



ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

Lay Formation alumni 'living as Eucharistic people'

By Teresa Bodnar-Hiebert

SASKATOON — A group of some 50 Lay Formation alumni joined Rev. Mike Dechant, OMI, Oct. 21 for a day of enrichment and reflection at Holy Family Cathedral in Saskatoon.

"I want to touch your hearts," Dechant said, opening the annual Lay Formation Alumni gathering on "Living as Eucharistic People." Dechant described a necessary paradigm shift, saying that we "need to look at how to be eucharistic in a whole different light." Full and active participation are needed, as "we are not to be spectators," he said, describing how when we gather for the Eucharist, "Jesus is in the word, the Eucharist, the people and the priest. The focus is not Jesus in the tabernacle. Jesus wants us to engage." Dechant stressed that the "Eucharist has to have a focus, the celebration of the Lord within us." Like a meal at a table, the celebration will be lively, interactive, and engaging. "If a wedding, a funeral, and a mass are all the same, then we're not doing a good job."

Dechant encouraged his listeners: "We need to imitate, to imbue the presence of Christ." He reiterated common examples: "You might be the only Bible that kids ever read," and "you might be the only church that person ever experiences." In Eucharistic celebration "we experience this moment of salvation. Death no longer has a hold on us," Dechant said. Those in attendance shared moments of healing, writing down a word or two — "a word that binds us or holds us back." They then went to the front of the room and placed their words in a metal bowl while chanting the words, "Lord, have mercy on me," with the assembly responding: "Lord, have mercy on ___" (naming each person individually). Dechant then set the paper on fire. As they disappeared into nothingness, he prayed, "May the Almighty God have mercy on us. May God forgive us our sins. May God bring us to everlasting life. Amen."

Dechant encouraged the gathering to be Eucharistic people.

"When we come in anonymity, it undermines the eucharistic mindset. Bring your daily concerns. Pray for someone and tell them and ask them to pray for you. Gather in clusters with those near you, create your own cluster — the Body of Christ is nourished," he said, noting that married couples attending a wedding can renew their own marriage vows while they are there.

The afternoon concluded with the celebration of the eucharist in the Queen of Peace Chapel in the cathedral. Those assembled experienced Christ in a powerful way when a young woman visiting the building spontaneously joined the celebration, asking for prayers.

The day of reflection for Lay Formation alumni followed a 30th anniversary celebration for the Lay Formation program in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon, which was held the evening before at Queen's House of Retreat and Renewal.

2018 ALUMNI FALL GATHERING

**Saturday October
27th 2018**

8:15am-3:30pm

Queen's House

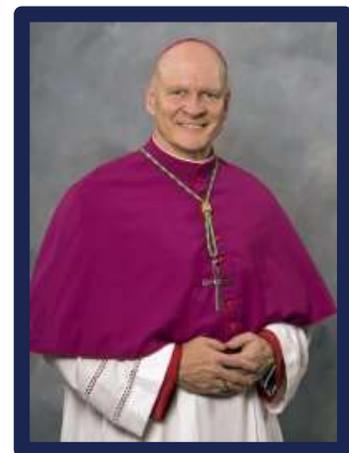
Retreat and Renewal
Centre

601 Taylor Street W

Saskatoon, SK

Registration opening
soon!

2018 ALUMNI FALL GATHERING GUEST SPEAKER



Most Reverend Bishop Mark
Hagemoen



SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS!

How did the Lay Formation experience affect your Christian journey? We would like to hear your story and publish it in the next newsletter. Please Contact Katelyn Peterson for more information.

kmh979@gmail.com or 306-270-2847

A Message from the Lay Formation Program Co-ordinators

As we draw close to the end of our first year of Lay Formation, both Jennifer and I continue to feel extremely blessed to be part of this incredible ministry. As we continue to grow in our own faith, we see the beauty of God's presence in the faces of those who journey with us one weekend a month at Queen's House Retreat Centre.

It has become a bit of a ritual that our adult children ask us how our weekend went. They show genuine interest in how Mom and Dad are helping others to take their faith to the next level, regardless of what level they started at and how each individual's lives are transformed through every session and every moment of reflection.



But what does this all mean? What purpose does this all have? Knowledge is a gift from God. And those that possess it and choose to share it are following their Baptismal call. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we feel this calling and we need to find the courage to respond. Jennifer always says that when facing a decision whether large or small, easy or difficult, we must take action. And if we hesitate, then we must find ways to ignite our call to action. Similar to a rocket launch, we too must "count down" to find the courage to take action.

Five, Four, Three, Two, One Blast off!

But wait!! Do we truly know where we are going? Have we remembered our catechism teachings from our childhood, or perhaps a recent Adult Faith Formation class? Or even last Sunday's Homily? If we are truly present when our brothers and sisters in Christ are helping us to grow in our faith, then we really do know what direction we are heading. There will be times when our brokenness restricts us from deepening our faith, but our brokenness will also bring us closer to Christ. Jesus wants us to lean on him. He expects us to lean on him. Only through this can we truly develop a deeper relationship with Jesus.

