

# THE JOURNEY

Our Lady of Victory Parish Newsletter

*We are sent to love and serve, as we journey toward the kingdom.*

Winter  
2020



## A Message from Fr. Alan

On Epiphany Sunday, which is designated each year by our bishops as Immigration Sunday, OLV had a special speaker at homily time. A member of our social concerns committee, and chaplain at Lake Region Hospital, Deb Forstner spoke beautifully to the invitation of being a welcoming people, and truly being thankful for the unity through the diversity in our midst! Deb has also newly accepted the position as editor of this parish newsletter, and this winter edition continues the rich themes ignited by the Epiphany. I wish to both thank Rhonda Antrim Petersen for her past leadership as editor of our newsletter, and to welcome Deb. Thanks also to all who contribute to the success of this special parish communication... which may also evolve one day to a newsletter for our Pelican Valley Area Catholic Community!

The following are excerpts of Deb's presentation on Epiphany/Immigration Sunday:

The Magi, commonly referred to as the Wisemen, were astrologers, looking for signs through the movement of stars, without ties to religion. The Jewish people were expecting a Messiah, but the Magi did not have the Hebrew Scriptures and its prophecies to guide them. By bringing these Wisemen from the East and the Holy Family together, God was moving people to intercultural and religious dialogue from the time of Jesus' birth.

Every moment, every day, God continues to come and dwell among us. And like the Magi, our part is to follow the signs God places before us. The light of Christ can only enter the world today if we

open our hearts. We can make our hearts as available as the manger where the baby Jesus laid.

Sometimes, however, out of suspicion, doubt or fear, our hearts become closed. We may not see or acknowledge that God is dwelling among everyone, in every land, and in people of every background. St. Paul, a Greek speaking Jew, was inspired by God to include Gentiles in his letters, even though the Gentiles had been viewed with a harsh stigma, as unclean outsiders.

Today, we are in a troubled, divided, and sometimes prejudiced world, where we struggle to find a balance between protecting our country, which is our right, and living and supporting the universal right of justice for all. God has called us to this as Catholic (which means Universal) Christians. Herod was far from being universal. He only wanted to protect himself and his rights to his kingdom... a very unjust and jealous king.

Because of a warning through a dream, the Magi did not return to report to Herod, but instead returned by a different route. This protected Jesus and his parents as they fled to the foreign land of Egypt.

We might be very invested in keeping things the same way; maybe even insisting on sticking with the way our ancestors would have done something. Traditions can be very good, and a lovely way to celebrate family life. However, to occasionally unlock and take a different route is to grow. And the grace it can bring when you do is truly amazing.

**So, what are some different routes we can take?** The following suggestions for new pathways apply to people of all ages.

- Can we sit by and invite new people, especially by reaching out to someone who may be feeling left out, is new to Fergus Falls, or perhaps new to this country?
- Can we welcome trying new activities, foods, and take in events from another culture?
- Can we speak up against bullying, harassment, and discrimination?
- Can we both promote our own faith and spirituality, while at the same time asking questions, carefully listening, and learning from others?
- Can we put a human face on immigration by supporting humanitarian work, such as that being done by the Knights of Columbus and other Catholic organizations?
- Will we be open to meet and interact with new people as we join with the parishes of St. Elizabeth and St. Leonard in our Pelican Valley Catholic Community?

May we see God's face in the faces of others, both in this church and throughout the world.

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# Church Environment Ministry

By Mary Loreno

A small, yet mighty, group of Our Lady of Victory parishioners join together each liturgical season, as part of the Environment Ministry. This ministry strives to support the life of each liturgical season and feast days through color and design, enhancing the beauty of our House of God and the experience of our sacramental journey.

This Christmas season, the Environment Ministry took direction from the Apostolic Letter of Pope Francis, with its focus on the significance of the crèche. Pope Francis encouraged all to share the tradition of setting up the Nativity scene in our homes, hospitals, prisons, workplaces and schools. In keeping with the Apostolic Letter, OLV shared a nearly full size Nativity at the front of our church, a rustic crèche in the Gathering Space, a humble nativity in front of the ambo and lastly a crèche in the Fellowship Hall. The use of these crèches was to help us to focus on the wonder and awe of the celebration of the birth of the Baby Jesus.

