

FAITH for today



WDREF

Wisconsin Directors of Religious
Education Federation

www.wdref.org

Winter 2013

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From the Facilitator

by Jennifer Ludtke

WDREF Facilitator



Traditionally the Catholic Church dedicates each month to a particular devotion. In January we focused on the Holy Name of Jesus. The Church reminds us of the power of Christ's Name and encourages us to pray always and everywhere in His Name. Keeping the name of Jesus always on our lips is a good way to ensure that we draw ever nearer to Him. Especially as we approach Lent, this is a great reminder about the necessity to pray always. O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Our January WDREF meeting was a new experience for most of us. Rather than traveling to St. Anthony Spirituality Center in Marathon, we met online using GoToMeeting. After working out a few technical difficulties, we were able to accomplish all of our business in a timely fashion. This online meeting enabled WDREF to be financially responsible, helped further WDREF's goal of taking greater advantage of current technology, and it also gave local representatives hands-on experience with a tool that local organizations may be able to use as well. I am so glad to have gotten some familiarity with this. In fact, it worked well enough that we will likely continue to hold the January WDREF meeting online.

I have to say that participating in an online meeting also reaffirmed how important it is to have time together in person, and not rely on technology exclusively to communicate and get our business done. Absolutely we need to learn about and use the great technological resources out there. But I encourage us all to balance our use of technology with good ole' fashioned face time – people are just too good to miss!

In this edition of the newsletter, you'll be reading a lot about the November 2012 Conference hosted by our friends and coworkers from Superior Diocese. For those who attended, it will be a great review of a lovely event. For those who missed it, consider this your nudge to put the 2014 Conference on your calendar and in your budgets now. Just like people, the WDREF conference is just too good to miss! May the Holy Spirit guide and strengthen us – individually and as Church – throughout the challenges and joys ahead.

God bless you all. - Jenny

WDREF Calendar

May 13-14, 2013

WDREF Board Meeting
St. Anthony's Spirituality Center
Marathon City

May 19-23, 2013

NCCL Conference
Cleveland, OH

August 26-27, 2013

WDREF Board Meeting
St. Anthony's Spirituality Center
Marathon City

October 24-25, 2013

WDREF Retreat
St. Anthony's Spirituality Center
Marathon City

2012 WDREF Conference Reflections

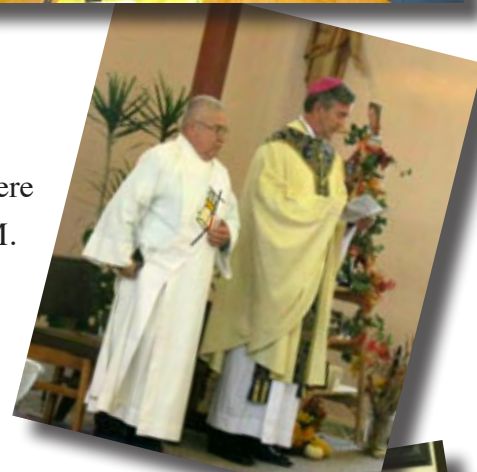
WDREF held its 17th biennial Conference November 8-9, 2012, at the Lodge at Crooked Lake in Siren Wisconsin with parish catechetical leaders from around the state in attendance. The theme of “Share the Story, Proclaim God’s Glory” was addressed by speakers Joe Paprocki and Carole Eipers (*see following two pages for presentation summaries*).

Participants also engaged in a variety of informational workshops including Theology of the Body and Chastity Education; Catechism of the Catholic Church; and Technology – creating Animoto and Smilebox video slideshows and sharing work via Google Docs.

The awards banquet was held at the nearby Forts Folle Avoine Historical Park where the Stephen C. Gilmour Award for excellence in catechetical ministry, Henriette M. Mackin Award for support of catechetical ministry, and the Good and Faithful Servant Award were presented (*see Blessings & Recognition column for winners*).

Mass on Thursday was rich in its uniqueness. The first church that was built in this part of the state was an Indian Mission Church. To honor that aspect of the Catholic story and in celebration of Kateri Tekakwitha being canonized a saint, Native Dancers from a parish in the Diocese of Superior joined in the celebration of the Mass and performed the story of Kateri’s life afterwards.

Overall it was a beautiful conference. Thanks to all who attended and a special note of gratitude to SUMMIT and the Diocese of Superior for being excellent hosts!



[View Smilebox Slideshow](#)

[View Flickr Photos](#)

[View 2012 Conference Evaluation Results](#)

Special thanks to all of our Exhibitors!



