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FEBRUARY 2015 *Newsletter*

The Catholic Faith Is at the Heart of Long-Lasting Diocesan Marriages

By Christine Corbett Conklin

Advertisements for this recent Valentine’s Day gave the impression that all it takes is the right jeweler, the right furniture store – or perhaps that giant, heart-shaped box of candy – to make a relationship perfect.

However, six couples from throughout the Diocese of Yakima, all of whom have been married for more than 50 years, credit their Catholic Faith with being



Dr. Dale and Camille Peterson

at the heart of their lives and their successful marriages.

There is no “quick fix,” no magic formula, to ensure absolute bliss each and every day, they agree. Rather, they

have found that by mutual respect and understanding, a solid commitment to their marriage, and by holding on to their faith in God, they have been able to cross the peaks and valleys of life and remain together.

“Notes of appreciation, flowers, unexpected phone calls, walks in the park and, yes, even chocolates, are ways of showing we care,” observed Dr. Dale Peterson of Wenatchee, who with his wife, Camille, is a member of St. Joseph Parish.

“There is nothing so important, however, as taking your wife in your arms, looking into her eyes and telling her that you love her so much and will always be there for her,” he

observed. “I am not by nature a real romantic, but the first time I said this to her I was quite determined. She replied to me ‘that was nice, but it sounded



Joe and Theresa Sampson



Felicitas and José Gutiérrez

almost like a threat!’ After 51 years of marriage, we’ve improved on our expression of our hearts’ desire, always striving for that perfection that can only be found in Christ

Jesus and ultimate love.”

The Petersons, who have three children, 14 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren came to the Catholic Faith later in life. Dr. Peterson, a retired urologist, joined the Church in 1996. Camille, a musician who played the piano and harp, joined in 2010.

“The Catholic Faith brings a wholeness to the marriage,” he observed, as others agreed.

“Faith makes us stronger and more resilient,” said Theresa Sampson of White Swan who, with Joe, her husband of 58 years, is a member of St. Mary Parish. “Any time you have any problems, prayer is the answer.”



Bea and Larry Cates

“The family that prays together stays together,” added Joe Sampson.

Despite the fact that Joe was quite upset when Theresa asked him to be her boyfriend (at age five), the couple now has five children, 10 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Both members of the Yakama Nation, they served with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In addition, he was a part-time rancher and served in tribal government.

There are other practical lessons which the Church teaches, say these couples.

“I think the Church teaches consideration for other individuals,”

said Larry Cates of Ellensburg, who, along with his wife of 56 years, Bea, is a member of St. Andrew Parish.

“This makes it easier to resolve issues. And never let the sun go down on anger.”

Bea Cates thinks “there’s too much (false) glorification of what married life is like today. You can have some difficult moments. Both persons have to give and respect each other.”

The Cates, who recall “walking together up the aisle for First Communion,” now have eight children and four grandchildren. He worked in aviation electronics and she was a bookkeeper and tax preparer.

It’s also important to remember that the two of you are a team, the couples say.

“We do a lot of things together,” Bea Cates said. “We go to Church together. We pray in front of Planned Parenthood together.”

“It’s good to wake up in the morning and decide what you’re going to do (together) for the day, something that involves the Faith,” added Camille Peterson.

The commitment of marriage also needs to be respected, the couples suggest.

“When you get married by the Church, it’s for the rest of your life,” said José Gutiérrez of Yakima, who, with Felicitas, his wife of 57 years, is a member of St. Joseph Parish. “It’s not just for one moment, one month or one year. We should take it seriously and be responsible.”



Mary and Mike Ahmann



Jacinto and Arcadia Limón

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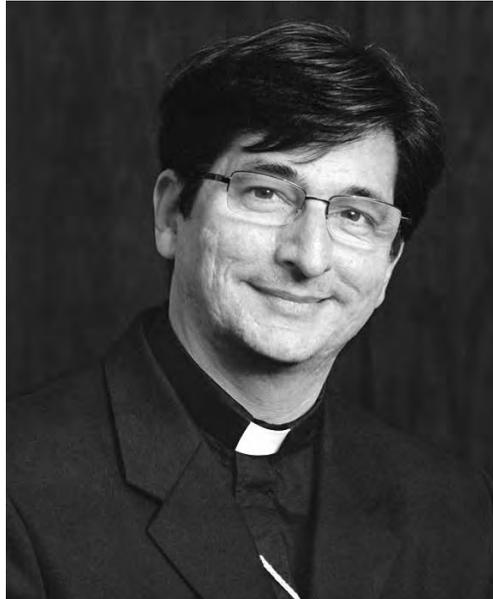
A Message from Bishop Tyson...