Our wonderful tradition of the donation of poinsettias for our Christmas Season decorated our church with over 70 donated poinsettias. Historically, the bright red flowers were known as the 'Flores de Noche Buena', or 'Flowers of the Holy Night' in Central America. The shape of the poinsettia flower and leaves were thought to be a symbol of the Star of Bethlehem, which led the Wise Men to Jesus, and their red colored leaves symbolized the blood of Christ. Thank you so much to all who filled our church with the beauty and symbolism of the red poinsettia!

While "undecorating" the church on the Feast of the Baptism of the



Beautiful lights



St. Anne and Mary statues in Christmas glory

Lord, an adorable, young parishioner, proclaimed with enthusiasm, "This is fun!" The Environment Ministry welcomes other creative and "fun-loving" parishioners to join us in designing, donating, cleaning or "undecorating" in our House of God.



Century old infant Jesus statue from Fr. Bill Gamber

Crèche outside church entrance



# The Color Rose: Twice Per Liturgical Year

Article and Pictures Submitted by Deb Forstner



Golden Roses presented to Shrine of Our Lady of Knock in Ireland by Pope John Paul II in 1979

The Third Sunday of Advent is also called Gaudete Sunday, which means Joyful Sunday. We celebrate with joy because at that time, our Savior is about to come at Christmas. The color Rose in the vestment of the priest and the stole of the deacon signifies joy and happiness. The use of rose helps to tie into this spirit of gladness which the Church wishes for us to celebrate.

The next time we will see these beautiful vestments/stoles is the fourth Sunday of Lent: Laetere Sunday (from the Latin *laetare*, which means to rejoice). This Sunday is also about rejoicing in the Lord who is going to resurrect on Easter Sunday. Additionally, the rose vestments on Laetere Sunday are a custom originating in the fact that, as a symbol of hope in the middle of the somber Lenten Season, popes used to carry a rose in their right hand when processing from the celebration of Mass on this day. Originally, it was natural rose; then a single golden rose of natural size; but since the fifteenth century, it has been a cluster or branch of roses, made of pure gold in brilliant workmanship. The popes bless

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WELCOME  
New Members



### DOUGLAS AND SARAH McCLAIN

Doug and Sarah McClain are both from Ohio. They met at a waterfowl research station in Illinois and were married in Illinois. They've lived in Ohio for the last 3 years, where they had their son, Elijah, in 2017. They moved to Fergus Falls and had their daughter, Zelie, within a month. Doug is a biologist with Ducks Unlimited, and Sarah is a stay-at-home mom. Welcome to OLV!

## PARISH HAPPENINGS

FEBRUARY 22

Children of St. Peter Gala and Fundraiser 5:00 p.m.

FEBRUARY 25

Mardi Gras 6:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 26

Ash Wednesday Masses 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 28

Lenten Walleye Fish Fries begin 5:00 p.m.  
Friday Stations of the Cross begin 7:15 p.m.

MARCH 19

St. John's Men and Women Choir Concert 7:30 p.m.

APRIL 2

Chrim Mass 7:00 p.m. at St. Mary's Cathedral in St. Cloud

APRIL 9

Holy Thursday Mass 7:00 p.m.

APRIL 10

Good Friday Service 3:00 p.m.

APRIL 11

Easter Vigil 7:30 p.m.

APRIL 12

Easter Sunday Masses 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

APRIL 18

OLV School Gala

APRIL 28

First Communion at 10:30 a.m. Mass

## REFLECTIONS OF AN OLD MAN

WHY CAN'T IT BE SIMPLE? *By Lee Krogh*

It was so simple when I was young. "Mom said so, and she knows!" "The Pope said so, and he's head of the Church!" "The government said so, and it wouldn't lie to us!"

So simple! Until I kept getting older and older, and learning more and more. Until I learned that, despite their vast experience and sincerity, mothers are sometimes wrong, popes haven't always agreed, and the government does lie to us.

Not so simple any more.