2012 WDREF Conference Reflections



Dr. Joe Paprocki

For those who were fortunate enough to arrive at The Lodge on Wednesday evening, Joe Paprocki got the conference off to a great start by engaging us in an exercise to start us thinking of our Catholic identity. We were to imagine that we were going to write a Catholic novel and, working with a small group of conference members, we were to capture the essence of the Catholic vision and imbue the novel with Catholic thought and imagery. After sharing what our small groups thought should be included in a Catholic novel, Joe identified five key elements that shape Catholic identity:

1. **Sacramentality** – Joe defined sacramentality as tangible, visible outward signs to encounter the intangible, invisible inner reality of the mystery of God – a mystery not to be solved but to be entered into.
2. **A Commitment to Community** – In describing this element Joe talked about the “We & God experience,” the worldwide Church, the Communion of Saints, and stewardship.
3. **Respect for the Dignity of Human Life** – Dignity and respect go hand in hand and as Catholics we have a commitment to justice by practicing the Corporal Works of Mercy.
4. **A Reverence for Tradition and Scripture** – Joe reminded us that “Catholicism has a rich heritage...a heritage that teaches the faith that what we have is a family heirloom.” The writings and lives of the Saints and the writings of the early Church Fathers teach us how to be disciples of Jesus. Practical implications for us are to make pilgrimages, study the lives of the saints, and learn the traditional prayers.
5. **An Attitude of Faith and Hope** – Because of the Resurrection, we should not despair but have an attitude of faith and hope. Joe challenged us to develop “an attitude of gratitude” and practice the Spiritual Works of Mercy.

On Thursday morning, Joe’s presentation was titled, “Proclaiming the Story of God’s Glory: Using the Language of Mystery.” We were reminded that as catechetical leaders we need to have a great imagination and then he proceeded to outline six elements of proclaiming God’s story in a catechetical setting:

1. **The Power of Song** – Joe shared with us that he tries to use a contemporary song related to the lesson. One of his sayings is “Enter through their door but leave through yours.” Use music to grab their attention and to set the theme of the lesson.
2. **Ritual** – The question to ask ourselves is, “What actions from the Mass can be added to the classroom?” Or “How do we mirror the liturgy of the Mass so our students know that what they are doing is different than attending a school class?” The next three elements Joe shared with us go along with the element of ritual.
3. **Signs and Symbols**
4. **Gesture and Movement**
5. **Silence and Reverence**
Joe has a supply box with candles, holy water, a crucifix, bible, and table runners in the liturgical colors. At the beginning of each class, the youth pick up an item and they have a procession to set up their prayer space. Other signs and symbols are added depending on the lesson or the liturgical season. Sign & symbols, rituals and movement all come together to create a moment of prayer, which may include silence. Joe reminded us that silence is God’s primary language and in today’s world we are often deprived of God’s voice with all the cacophony of noise going on.
6. **Storytelling** – We have a great story to tell – the story of God, Jesus Christ, and the Church. Our role, as catechists, is to help our learners make a connection between the stories of God, Jesus, and the Church to their own life experiences and circumstances.

“Once Upon a Time. . . Happily Ever After”



Dr. Carole Eipers

Carole Eipers gave us much to think about, discuss and celebrate in her two presentations on Friday at the WDREF Conference. She reminded us that like liturgy, storytelling is the work of the people. Stories connect us, give us a common thread, and are essential to our catechetical ministry. It is ours to gather the stories, and to share them. She reminded us that we need communal stories for guidance, hope and inspiration; they help us understand our own story and know how to live together.

Carol encouraged us to know and share our own stories of faith. To this end she did not allow us to sit and listen, but

kept us involved by asking us to share with one another several times over the course of the day. “What stories do people tell about you? What is your story? How do you reveal God’s Glory?” She challenged us to find ways to teach our catechists to read their own lived experiences; to ask them how they see God’s Glory in their story.

Carol also gave us an example of sharing the story as she mined the Gospels, using the devices of characterization to help us discover the answer to “Who is Jesus?” She noted that we discover this from what he says, from what he does, from what those around him say about him, and from the way others react to him. Then she led us in a powerful, prayerful reflection on this, deftly quoting from Scripture as she answered each question. When she finished there was no doubt of the power of storytelling as a tool for evangelization.

Lenten Reflection

Joanie McKeown’s personal journal entry on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land

After walking the Stations of the Cross in the morning, we celebrated Mass in a side chapel of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. The Gospel that day was the Gospel of the Resurrection. Somehow it seemed out of place – like we had gone too quickly to the joy without fully reflecting on the tragedy. Fr. Al’s homily brought the experiences of the morning into focus. He said:

We had thought this would be a morning of prayer, where we could reflect on Jesus’ last hours and the very path he walked, while praying the Stations of the Cross. But, that was impossible.

