

My dear friends,

Cathedral:

Holy Week was a wonderful experience at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew as it was in the parishes. The Chrism Mass brought together representatives from all our parishes for the blessing of the Chrism and to receive the oils that will be used in sacramental celebrations throughout the year. Following the Chrism Mass, a reception was held at Cathedral Square Center for those who attended the Mass. For many of the guests, it was the first time they had been to the center.

The piazza in front of the Cathedral is almost completed and has already proven to be a wonderful gathering space before and after Masses. I am most grateful to Mrs. Joan Secchia for making this space possible. With the piazza construction nearly completed, the Cathedral Square Center building parking deck will be much more convenient and easier to access.

The audio and video technology which makes production and broadcast of the 10:00 a.m. Sunday televised Mass from the Cathedral of Saint Andrew possible has recently been updated. Each week, the televised Sunday Mass which reaches most parts of the diocese, touches the lives of thousands including the elderly, sick, disabled, incarcerated and homebound. Those who watch the Mass may have already noticed a major upgrade in the quality of the production.

The advancements in technology and software improve broadcasting capabilities and make Internet video streaming and podcasting possible. Broadcasts of the Sunday televised Mass which have been taking place for over 50 years are now being accomplished with greater flexibility and enhanced views. The addition of smaller, mounted digital cameras allows for an unobstructed view of the front of the sanctuary for those attending and participating in the Mass and those watching from home. Efforts to expand the outreach of this ministry are in place and include the future ability to videotape concerts, events and other important liturgies and sacramental celebrations.

At the present time, the major homilies of Holy Week and Easter as well as confirmation are available on the diocesan Web site (dioceseofgrandrapids.org) as audio and video podcasts. Tapes of the Sunday Mass will soon be available on the Internet through the Web site, making these Masses accessible throughout the week for those with Internet access. The diocesan Web site is currently being redesigned. The launch of the site is expected around July 1.

The Cathedral has underway a low-key fundraising effort to assist in meeting the costs of the new cameras and sound system. Should you wish to support that effort, contributions may be sent to: Cathedral Television, Diocese



>> Bishop Hurley lights the Paschal candle outside the Cathedral of Saint Andrew during the Easter Vigil liturgy on April 11.

of Grand Rapids, 360 Division Ave. S., Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Television time is purchased from WXMI FOX17 and is supported by our Catholic Services Appeal which is currently in progress.

Catholic Charities:

In these difficult times, I want express my appreciation to Catholic Charities West Michigan (CCWM) and the 300 staff members employed by the agency who help create hope for individuals and families in need throughout the 11 counties of our diocese. CCWM has offices located in nine different locations: Big Rapids, Grand Rapids, Hart, Holland, Ionia, Ludington, Muskegon, Stanton and White Cloud. I had the privilege of speaking to the staff last month about the meaning of Catholic charity. Catholic teaching and doctrine defines the parameters within which the agency operates. Charity is that love of God; that we have received and experience; that springs from the very heart of Christ; and that we share with others.

The services CCWM provides are in three distinct areas of emphasis: child welfare and family preservation, which includes foster care and adoption services, and offers programs that strengthen families and keep children safe; behavioral health and counseling services; and, social outreach services that include food, shelter and pantry programs. CCWM serves people of all faith traditions. In 2008, over 25,000 individuals and families were served; 75% of whom had annual incomes less than \$15,000. During the same year CCWM served over 225,000 meals and another 9,875 families through its food and pantry programs.

These programs are funded from a variety of sources including state government contracts, fundraising efforts, special donations as well as significant support from the Catholic Services Appeal. It is my view that in Catholic Charities West Michigan we have a team of highly trained employees, dedicated volunteers, a generous church and community, and they deliver the highest quality services. The work of Catholic Charities West

Michigan is truly the work of the church and I am grateful to them.

Graduations and Commencements:

Graduation is the special time of the year when our young people (both in age and spirit) look forward to a new stage in their life. I extend my congratulations to all the graduates and the assurance of my prayers for their success in the future. For many graduates, it may be a difficult time due to the poor job market. We need to know that our God is with us in our successes and failures and in our joys and sorrows. His is an abiding love and gives us hope.

Ordinations:

On Saturday June 5th, 2009, 10:00 am, at the Cathedral of Saint Andrew, I will ordain Deacon Michael Burt and Deacon Aaron Ferris to the priesthood. I will also ordain Mr. David Gross as a transitional deacon. I ask you to keep them in your prayers as they prepare to serve you, the people of the Diocese of Grand Rapids, for years to come. All are welcome, although seating may be limited.

Parish Visits:

I continue to make weekly parish visits to celebrate and pray with parishioners. It is a wonderful experience for me to see faith being lived out and practiced in our parish communities. During the winter months, I stayed somewhat closer to Grand Rapids but now that spring is here, I will travel to other areas of the diocese. We have 17 of our priests moving to their new pastor assignments. I will be present at the parish for the formal installation of each new pastor. During the installation, the priest makes a profession of faith, an oath of fidelity to carry out his office, and, in turn, I will formally install him as the pastor of the parish. In some congregations the pastor is hired by the elders and the congregation. Our tradition and practice is the pastor comes as a disciple, who is sent by the bishop in the name of the Lord, to minister to God's people.

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