All of which confirms my long-held belief that there's rarely a simple, absolutely correct answer to any question.

Including immigration!

Yes, I know the Bible tells us to love our neighbors as ourselves, that all people are our neighbors, and that we should welcome the stranger. And I believe that—100%! At the same time, I know that there are millions (if not tens of millions) of men, women and children in our own country who are homeless, hungry, and without medical or mental care. So what's the answer?

Frankly, despite the hours of thought I've given to the question, I don't know! At the same time, I do know that if I were a father living in one of the crime-infested, totally impoverished, corrupt, gang-ridden areas that many immigrants come from, I couldn't consider myself a decent father—or man, for that matter—if I didn't do everything possible to bring my family out of that environment. That's a simple truth, but I'm not sure that that would be the right thing.

To me, the bottom line is that there has to be a middle ground, an answer that lies somewhere between a simple "Let them all in" or "Keep them all out." But until someone with greater knowledge—and considerably more clout—than I have finds that answer, I'm afraid I'm confined to praying for one. And, as Deb Forstner suggested in her homily on Immigration Sunday, accepting and helping the immigrant families I may someday encounter.

When and if that happens, I pray that it will be simple.

***P.S. I don't think many people realize how time consuming and difficult it is to organize and edit this newsletter. Be sure to thank Deb Forstner for taking the reins from Rhonda Antrim Petersen after her more than five-year stint of consistently excellent work.***

# BILINGUAL MASS 2019 AND THE OLV SCHOOL SPANISH PROGRAM

By Deb Forstner  
Photos taken by Rachel Tuel

On December 12, 2019, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School had a Bilingual (Spanish/English) Mass to celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It was an impressive, spiritual experience for all who were blessed by being there. Under the direction of Mrs. Alyssa Fearing, students sang songs in Spanish, and there was a student solo of Ave Maria. Maria Bedoy taught students a dance and led them with drumming that day. Spanish teacher Mrs. Karla Ehlers had worked with students so they knew the Mass parts that were said in Spanish, along with the readings that were read in Spanish. Keeping the pronunciation of Spanish vowels straight is indeed an acquired skill. It also helps a great deal that our parish priest, Fr. Alan Wielinski, is bilingual. For more background information about the history of Our Lady of



Guadalupe, please refer to the article below.

In the 1980's, Gail Welle was a first grade teacher at Our Lady of Victory School. She taught her students at that time words and songs in Spanish, in order to pique their interest in foreign language study. Spanish has been part of the OLV School curriculum since the Fall of 2000. Former school principal Sandy Carpenter taught students

Spanish at that time. Currently, Karla Ehlers, a native of Peru, is teaching all students from preschool to 6th grade, in Spanish classes held on Fridays. Mrs. Ehlers has been part of the OLV School faculty for the past five years.



## Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe

Researched by Deb Forstner with input from Teresa Rodriguez

On December 9, 1531, in Mexico, Mary appeared to Juan Diego, a poor humble Aztec Indian who had recently converted to the Catholic faith. She asked him to go to the Bishop and tell him to build a church. She said, "I will show and offer all of my love, my compassion, my help and my protection to my people." Juan Diego did as she asked, but the Bishop asked for a sign that this message was really from Our Lady.

Mary granted his request. On December 12, she showed Juan Diego the most beautiful Castilian roses, and told him to gather them. It was a miracle that the roses were there and in bloom because there was frost, and the ground was an infertile place where only cactus and thistles grew. After he gathered them, she helped arrange them in his tilma, or poncho, and told him to show them

to the Bishop.

When he brought them to the Bishop, the Bishop was amazed at the roses, but was even more amazed at what began to happen to Juan Diego's tilma. Right before their very eyes, the image of Our Lady began to form on the cloth. The picture of Mary was beautiful, and the Bishop fell to his knees. He had the church built at her request.

The tilma is still intact today. The colors have not faded, and the cloth has not deteriorated. It has been on display in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City for all this time. Juan Diego was canonized as a saint at this basilica by Pope John Paul II on July 31, 2002. Teresa Rodriguez of our parish reports that her husband Jose's family in Mexico would welcome each December 12th by serenading Our Lady and going to Mass at midnight.