Dear Friends,

“Vocation” might be the best way to sum up our stories in this month’s Central Washington Catholic.

Our comments and reflections from six Catholic couples who have been married for more than 50 years point to a love that focuses – not simply on themselves – but on how their faith has seeded their families and led to a flourishing of our wider Church community. What a blessing to have such foundational compasses as these couples all across Central Washington, pointing us to Christ!

Likewise, during this year in which Pope Francis is uplifting “Consecrated Life,” how fitting it is to have a photo of Providence Sister Alice St. Hilaire grace this edition of the Central Washington Catholic. Her community educated generations of young Catholic women (including my own mother at the old St. Joseph Academy in Yakima) and her community continues to be active in health care across the Pacific Northwest.



Bishop Joseph Tyson

While Sister Alice is moving to take up her ministry of prayer at the St. Joseph Residence in Seattle, she brings with her all of us – for whom she’s been a spiritual compass for so many years.

Our parish feature on St. Aloysius in Toppenish reminds us of the long commitment this parish has had to serve both the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking, right from the heart of the Yakama Nation. St. Aloysius was among the first of the parishes here in the Diocese of Yakima to hold regular parish festivals. While these often serve as key moments of fundraising and stewardship, they also serve as a point of encounter and a place for people to come together, to feel less alone and more connected to each other and to the Church that loves them.

I hope these stories inspire you on your own journey of faith and spark ideas on how you can invite all to Christ through the ministry of your local parish, too.

Many prayers and blessings to everyone!

Devotedly yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

Faith Is at the Heart of Lasting Diocesan Marriages *Continued from page 1*

What advice would these couples give to younger people just beginning married life?

“Maybe what they should try to do is to know their husband (or wife) and their ways,” said Felicitas Gutiérrez. “I got to know my husband very well. By knowing them really well, we can prevent getting in an argument. Sometimes, to just listen is better than to talk!”

José, who did farm and warehouse work, and Felicitas, who worked in General Services for Memorial Hospital and also did some summer farm work, have five grandchildren, 10 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. They met at an early age in the church.

Mike Ahmann of Moses Lake who, along with his wife of 53 years, Mary, is a member of Our Lady of Fatima Parish, suggests that “marriage isn’t any different from any other walk of life. You need to live by virtue, treat people properly. Be honest, kind, gentle and forgiving.” The Catholic Church, with the graces available through the sacraments, “gives us one more advantage” in surviving any difficulties that may come along, he said.

Mary adds, “I know that the Church has it right. Marriage is forever. You can build a beautiful life – two human beings and a family, a legacy for God and for yourself.”

The Ahmanns, who met on a blind date, have nine children and 29 grandchildren. Mike was a banker and self-employed as a photographer, and Mary was a bus driver at one time.

Even financial challenges faced by many couples are better faced together, believes Jacinto Limón of Prosser, who, with his wife of 61 years, Arcadia, is a member of Sacred Heart Parish.

“They’ve got to trust each other, work hard to earn money and work hard with the family,” Jacinto said.

“I’ve told a lot of young couples, you have to understand each other,” added Arcadia. “Take a little while, take a deep breath, there’s no need to be fighting each other.”

Jacinto, who worked with farm equipment and harvesting hay, and Arcadia, who did farm work at one time, have six children, 15 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Through time, many couples learn little habits that help foster their marriage – whether it’s the husband fixing breakfast on Sunday morning, or letting the spouse have the TV remote! Yet, at the heart of lasting marriages is something more meaningful, these couples say.

“Over the years, we’ve decided we’re no longer going to get upset over the little things in life,” said Dr. Peterson.

“We just try to please each other, talk to each other,” said Camille Peterson.

“It’s not always an easy road, but, with God’s grace, you make it through,” added Mary Ahmann. “Every stage of life seems to have a little more truth to it; you become wiser. Then, you think, ‘Look at all of the things we’ve done, the bridges we’ve crossed.’ It’s called life.”

If you have been abused or victimized by a member of the Catholic clergy, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out.

The Yakima Diocese has a sexual abuse hotline for those who wish to report some incident concerning that issue as regards a bishop, priest, deacon or diocesan employee or volunteer. (888) 276-4490

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Sister Alice St. Hilaire Retires

Sister Alice St. Hilaire (Sister Mary Georgetta), a Sister of Providence for 67 years who has served for many years in the Diocese of Yakima, recently retired to the St. Joseph Residence in Seattle.