Imagine, now, how Jesus felt. He walked that same path, was jostled by vendors and the crowds like we were, was probably jeered at and made fun of – but even worse than that, he was probably ignored. Many people probably just went about their business, like they had this morning as we walked that road. There he was, an innocent man, heading to his death, and ignored.

Tears streamed down my face as Fr. Al talked. Yes, we were seeking a prayerful, religious experience and couldn’t imagine how people could just be going about their normal routine. It was distracting and at times irritating... but imagine what Jesus must have been feeling as he walked to his death and others went about their normal routine. When we need help or attention or love and are ignored, yes it hurts, but it couldn’t possibly match what Jesus experienced:

- Deserted by his friends at the time of his death.*
- Ignored by others too busy to be bothered with the likes of him.*

How often do we, today, ignore Jesus because we have more important things to do? How often do we ignore our relationship with Jesus even as we do the work of the Church? Even worse, how often do we ignore Jesus not because of something important, but simply because another distraction has entered our lives?

I don’t know if it was just the setting or the experience of the morning or the effect of the moments we shared the day before, but Fr. Al’s words struck deep. Ignored, even as we stood at his tomb today.



Mareda

Began their 2012-2013 year on Oct. 25 with a program presented by Kenneth Doran sharing insights into the “New Evangelization.” The next meeting will be Jan. 31 with Bishop Hying, Auxiliary Bishop. The March meeting will focus on “Thinking Outside the Box – New Perspectives on the Sacrament of Reconciliation,” with presenter Dr. Kathie Beuscher who did her Doctoral Dissertation on the sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Mareda Retreat will be May 22-23 at the Pallatine Retreat Center in Elkhorn. Retreat Director will be Fr. Robert Hater.

MDREO

On Oct. 4, MDREO kicked off its 2012-2013 program year with its first-ever “Catechetical Convocation” featuring our Bishop Morlino as speaker and Mass celebrant, celebrating the Year of Faith as our day’s overarching theme. The day, co-sponsored by the Madison Diocese OEC, was open to all catechetical leaders of the diocese—MDREO members or not— as a great way to highlight not only the work of our organization but to illustrate how we work in partnership with our colleagues in the diocesan office.

A morning of “Advent Prayer, Advent Peace” with Abbot Marcel Rooney, OSB was held on Dec. 13. The day ended with a white elephant gift exchange.

“MDREO Movie Matinee was held on Jan. 22 featuring the newest from Ascension Press and the Augustine

Institute, clips and classes available online, creative use of AV, and more—all in a setting with three “theaters” and an old-fashioned popcorn machine.

Our March program day will travel to the site—and experience the famous “cave”—of the Dead Theologians Society, at St. Mary’s Parish of Pine Bluff.

Our second annual “Milwaukee Road Trip” will cap off the year visiting the Brew Crew just for the fun of another tailgate party and the thrill of seeing our group’s name flashed up on the big screen.

ProCLAYM

ACRE Assessment tools continue to be used by all Catholic Schools and Parish Faith Formation Programs, per request of Bishop Ricken last year. The hope is that the on-going tally of ratings will result in improved programs that target weak areas of knowledge.

All parish programs are being asked to create or update their Crisis Plans, as a result of the Sandy Hook tragedy. The diocese is issuing guidelines of what they would like included in these plans.

Textbook evaluations for grade 1-8 materials will be completed this spring, after a presentation by the top five publishers. Input from catechetical, school and parish leaders will be sought at this meeting, and the evaluation committee will narrow the field to three choices. The plan is to then begin the evaluation process for high school materials.

Restructuring in the Diocese Department of Education has resulted in the forming of The New Evangelization Department – under the leadership of Julianne Stanz. This department will manage the Young Adult Discipleship and Formation, and Adult Faith Formation, among other roles.

The Mentoring Program, for new catechetical leaders will be reinstated, per request of many who had the privilege of being able to tap into the wisdom and advice of a mentor at the start of their career in a catechetical program.

The first year of the Catechetical Certification Program is nearing completion, and will be evaluated by the trainers themselves in May.

ProCLAYM will be offering a Day of Reflection on Feb. 28. The speaker is Julianne Stanz, on the topic “Cloud of Witness: A Day With the Saints.”