# Novena Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe ~

We turn to you, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and ask that you bring hope to our troubled world. As you did in 1531, make God's love and compassion known to us today. Open the eyes of the leaders and the comfortable so that they will recognize their responsibility to care for the less fortunate and the poor. Open the hearts of the downtrodden, fill them with the warmth of God's love and give them hope in tomorrow. Help us all to follow your Son's call to love one another as He has loved us.

**Amen.**

The Color Rose: Twice Per Liturgical Year  
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at least one every year, and often given to churches, shrines, cities, or distinguished persons as a token of esteem. (For example, a Golden Rose display was presented to the Shrine at Knock, Ireland.)

Not all churches have rose vestments since they are only used twice a year. Fortunately, Our Lady of Victory does, thanks to a gift from our parish quilting group. Pictured are Fr. Alan processing at the start of Mass on Gaudete Sunday this year, and Deacon Chuck showing the rose side of his deacon's stole.



Father Alan  
Wielinski



Deacon  
Chuck Kampa

# MY JOURNEY TO OUR OLV CHURCH COMMUNITY

by Lone Koep

My journey to Fergus Falls and Our Lady of Victory is a long, twisted story. It began many years ago in an area near modern day Baghdad, Iraq. What is now desert was once beautiful green as far as eye could see. Some years later, I understand one of my ancestors, Noah, followed God's will, and thank goodness he did or I wouldn't be here to share my story with you! As my family grew, some migrated west through modern day Turkey, with some choosing to make their home, in Spain, France, or Denmark. Some eventually called Germany home, and others settled in Ireland.

When Spain was exploring the New World, Spanish ships landed off the coast of Mexico. Being the adventurous explorers they were, they made their way north through Mexico. New Mexico was colonized by the Spanish in 1598, as part of the Imperial Spanish viceroyalty of New Spain. The Spanish intermixed with Native Americans, and some made their home in the Hondo Valley, located within our 47th state, New Mexico. My grandmother on my mother's side is from this descent.

In 1851, at the age of 22, during the Potato Famine, William Brady, a baptized Catholic, left Ireland. After a long and dangerous sea crossing, Brady, along with thousands of aliens from Europe, arrived in New York where they remained in temporary housing. There were two options for those without sponsors; either join the uncertain labor force or join the military. He joined the military, served 15 years, rising to the rank of Brevet Major and ending his military career as commander of Ft. Summer in New Mexico. William and his wife, Maria, built their ranch outside of Lincoln, New Mexico. This was a turbulent time in 'wild west' history. In 1876, the local settlers desiring peace convinced William to become Sheriff. This is an office he held until he died as the result of an ambush 2 years later. William Brady has left a long line of military and law enforcement descendants.

He was my mother's great-grandfather.

John Henry Neubauer, a Catholic from Germany, migrated to the United States by way of Ellis Island in the early 1800's. John's family were farmers. He made his way to North Dakota by way of Chicago, Wisconsin, across Minnesota, finally settling in southeastern North Dakota. His grandson, Henry, my grandfather, continued the farming tradition. He married Lethe, a lady of French, English & Dutch descent. In addition to raising farm produce, he raised 16 helpers. My father, Edward, inherited his dad's love of the soil. However, farming was interrupted when he was drafted during WWII. It was when he was assigned to a base in Texas and was responsible for moving military equipment, that he stopped in a little café just outside of Hondo. Mom happened to also be in the cafe that day. Romance blossomed. They were married, the war ended and dad tried farming New Mexico style. The soil needed to be irrigated in order to produce. He was accustomed to rain. As a child, many times I heard him refer to North Dakota and Minnesota as "God's country". By this time, Henry had moved to a farm by Otter Tail Lake. When I was 14, in the middle of November, we moved in with Grandpa Henry. We had brought all the farm machinery and livestock. The chickens rode in the back of the pickup with me, my brother and sister. My two sisters and a baby brother rode in front with my parents. We were homeless. Had it not been for grandpa welcoming us in that winter, we would not have had a place to stay.