Sister was honored for her dedicated service during a Mass held at St. Joseph Church in Yakima on January 25 and presided over by Bishop Joseph Tyson, followed by a reception in Schoenberg Hall. A potluck dinner preceded the Mass on January 24.

Sister Alice was born in the Yakima Valley, the oldest of eight children, and worked in various capacities here since 1990. Among her responsibilities, she did formation work for the sisters and parish work for St. Joseph Church, served as a liaison with the religious community here, was part of a team that offers Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (SEEL), and was a longtime co-chair of the diocesan vocations committee.

According to the Sisters of Providence, Sister Alice made her first vows in 1948 and taught primary grades and music in Missoula, Montana; Walla Walla; Fairbanks, Alaska; and Seattle. She earned her Bachelor's degree at the College of Great Falls (Montana), then enrolled in a combined Master's and Doctoral program at St. Louis University in Missouri and received her Doctorate in Philosophy in 1961.

Sister Alice taught philosophy for 13 years, at sites including St. Thomas Seminary in Kenmore, Washington. She was chosen for the first Formation Team, served on the Provincial Council and at Providence Hospitality House, and frequently was an "ad hoc" director for a Sister of temporary vows.

We wish Sister Alice many blessed and productive years in retirement!



Father Felipe Pulido, Sister Alice St. Hilaire and Bishop Joseph Tyson shared a moment during festivities honoring Sister Alice.

Valentine's Day Boxes Bring Cheer to Many

Volunteers representing local businesses, churches, schools and food banks assembled and delivered 70 Valentine's Day boxes for low-income seniors and adults with disabilities on February 13, through Catholic Family & Child Service's Volunteer Chore Services program.

Each Valentine's Day box contained cleaning products, personal care items, fresh produce, an assortment of non-perishable food, and treat bags.

"These boxes are welcomed by low-income elders specifically at this time of year because winter weather can leave them with higher heating bills, affecting those on a fixed income the most," said organizer Lou Ann Desgrosellier. "Receiving the cheerfully decorated boxes of useful and needed goods gives them a financial and emotional boost."

The boxes were delivered by La Salle Catholic High School sophomores. The project also required many volunteers and in-kind donations from 14 churches; St. Paul and St. Joseph/Marquette schools; the Yakima Diocese; Johnson Orchards; Spinners Corporation; Chalet Dental; The Pantry Food Bank; Seventh Day Adventist Food Bank; Wray's Thriftway; Riverside Christian School; and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.



La Salle students, Logan Brown, William Berndt and Jeffrey Vargas delivered a Valentine's Day box to Martha Higgenbotham, a resident at Rose of Mary Terrace, a Catholic Charities Housing Services complex for seniors in Yakima.

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NEWS

From Around the Diocese

Help Operation Rice Bowl This Lent

This year marks the 40th anniversary of CRS Rice Bowl, the largest and oldest Lenten program used by millions of Catholics across the United States known for its iconic and symbolic cardboard 'rice bowl.' Since its inception, Catholics have contributed alms totaling \$250 million to support efforts that fight poverty and hunger in dioceses across the U.S. and overseas.

Last year in the Diocese of Yakima, \$26,497 was raised through Rice Bowl donations, with \$19,873 going to Catholic Relief Services for international efforts. The Diocese retained \$6,624 for local efforts. Because of this generosity, the Diocese recently was able to donate \$5,000 to the FISH Food Bank in Ellensburg, to help rebuild after a devastating fire last fall.

"When we step back and consider that this paper rice bowl has made it possible to give real, life-saving assistance to so many, we see the power the 40 days of Lent have produced over the last four decades," said Joan Rosenhauer, CRS executive vice president of U.S. Operations.

To see some simple recipes recommended by CRS, or to get ideas for family activities and Lenten reflections, visit www.crsricebowl.org.

Special Observances Scheduled

In the days leading up to Easter Sunday, the most important day of the Catholic Church year, numerous special observances are planned.

All are invited to attend the annual Chrism Mass at 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, in St. Paul Cathedral. This beautiful Mass will include blessings of the holy oils used for sacraments throughout the year and renewal of vows by our diocesan priests.

There will be an annual Palm Sunday Weekend Youth Retreat, for ages 18 and over, March 27-29 at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Grandview. For more details on this event, contact the parish at (509) 882-1657.

Also, check the diocesan web site at www.dioceseofyakima.org and your parish bulletin and website for schedules for the Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday, April 2-4; followed by Easter Sunday, April 5.