So, when Jennifer suggested we as a family go on a Parish mission trip to Haiti in 2014, or when we chose to take an Alpha course at our local parish, or when we participated in a passion and purpose course at Holy family, it was like.... 5,4,3,2,1, Blast off! My feet are off the ground, and God, you are in charge and I will follow your call to serve.

BE BOLD.....BE CATHOLIC!!!

Jennifer and Blair Carruthers are parents of 5, married for 28 years, members of Holy Family Cathedral, and facilitators of the Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon Lay Formation Program

Lay Formation Alumni Executive

Co-Chair: Veronica Chelack 306-371-5000
 Co-Chair: Marjorie Stevens 306-227-5056
 Treasurer: Ann Donald 306-343-9116
 Secretary: Dodie Abrametz 306- 230- 2005
 Newsletter Editor: Katelyn Peterson 306-270-2847
 Registration Coordinator: Gloria Pryma 306- 280-4517



A Message from the Alumni Association Co-Chairs:

Greetings Lay Formation Alumni! We are indeed Eucharistic people, as Reverend Mike Dechant suggested at the October 21st, 2017 Annual Fall Meeting. Let us keep in our prayers the “new group” of Lay Formation members as they will soon celebrate the completion of their first year of their journey in this amazing program. Pentecost was a lovely reminder of our own missioning just one year ago.

The graduates of June 2017 are keeping in touch by meeting once a month for lunch or supper, bringing their concerns and celebrations to one another, nourishing the Body of Christ. It is so good to stay connected.

GOOD NEWS!! Bishop Mark Hagemoen has graciously agreed to be our guest speaker at our 2018 Annual Fall Meeting on October 27th. Advertising for this event will begin early throughout the Diocese in hopes of generating as much interest as possible. We are changing and improving the registration process in order to successfully plan this event. Just like all conferences, the organizing committee will need to know in advance who is coming in order to plan our space and the amount of food needed for the breakfast and the noon lunch. We will keep everyone posted in regards to the deadline date for registrations.

Blessings to all and please keep us in your prayers as we continue to meet, plan and facilitate Lay Formation Alumni happenings. Veronica Chelack and Marjorie Stevens

Lay Formation Program Coordinators

Diocesan Program: Jennifer and Blair Carruthers

Aboriginal Program: Marlene Hanson

Eparchial Stream Program: Sr. Bonnie Komarnicki, and Sr. Marijka Konderewicz

Looking for resources?

- Did you know that **Universal Church Supplies** has a large selection of Catholic and Christian books, bibles, jewelry and gifts? They are located at 437 2nd Ave N, Saskatoon, SK
- With a Saskatoon Public Library card (free) you can gain online access to thousands of Christian books, musicians, and other resources on an app called **Hoopla**. Check it out today!
- **Queen's house** is constantly updating their upcoming events and retreats. Let's support the wonderful work and programs of Queen's house! http://www.queenshouse.org/?page_id=2606
- **The Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon** website: <https://rcdos.ca/>

Have you ever considered the J.O.Y. program?

The J.O.Y. (Justice & Outreach Year) of Formation is an experiential learning program that links Catholic Social Teaching with the real-life challenges experienced by people living on the margins. During 10 weekend sessions (September – June), participants will explore various issues of social justice including:

- International development, Economic Injustice & Peace
- Refugees
- Walking with Indigenous/ Métis people
- Anti-poverty
- Human Dignity
- Health & Elder Care
- Hunger & Food
- Restorative Justice
- Youth & Family
- Care of the Earth & Ecological Justice



By visiting local service agencies, meeting with those who work in these social justice fields and being with the people they serve, participants will gain an opportunity to broaden their understanding of the issues at hand and become equipped with the skills to engage in service outreach. Participants will be invited to enter into a process of personal transformation.

DO YOU LOVE SPENDING TIME WITH BABIES AND CHILDREN?

Time Out for Moms is looking for volunteer caregivers to watch the children on Wednesday mornings from 9:15am-11:30am at Holy Family Cathedral beginning in September 2018. There is an urgent need for more volunteers, especially with the babies under 1 year of age. Transportation can be provided if necessary.

If you are interested, please contact:

Katelyn Peterson
306-270-2847

Did you know that you can continue to support the Lay Formation program by purchasing an Alumni Membership?

After their Missioning from the Lay Formation Program, participants become part of the Alumni community which is 850+ members strong!

Membership Fees are \$20 per year which assist in covering costs for:

- the annual Alumni Fall Gathering each October
- the Missioning Tea every second June, and
- the bi-annual newsletter.

Please mail your membership dues to:

Marjorie Stevens
414 Spruce Drive
Saskatoon SK
S7N 2N4

Thank You