Long story shortened, I've lived in many places both in the USA and abroad, and as much as I love New Mexico, dad was right. This is God's country! I feel so at home in our parish. I am grateful that the faith I was raised into is so alive here!



# Graciela Kretchman Celebrates her Multicultural Heritage

Story and photo by Tom Hintgen



*Graciela Kretchman is proud to be a member of Our Lady of Victory Church and is also proud of her heritage from growing up in Mexico.*

Our Lady of Victory parishioner Graciela Kretchman is proud of her roots in Mexico City, where she was born, and also her ties to Guadalajara in western Mexico where she lived before emigrating to the United States.

Graciela has volunteered with multicultural groups to provide assistance to people of all cultural backgrounds. She appreciates that OLV and the Diocese of St. Cloud warmly embrace the multicultural diversity of the church.

Guadalajara in her home country is known for its mariachi music. Mariachi is the distinctive version of the Spanish theatrical orchestra of violins, harps and guitars.

Graciela's journey from Mexico to Fergus Falls began with her daughter, Elisa, who was a figure skating national champion in Mexico and a participant in the Junior Olympics.

Elisa's figure skating coach found a job in Wahpeton, North Dakota, at a time when Graciela was a single mother to Elisa and her two brothers. The coach urged Elisa to also move to Wahpeton.

Elisa's father persuaded Graciela to accompany Elisa and live together in Wahpeton while he agreed to take care of their two sons in Mexico.

In 1992 Graciela and Elisa

moved to Wahpeton and a short time later to Fergus Falls where Graciela found housekeeping work. Elisa competed in figure skating in Fergus Falls.

It was in 1993 when Graciela needed to complete a financial transfer of money from Mexico to Fergus Falls. She was referred to Chuck Kretchman at what was then Norwest Bank in Fergus Falls.

Chuck was a widower and, two years later, Graciela and Chuck were married with the support of their children.

Today Graciela's daughter, Elisa, lives in Fargo and has two children.

"I'm able to return to Mexico twice a year to visit my family members, and I'm blessed to have a wonderful relationship with Chuck's children and grandchildren," she said.

Graciela is the oldest of 10 children and, along with visiting her siblings, she also takes enough time to visit one of her two sons, still in Mexico, and his family. The other son resides in Illinois.

"We have a lot of good food in my homeland during those visits,"

Graciela said, "and of course I love the pleasant weather during the warm seasons of the year."

Graciela had a green card for five years and became a U.S. citizen in 2000. Her daughter Elisa also is a U.S. citizen.

"I love being a member of the Our Lady of Victory Church and also appreciate having ties to diversity committees up in Pelican Rapids," she said.

Graciela has been a member of the International Friendship Festival Committee in Pelican Rapids and has served on diversity committees on the campus of M State, Fergus Falls. She has been happy to work as a committee member for the United Way in Otter Tail County.

Over the years Graciela has worked side by side with former OLV School Principal, Sister Adela Gross, in helping migrant workers in Pelican Rapids and in other areas of the Diocese of St. Cloud.

Fellow OLV parishioners appreciate Graciela's warm smile and warm personality.

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## My Parents' Immigration Story

by Marlys Klovstad

My parents, Amelia Savel and Adolph Kollar, were born in Austria, lived in Czechoslovakia, and went to a Hungarian school before World War I started. The war clouds were gathering and living conditions were terrible, so my father escaped by stowing away on a ship to America. My father worked in the coal mines in Pennsylvania before eventually farming in Minnesota. My mother was torn about leaving her parents and family. Dad sent money for passage to America four times. On the fourth time he said, "This is the last time." Mom finally agreed to leave her homeland. She did not know English, but came with one piece of advice: "Do not



go with anyone unless they have a red cap." She followed this advice and arrived safely in America. She never saw her relatives again, but was happy with her one family here. I'm thankful they came. I am now the only one of their children left, and with all the happy memories.

## KARLA EHLERS:

### Our Lady of Victory Catholic School Spanish Teacher, Originally from Peru

Karla was born and raised in Ica, Peru, and her family last name was Breamassa. She met her husband, Kirk Ehlers, when he was visiting in Peru. They fell in love and married in 1999. Kirk is from Elbow Lake, and the young couple first lived for 7 months in North Dakota. For the last 20 years, they have resided in Minnesota.