Vocation Events Planned

Numerous events are planned in upcoming months to encourage vocations.

Young women between the ages of 16 and 29 who are thinking about religious life may join in a Day of Discernment planned for March 21 at St. Joseph Parish in Wenatchee. The free event will be held in the St. Joseph School gym from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more details, contact Sister Olga Cano at (509) 662-8752.

On April 26, when we observe World Prayer for vocations, all are welcome to drop by Holy Redeemer Parish in Yakima any time between 4 and 8 p.m. During that time, there will be exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and prayer for vocations to the priesthood, religious life, marriage and single life.

There also will be a Vocation Camp, June 19 to 21 in Twin Lakes, Idaho. Young men between the ages of 13 and 19 who are considering a vocation to the priesthood are invited to come. For more information, please contact Father Felipe Pulido at (509) 248-1911.

St. Aloysius Church, Toppenish: This Smaller Parish Has an Abundance of Spirit

For a parish with only about 400 families, St. Aloysius Church in Toppenish has more than enough spirit to go around! From its annual summer fiesta (perhaps the first of its kind in the state) to its service organizations, choirs and community outreach, parishioners take an active role in church life.

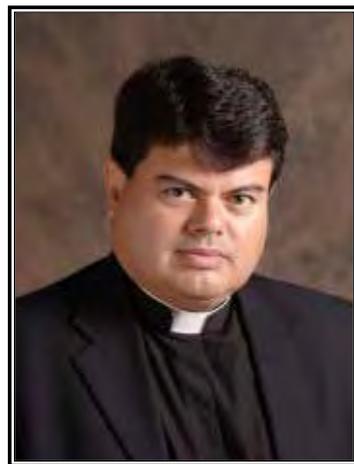
"I think that the special thing about the parish is the community itself, the way they like to volunteer and help," observed Trinidad Márquez, a parishioner since 1991, who will be a leader of a new organizing committee for the fiesta.

"The people who go to our church are really humble, really nice and willing to help," added Maria (Coco) Jiménez, a parishioner since 1972 who is on the parish council board and a member of Guadalupanas. "It's good people we have in Toppenish, and we've had really good priests. Father Flores (the current pastor) tries to get the parish together. He's always very supportive."

The history of the Catholic Church in Toppenish dates back to the end of the nineteenth century, when Jesuit priests from St. Joseph, Yakima, began ministering in the area.

The first Catholic Church was built in Toppenish in 1909, later serving as a parish hall when the current brick church, with its myriad small panes of glass on the front face, was constructed in 1949. After fireworks ignited the parish hall in July 1990, it was necessary to build a new hall.

Pastors in recent years have included Monsignors Martin Skehan and Desmond Dillon, and Fathers Enrique Camacho and Ronald Patnode (all deceased); and Fathers John Shaw, Argemiro Orozco, Francisco Higuera, and, since 2008, Father Juan Flores.



Father Juan Flores

"I've been very happy and blessed to be here," Father Flores said. He, too, commented on the hard work and enthusiasm of parishioners as they organize the annual summer fiesta fundraiser, which draws an estimated 4,000 to 5,000 people to nearby Lincoln Park. Other active parish groups include St. Helen's Guild, the Knights of Columbus who join with Wapato Knights, the Legion of Mary, Guadalupanas, St. Kateri Tekakwitha Guild and a charismatic movement. In addition, there are five separate, small choirs who sing for weekend Masses. Other efforts include community food bank and Christmas outreach programs.

One challenge faced by the parish is holding on to the smaller, Anglo portion of the community, Father Flores said. Numerous parishioners tend to move to Yakima in their later years for living assistance while younger members head out of town to college.

However, for many parishioners of diverse backgrounds, St. Aloysius is still the perfect place to be.

"It's just like a second home for me," observed Adam (Lesty) Schneider, who, along with his wife, Rosalie, has been a parishioner for 50 years. "We associate with a lot of the people in the church. You recognize most people and get to know them. I like the church because it's not too big."

Márquez agreed.

"It is very special," he said. "This is where my kids were baptized, where I got married (to his wife, Rosalva), where my brothers-in-law and my brother were married, where my kids went to Sunday school and where they're in Confirmation classes this year. I feel so attached with the parish."

People here also are devoted to prayer, with groups visiting church to intercede for world, national, state and parish intentions, Jiménez said.

"Everyone is willing to do whatever we need," she said. "That makes a wonderful church, a beautiful church."



St. Aloysius Church in Toppenish