Reinhold also had strong charismatic leanings.

Other pastors, in more recent years, have included: Monsignor Desmond Dillon, and Fathers Michael Ibach, Donal Kennedy, Anthony King, Osmar Aguirre, Ronald Patnode, Alberto Magaña and Ricardo Villarreal.

As the parish looks ahead, there is a dream of a new and larger church building.

This spring, the parish's debt was retired, thanks to a large donation to the Diocese of Yakima from a bequest to a neighboring parish, along with some fund raising by parishioners, explained Evangelina (Benjie) Aguilar, a long-time parishioner who heads the Quinceañera program. Retiring the debt removed one hurdle for a possible building campaign.

"We've had a little church forever. We've needed a big church forever," she said.

Despite the numbers, however, parishioners see each other "like family," she suggested. "We take care of each other."

From its food bank to Adoration program to bereavement outreach, and many activities in between, St. Joseph Church is alive with spirit.

"It's great to see people grow in their understanding of the role of the Church today, of their role of participation, service, and evangelization," Father Bunnell concluded.



Bishop Tyson blessed people and religious objects outside St. Joseph Church on Palm Sunday.