Currently, all of Karla's family of origin continue to live in Peru. Karla notes that family is what she misses about Peru the most. Another thing she misses are the unique flavors of the fruits and vegetables from the local Peruvian markets, as well as the fish from the ocean.

When asked what things made it challenging to adjust to life in the United States, Karla



mentioned finding people who are compatible in terms of beliefs or personality. She added that this can be challenging, but it is not impossible. Things that have helped the adjustment to life in the USA are the unconditional support of her family, finding the job and church that she prayed for, and being part of a group

that loves workouts and dancing classes. Karla adds that dancing is a must in Peru!

Karla has two children, who speak both English and Spanish. Cristina is 14 years old and in the 9th grade, and Neil is 19 years old at NDSU.

## ROQUE ROSSETTI:

### Business Success Story, Originally from Brazil

OLV Parishioner, Roque (pronounced "Hockey") Rossetti, was born in Brazil. Roque moved to Minnesota in 1999. However, he had been visiting the United States since 1989. When asked what he misses about Brazil, Roque replied that besides the warm weather year round, he mostly misses his Brazilian family. He also misses some of the local food and fruit.

However, Roque stated that he has never struggled or found it difficult to adjust to the USA. He adds, "Although I was born in Brazil, I am wired to be an American in a lot of aspects."

Roque shared that it helped and continues to help in his adaptation to life in Minnesota that he has a business, family support, and has made friends since moving here. Roque notes that he has created opportunities for himself by working hard, paying his dues, and treating people the way he wants to be

treated. "It is a combination of things that make it all work," he said.

Roque is currently the founder and president of Galaxy Enterprises in Rothsay, MN. He founded Galaxy in 2002, supplying customers in several different industries with Computer Numeric Control machined products. Galaxy employs fourteen people, and Roque identifies his employees as his most valuable asset. Most of the parts Galaxy produces are made out of aircraft grade aluminum, titanium, brass, stainless steel, various types of plastics, composite materials, and many grades of carbon steel.

They make machine components to customer specifications, following blue prints and 3D solid models. They then create a program the machines can interpret in order to make the part. Their parts can be found in medical and scientific devices, World War II airplanes, tractors, skid steers, boat



lifts and docks, among others.

In 2016, Roque's success as a Brazilian immigrant who has brought manufacturing jobs to Minnesota was documented in the journal of the New American Economy organization. Thank you Roque for sharing your story with us through the The Journey, and being part of our parish.

**SEE PAGE 8  
FOR MORE FROM  
DEB FORSTNER**

**CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF VICTORY**  
**207 North Vine Street**  
**Fergus Falls, MN 56537**



**MASSES**

Saturday 4:30 p.m.  
Sunday 8:30 a.m.  
Sunday 10:30 a.m.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION**

Thursday 8:30 a.m. (when there is 9:00 a.m. Mass)  
Saturday 3:30 p.m.

*Our Lady of Victory School*  
(K-6th grade)

*Learning Ladder Preschool*  
(3-5 year olds, full and half day)

218/736-6661

[www.ffolvschool.org](http://www.ffolvschool.org)



When Minnesota was a young state, my great great grandparents were pioneers from Germany in the southwest region near New Ulm, MN. At that time, there were many injustices and atrocities committed against the Dakota Indians, and war broke out. On August 18, 1862, a day when many settlers were killed, an Indian who was friendly toward my family gave warning, and the Forstners were able to get to safety. On the site of the original homestead, my grandfather's generation built a small "Heimat," which in German means homeland. On a wall in that structure, there is a plaque thanking the Indian they referred to as "good" (pictured). I wish I knew that Indian friend's name. I can only hope that my ancestors had earned the Indian's trust and warning by being good to the Dakota.

Today, my parents have a cabin near Waubun, MN, where they have many Native American friends, mostly made by meeting each other at the Catholic Churches in the area. We are blessed to celebrate the Eucharist together, and at times to socialize outside of church. I am grateful for these friendships in my family's story.

By Deb Forstner