

# MICAH 6:8

Live justly. Love tenderly. Walk humbly with your God.



Office of Living Justice

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## A Note from the Living Justice Director

### Greetings!

During the winter, it is difficult for me to stay motivated. Christmas seems like ages ago, and my New Year's resolution has already faded far into my memory. When the temperatures drop to a high of two degrees with a wind chill of negative 22, I would much rather stay in my pajamas, curl up on my couch, and read a good book. That sounds much more enjoyable than bundling up with a million layers to go outside and carry on with my daily routine.

Oftentimes, I think about the early fathers of our church and wonder if they ever felt the same way. Did St. Peter and Paul ever say, "I think I am going to take it easy today?" I do not think so. Despite the hostilities of the early church (which were far more serious than the winter weather!), they carried on to profess the Gospel. But, could you imagine if they did take a break? We may not have the richness of our Catholic teachings today.

Despite the bitter cold and the lack of motivation, we must carry on with our work, just as the early fathers of the church. Currently, there are still several threats to our Catholic moral and social teaching. We commemorated the 40th anniversary of Roe v. Wade and the HHS mandate still looms, among others. At the same time, some positive movement has been made in the area of compassionate and comprehensive immigration reform. Eight senators drafted a bi-partisan plan to address immigration reform, and President Barack Obama recently gave a speech in Las Vegas articulating his plan. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has generally welcomed these movements but still recognize that there is work to be done to improve them.

Christmas season has ended, winter continues, and Lent begins today on Feb. 13 with Ash Wednesday. There is work to be done, and in this newsletter, you will read about the many happenings of the Living Justice team.

Many blessings on your continued ministries!

**Catherine**



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## Catholic Social Justice

### Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

*"Ending the death penalty would be one important step away from a culture of death and toward building a culture of Life."*

United States Catholic Bishops, 2005, A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death

This month, we will begin our study of the "Themes of Catholic Social Teaching." The first theme we will look at is "Life and Dignity of the Human Person."

Human life is considered sacred and the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. In our society, human life is under attack from abortion and euthanasia. Cloning, embryonic stem cell research and the death penalty are threatening the value of human life. Catholic Social Teaching tells us to avoid war and the intentional targeting of civilians in terrorist attacks. Conflicts must be prevented and resolved by peaceful means. We must all keep in mind that people are more precious and important than things and life must be enhanced, rather than threatened.

Catholic teaching offers a unique perspective on crime, punishment and the death penalty. Dignity of the person applies to both victims and offenders. All life has dignity and is a gift from God that must be respected and defended from conception until natural death. In fact, the catechism goes so far as to say "the cases, in which the execution of the offender is an absolute necessity, are very rare, if not practically non-existent" (CCC, 2267).

In 2005, the Zogby poll found that support for the death penalty amongst Catholics is declining - 48 percent of Catholics supported the use of the death penalty which is a decrease from the previous number of 68 percent with a "respect for life" given as

## Database Updates

The Office of Living Justice is updating its email database.

Please contact Theresa McKenna, the new administrative assistant for the Department of Worship and Living Justice, at [tmckenna@gbdioc.org](mailto:tmckenna@gbdioc.org) if you have a new email address that should be on file for Living Justice newsletters.

Thank you for your help!

## Save the Date

### Feb. 7-14

National Marriage USA Week

### Feb. 13

Ash Wednesday

### Feb. 13 - March 24

40 Days for Life

### Feb. 16

Do a Grouch a Favor Day

### Feb. 17

Random Act of Kindness Day

### Feb. 20, 27, and March 6

Lenten Marriage Enrichment Offering

### Feb. 24

High School Youth Conference

### March 15-17

Married Couples Retreat

### April 5-7

Retrouvaille

### April 10

Catholics at the Capitol

## Catholics at the Capitol

Please join us this year for Catholics at the Capitol on Wednesday, April 10!

Our theme is "Reclaiming the Common Good in the Year of Faith." There will be a keynote address by The Most

the number one reason for changing of attitudes. The number of executions dropped 12 percent between 2009 and 2010 and more than 50 percent since 1999. Meanwhile, the number of those exonerated between 1973 and January 2012 has risen to 140.

Please continue to pray for victims of crime, their families, those wrongly convicted, and those awaiting execution. Also pray that all states will take a stance like Wisconsin and not offer the death penalty as a component of the criminal justice system. Most importantly, pray that all followers of Christ be "unconditionally pro-life as Blessed Pope John Paul II stated in his encyclical The Gospel of Life" (Gospel of Life 27).