DARE

The DARE Board met with Bishop Callahan on Sept. 25. We deviated from our agenda and had the opportunity to discuss a situation that was fresh in the minds of several of the Catechetical Leaders present. This led to the Bishop asking for a list of bullet points from our discussion to use when he presented at a Dean’s meeting with priests. These points are indicative of Bishop Callahan’s feelings on the importance of Religious Education in all forms, for all ages:

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- Faith formation needs to be at the heart of parish life. Faith formation is about assisting children, young people and adults to encounter Jesus Christ and to grow in their faith relationship with Him as a committed disciple throughout life.
- The mission of Evangelization is at the heart of the Church and should always be first priority, regardless of issues such as tight budgets, staffing, etc.
- RE Programs and Catholic Schools should work in close collaboration, not pitting one against the other.
- Youth Ministry needs to be woven in the RE Programs and Catholic Schools.
- Finance Councils, Parish Councils and other parish groups often need to gain an understanding of faith formation in the parish as passing on our faith in Jesus Christ to future generations so that all people can be fully engaged as converted disciples.
- Catechetical leaders and Catholic school administrators need to be held to a high standard by being rooted in daily prayer, frequenting the Sacraments and receiving ongoing faith formation.

All of the above leads to a strengthening of family life, the cell of society.

SUMMIT

The members of SUMMIT were so pleased to host this fall's WDREF Conference. They were grateful for the positive comments received, and for the help received by WDREF reps serving on the Conference committee as well as diocesan organization members. It was once again, a real team effort, and a wonderful opportunity to "Share the Story – Proclaim God's Glory!"

SUMMIT met on Sept. 27, where our new diocesan liaison/representative Peggy Schoenfuss, and her co-worker, Megan Noll, shared information regarding the Year of Faith within the Diocese of Superior. The Dec. 6 meeting included a presentation by Ernie Swartz on Sustaining and Retaining Catechists.

At the February 7 meeting, Joanie McKeown spoke on how to select the best Grade 1-5 textbooks for your particular parish setting. Her presentation included a summary of Learning Styles and ways to incorporate each into the lesson.

The diocesan method for catechetical certification will be changing in 2013. A training/discussion event is scheduled to take place on Thursday, Jan. 17. This new method will employ among other things, the "Echoes of Faith Plus" materials.

LIVING OUR BAPTISM AS PROPHET, PRIEST AND KING

WDREF RETREAT

OCTOBER 24-25, 2013 (NOTE THIS CHANGE)

ST. ANTHONY'S SPIRITUALITY CENTER
MARATHON CITY, WI

FACILITATED BY: FR. JAMES KUBICKI, SJ
NATIONAL DIRECTOR, APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER



B&R Blessings & Recognition

The awards committee was made up of one representative from each diocese: Jennifer Ludtke (MDREO), Emily Revak (DARE), Theresa Alberts (ProCLAYM), Jim Gill (Mareda), and Joanie McKeown (SUMMIT). All of our nominees were very qualified to receive the awards, but after much prayer and consideration, the following individuals were recognized at the November 2012 Conference.

Henriette M. Mackin Award

Congratulations, Jerry Koenig! A retired police officer, committed husband, father and grandfather, Jerry has been a positive influence on hundreds of youth and their families. He has volunteered for over 30 years in Religious Education and Youth Ministry programs. He is a model of the importance of good values, being involved in the community and being dedicated to the Catholic faith. Jerry founded a youth group in his parish, “Jesus and Company” that meets in the “Upper Room,” and provides a variety of service opportunities, creative community building, and opportunities for prayer. Jerry allows kids to come and be themselves in a loving and faith-filled atmosphere.

As his nominator, Anne Stemper, stated, “Jerry is a very humble man – living his baptismal call to love and serve everyone and to bring others to know and love the Lord. His receiving this award [affirms] in him the good that he does and helps him see the profound effect he has had on the lives he has touched.

Jerry is an outstanding example of living out the catechetical ministry in the Diocese of Green Bay. WDREF is invigorated by his commitment of living the call of discipleship and we are honored to award him with the Mackin Award for support in ministry.

Stephen C. Gilmour Award



Congratulations to Andrea Sabor! Andrea has served the Church for over 40 years in leadership roles in WDREF, NCCL and ProCLAYM, as well as in parishes and at the diocesan level. She is

lovingly devoted to her husband Dan, her three children and their families, particularly her four grandchildren.

Andrea responded to the call to servant leadership many times over the course of her career, mirroring the development of catechetical leadership from the province of priests and sisters to committed lay people. In parish settings she tirelessly advocated for catechists through ongoing support and training. Andrea has always valued lifelong learning, seeing the family as the first and foundational source of catechesis and supporting families through catechetical programs and later by organizing training sessions for parish catechetical leaders to explore intergenerational learning.

