

local news



Blessings grow as parishes respond to So Faith May Flourish

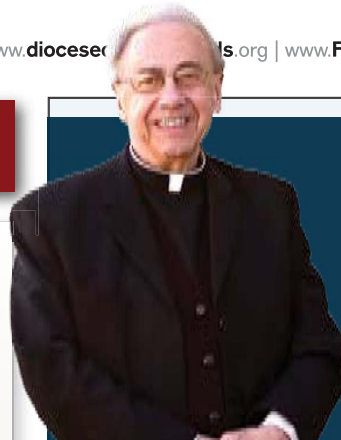
>> Our diocesan family of 103 parishes and 179,000 registered Catholics is truly blessed as gifts are given to our important once-a-year Catholic Services Appeal (CSA).

The CSA supports vital diocesan programs, services and ministries that provide training and formation for parish leadership; support the recruitment and formation of seminarians; advance evangelization through technology; offer financial and administrative services to parishes; and help feed the hungry through local, national and international charities.

Each of our gifts to CSA furthers the mission of the church – locally and beyond our borders – So Faith May Flourish!

Thomas Maj appointed West Catholic High School principal

>> Thomas M. Maj has been appointed principal of West Catholic High School in Grand Rapids. Maj succeeds Stanley H. Spetoskey, who, after eight years as principal, announced in March his plans to retire at the conclusion of the 2009 academic year. The appointment was announced by Rev. R. Louis Stasker, pastor/president of the Grand Rapids Catholic Secondary Schools. Maj, who currently serves as assistant principal of Catholic Central High School in Grand Rapids, will assume responsibilities as West Catholic High School's principal on July 1. For additional details, visit dioceseofgrandrapids.org.



Love is not rude or quick-tempered

>> Msgr. Gaspar F. Ancona is a senior priest of the Diocese of Grand Rapids.



On any given day in homes and hospitals across the world, someone bed-ridden and in great pain cries out for help: "Is anyone there? Can anybody help me?"

Someone may be nearby or down the hall. Or sadly, help may be farther away or nowhere to be found. The shouting continues nevertheless.

Sometimes a nurse, a family member or friend is able to respond to such pleas right away, with a quiet and composed bedside manner, with a cooling damp cloth to a fevered brow, with water for taking medication, with a plumping up of pillows and rearranging of tangled bed sheets. The crisis is eased – if only a little, if only for awhile – but the respectful, calm attentiveness lingers.

Other times, someone may approach the afflicted person, but with great irritation and even scolding. In the Gospels, those who cried out publicly to Jesus for help in the midst of the many crowds were often hushed up by those nearby, with attempts to hustle them off and away as a public nuisance. Jesus would remain unruffled. He demonstrated time after time that the "main event," the very purpose for his visit, wasn't a choreographed appearance and some standard stump speech. It was to announce that the kingdom of God was at hand and to demonstrate what actually happens when God draws near. Nothing demonstrated that better than the way Jesus serenely gave his love and healing to the afflicted.

"Flying off the handle," or being quick-tempered, is often an expression of helplessness, and a not very constructive one at that. Unfortunately, it usually makes a tense situation worse by fraying the nerves and affronting the dignity of others. Giving in to a spirit of aggression or stoking one's own pent-up anger until a "fuse is blown" inevitably brings about foolish deeds, at a minimum, or words that will be regretted. Relationships that had been important may end up a wreck.

Take a deep breath, we're often advised, or a time-out in a neutral, peaceful corner. Maybe even get your blood pressure checked. But, remember, if it's love we want, or love we want to give, it won't happen by being hot-headed.