**Your Friend in Christ,  
Eric Weydt  
Catholic Social Justice Coordinator**

## Resources

- The Gospel of Life, Pope John Paul II (March 1995)
- A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death, United States Catholic Bishops (November 2005)
- Catechism of the Catholic Church, Catholic Church (1995)

## Family and Married Life

**Feb. 7-14 is National Marriage Week USA**  
**Let's strengthen marriage!**

### CHECK OUT THIS WEBSITE

"For Your Marriage" is an online initiative of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The website has a variety of articles, prayers and blessings, church teachings, and daily marriage tips, to name some regular features. Click on the tabs to find interesting articles for those who are dating, for engaged couples, for married couples of all ages and stages, and for parents and families: <http://foryourmarriage.org/>.



## MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT OFFERINGS

- **Married Couples Retreat:** "Growing in the Spirituality of Marriage" at Monte Alverno Retreat Center, Appleton on March 15-17, 2013. "And the two shall be as one." We've often heard these Scriptural words about marriage. Less often have we heard that God wants this unity to occur, not only on the physical level, but on ALL levels, including the spiritual level. That's Marriage Spirituality - and that's what this Married Couples Retreat is all about. We will explore how much richer married lives become when couples TOGETHER discover their truest identity in God. Come and be enriched - for each other! Led by Deacon Steve

Reverend Peter F. Christensen, Bishop of Superior, Wis., with several breakout sessions addressing the various themes of Catholic Social Teaching. Participants will also have the opportunity to visit with their legislators in order to continue professing the Gospel message.

To register, please fill out the [attached form](#) or feel free to contact the Living Justice office.

## Parenting & Family

### How To Take Young Children to Mass

Can parents with small children really bring them to Sunday Mass with good results?

Yes, say Josh and Stacey Noem, parents of three. They offer some practical advice for parents who want the experience to be positive for them, their children, and their fellow worshippers.

[Read the full story here.](#)

## Knights of Columbus Request

### Benefit of Ultrasound Technology

In January, Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan wrote a *Catholic New York* article saying, "Ultrasound technology has opened a window into the womb, allowing us to glimpse preborn babies from the earliest weeks of gestation."

[Read the full article here.](#)

Gary Hughes from the Knights of Columbus has written on behalf of the councils from Sheboygan and Manitowoc counties. They have teamed up to start a fund

and Peg VandeHey and Deacon Dave and Joan Van Eperen. Contact Monte Alverno Retreat Center at (920) 733-8526 or check out their website at: <http://www.montealverno.org/>

- **Marriage Encounter Weekend:** Married couples, if you are looking for a weekend away, please consider a Marriage Encounter Weekend. It is a time to renew your relationship, away from the everyday distractions of life. It is an opportunity to strengthen your communication and promote greater intimacy in your life together. You don't NEED a Marriage Encounter Weekend, but you DESERVE one. Discover each other again, more deeply, honestly and warmly. See the website for more dates and information at: [www.gbme.org](http://www.gbme.org)
- **Lenten Marriage Enrichment Offering - Make a date with your spouse or your fiancé to strengthen your marriage!** Enrichment opportunity for married couples and engaged couples during Lent: This is an invitation to participate in a presentation and study of Blessed John Paul II's teaching of "Theology of the Body." Pope John Paul II delivered a series of Wednesday audiences over five years, which came to be known as "Theology of the Body." The three sessions will be led by Steve and Jacinda Thiele, from Manitowoc, who are trained instructors of "God's Plan for a Joy-Filled Marriage" and regularly present at the diocesan marriage preparation program. The Thieles are married and have two children. They present in a loving, non-judgmental manner. Steve & Jacinda have a great love for their Catholic faith, which they want to share with others. Dates: Feb. 20, 27, and March 6 at 6:30-8:30 p.m. Cost: \$25/couple to cover the cost of the books. Please pre-register by calling Lori toll free at: 1-877-500-3580, ext. 8296.
- **Marriage Help:** Retrouvaille has helped tens of thousands of couples at all stages of disillusionment or misery in their marriage. This program can help you too. For confidential information about the program or to register for the April program at St. Norbert Abbey on April 5-7, please call: (800) 470-2230 or visit our website at: <http://helpourmarriage.com/>.

## Dignity of Human Life



### Feb. 13-March 24

40 Days for Life is a focused pro-life campaign with a vision to access God's power through prayer, fasting, and peaceful vigil to end abortion.

The mission of the campaign is "to bring together the body of Christ in a spirit of unity during a focused 40 day campaign of prayer, fasting, and peaceful activism, with the purpose of repentance, to seek God's favor to turn hearts and minds from a

drive for Pro Life to raise enough money to purchase an ultrasound machine for The Crossing of Manitowoc County.

The Crossing is a nonprofit Christian-based organization that offers free pregnancy support services, counseling and education.