Andrea has been a vocal supporter and member of professional organizations such as ProCLAYM and WDREF, having been a member of WDREF since its inception. Her work as a diocesan consultant provided a variety of catechetical events in support of the professional development of PCLs.

In addition to describing her professional accomplishments, nominator James Whalen stated, “Most importantly Andrea builds relationships with and among catechetical leaders, supporting them with her easygoing and friendly demeanor and constant willingness to provide help, suggestions, ideas or her physical presence through leading workshops or trainings.” WDREF felt blessed to present Andrea with the Stephen Gilmour award for her leadership in ministry.

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Good and Faithful Servant Award

Congratulations, Roger Cadotte! WDREF was formed over 30 years ago with the help and support of the diocesan directors in the five dioceses in Wisconsin. Those



DDs recognized how beneficial it was to them when they gathered with their peers, so, they helped to form WDREF to give us the opportunity to experience those same benefits.

For the majority of these years, Roger Cadotte was the diocesan director of faith formation in the Diocese of Superior. Roger made sure that either he or his associate director attended every WDREF Board meeting. As he joined in the Board discussions, it was always with a willingness to share his knowledge and his perspective while still respecting the PCLs' views...a true servant leader.

The Good and Faithful Servant Award for lifetime achievement in the catechetical ministry is presented only when there is an unanimous decision by the WDREF Board. This is only the second time in WDREF's history that this award was presented. The "lifetime achievement" that it recognizes is for a true, lifelong commitment to the progress of the catechetical ministry; a dedication that shows a true sense of discipleship, with contributions that have a lasting impact on the catechetical field in the state of Wisconsin.

The award recognizes that Roger's knowledge in the fields of religious education, youth ministry, lifelong formation is superb, it's "Superior." He's an excellent role model for how to treat people – never making people feel lesser, never making a person feel that the time he spent with you was an imposition. If you want to get to know a true Servant Leader, you've found that person in Roger Cadotte.

Who's Who Moment ...

WDREF Member in the Spotlight

*Peggy Schoenfuss
Director of Catholic Formation
Diocese of Superior*



As of July 1, 2012, Peggy Schoenfuss has taken on the role of Director of Catholic Formation for the Diocese of Superior. Since 2006, Peggy has served as the Superintendent of Schools and still maintains that position while overseeing the parish catechetical and adult formation programs.

Peggy is excited about her new responsibilities and is learning a lot about the wonderful things the parishes in the Diocese of Superior are doing to bring Christ to the children, youth and adults. The first six months have been very busy getting to know the programs and

implementing a new catechetical certification program, which was in the planning stages before taking on the position. With the new evangelization being emphasized by Bishop Peter Christensen, Peggy hopes to team with parishes and help all Catholics in the diocese accept the challenge of sharing Christ with others. "It's an exciting time in the Church today. Some people call it challenging, but in reality, it's an opportunity to be true missionaries of the faith."

Peggy Schoenfuss has her office at the Bishop Hammes Center in Haugen, WI. She is married to Mark and has three boys: Jacob 15, Brian 12, and Matthew 9. They live in Rice Lake.

NCCL nuggets

By Pam Fischer, NCCL Rep.
faith1@lakefield.net

Highlights from the November Rep. Council Meeting
November 1-3, 2012

NCCL Organization

- *Joining NCCL:* It costs less than \$1.25 a week/\$5.00 a month to be a member. Getting the *CL Magazine* (Editor is Nick Wagner) and the weekly newsletter is worth it. We need to nourish ourselves, and one way is by joining NCCL.
- *NY State Catholic Conference website article:* “Leaders in the 3rd Millennium” worth printing along with the supplemental workbook (the implementation).
- *Conference:* The 77th Annual NCCL Conference and Exposition is the Professional Development Conference for Catechetical Leaders in 2013:



Ignite the Fire of Faith
“Save Me a Place”
[Download Form](#)

For the most up to date information, visit:
www.nccl.us

- *Highlights from Bishop Leonard Blair:*
 - Conformity reviews are essential for the textbooks.
 - Catechesis office in the Vatican has been moved to the Evangelization Office.

NCCL
National Conference for Catechetical Leadership

WDREF Executive Team



Treasurer - Danelle Kegley
Facilitator - Jennifer Ludtke
Secretary - Dominick Meyer

Learn more about our executives...
www.wdref.org/OurOrganization.html

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www.wdref.org

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www.wdref.org



WDREF Mission Statement

As the statewide organization of professional catechetical leaders, the Wisconsin Directors of Religious Education Federation (WDREF) promotes ministerial and professional development and provides ongoing formation, advocacy, support and recognition to our members through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.