[Click here to read the complete letter.](#)

## Diocesan Website and Social Media Links

### Diocese of Green Bay website

For more information on the Diocese of Green Bay, visit [www.gbdioc.org](http://www.gbdioc.org).

**Like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter!**

Diocese of Green Bay

Like us on Facebook 

Follow us on  twitter

The Compass, official newspaper for the diocese

Like us on Facebook 

Follow us on  twitter

## Website for Parishes

[Click here to visit the diocesan website for parishes.](#) At this website you can read Bishop Ricken's pastoral letter, "Parishes: Called to be Holy, Fully Engaged and Fully Alive," and find other parish-building resources.

culture of death to a culture of life, thus bringing an end to abortion."

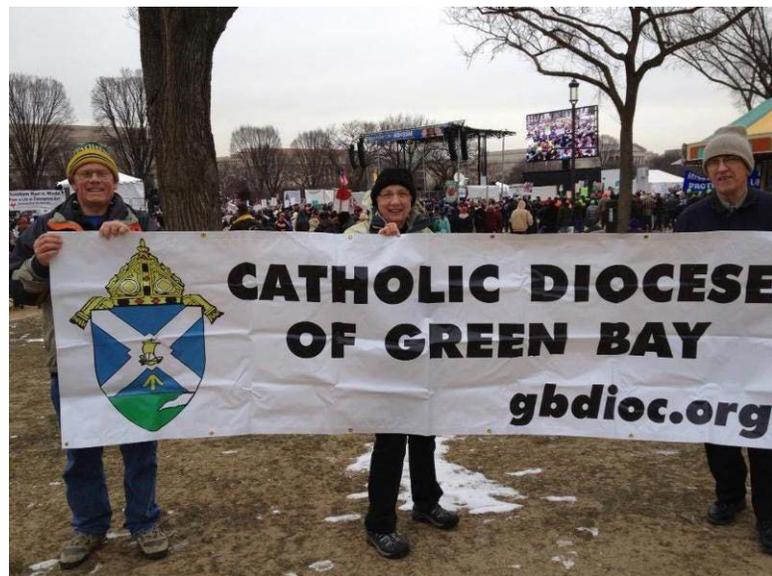
The campaign will be taking place in Green Bay at the Medical Arts Building. If you cannot physically be at the location, please consider fasting and praying during these 40 Days.

What are some of the blessings that have come from the 40 Days for Life Campaign?:

- Reports document 6,749 lives that have been spared from abortion - and those are just the ones we know about
- 76 abortion workers have quit their jobs and walked away from the abortion industry
- 26 abortion facilities completely shut down following local 40 Days for Life campaigns

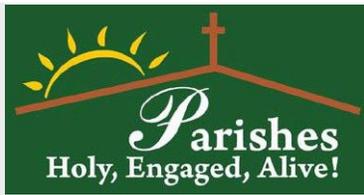
Find out more about this powerful peaceful campaign by visiting the main website, [www.40daysforlife.com](http://www.40daysforlife.com).

## March for Life Recap



The Diocese of Green Bay offered a family and adult trip to the annual March for Life in Washington D.C. The group of 43 flew out on Thursday, Jan. 24 from Milwaukee and returned on Saturday afternoon. They marched with the largest crowd reported in the history of the March for Life. It was amazing to see the number of young people who were marching, offering hope that this new generation will bring about the culture of life! Members were also blessed to visit and pray at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, plus spend time at various historic sites in the area.

Next year, the march lands on Wednesday, Jan. 22. Plans for the march will begin this spring and we will keep you posted on updates. Consider taking a pilgrimage to Washington, D.C., next January!



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## High School Youth Conference "Free to Be... Fully Alive!"

**Sunday, Feb. 24 at St. Thomas More Parish, Appleton**

Join us for our high school youth conference, co-sponsored by Fox Valley Catholic Youth Ministers Association - Fox Valley and the Diocesan Dignity of Human Life Office.

Bishop David Ricken states, "The youth of today are bombarded with challenges from the secular world, and it is crucial for us to ground them in the beauty of their faith so they can embrace their call to follow Jesus Christ. We need to constantly make them aware of the fact they were created in the image and likeness of God. They are incredibly special to the world."

Marcellino and Anthony D'AmBrosio will focus the first part of their witness on how beautiful it is that each of us is created in the image of God. They will then help us delve into what that means in our culture today. How do we fight the culture war and stay true to ourselves and Jesus Christ by comparing our modern restrained Christianity to the faith of the early church, namely the martyrs?

Come be fed by the Eucharist, share in a meal, and be challenged by Marcellino and Anthony on Feb. 24!

For more details and registration forms, please visit this link: [High School Youth Conference](#).