



NEWS ARCHIVE:

## Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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# Graduates from three streams of Lay Formation are sent forth with joy in two missioning celebrations

Lay Formation graduates from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon gathered with fellow graduates from the dioceses of Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Keewatin-Le Pas, along with members of the Lay Formation leadership team, Bishop Donald Bolen (diocese of Saskatoon), Bishop Bryan Bayda (eparchy of Saskatoon), and Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie (archdiocese of Keewatin-LePas), and other celebrants for a group photo June 4 at the eparchy's missioning celebration at Ss. Peter and Paul Church in Saskatoon.

## ***Unique shared formation program includes Diocesan, Eparchial and Aboriginal Catholic streams***

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

After two years of journeying together in a program of faith formation and enrichment, 41 graduates from three streams of the Lay Formation program were recently sent forth in two joyful missioning celebrations, one in the Eastern rite and another in the Western rite.

Graduates of this year's shared program come from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon and the Roman Catholic dioceses of Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Keewatin-LePas.

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Jointly offered by the three dioceses and the eparchy, Lay Formation offers formation in discipleship, a chance to learn more about the Catholic faith as mature Christians, a commitment to prayer and spirituality, and an experience of community life (see related article). Participants gather at Queen's House in Saskatoon for one weekend each month from September to June over two years.

The program is unique in the world in the way that it combines three groups: a Latin-rite diocesan stream, a Byzantine-rite eparchial stream, and an Aboriginal stream. Together participants from the three Lay Formation streams share the Catholic faith that they have in common, while also spending time to explore more deeply their own traditions, cultures and spiritualities.

Bishop Bryan Bayda, CSsR, sent forth the participants from the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon at an Eastern rite celebration of the Divine Liturgy on Saturday, June 4 at Ss. Peter and Paul parish in Saskatoon.



Coordinators present the graduates.

The eparchial graduates were presented to the assembly by Lay Formation team member Sr. Bonnie Komarnicki, SSMI, who described how the 13 participants had journeyed to a deeper understanding of their own faith and heritage, while walking in respect with others in the shared program.

In his homily, Bayda encouraged all the Lay Formation participants to continue to deepen their intimacy with Jesus Christ, and to share that intimacy with others, and with the world. The eparchial participants renewed their baptismal promises, before they were anointed and sent forth by their eparch.



Graduates renewed their baptismal vows before being anointed by their respective bishops.

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The following day, Bishop Bayda joined Bishop Donald Bolen of Saskatoon diocese, Bishop Albert Thévenot of Prince Albert diocese and Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie of Keewatin-Le Pas archdiocese for the missioning of Latin-rite diocesan and Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation participants.

“This Lay Formation program is such an incredible treasure,” Bolen told the assembly during the joyful celebration at St. Anne’s parish in Saskatoon, before turning to the graduates: “We rejoice with you, and celebrate with you.”

Thévenot presided at the Eucharistic celebration, which included First Nations traditions such as using a star blanket to hold offerings brought forward by the assembly as drummer Tracy Delorme sang an honour song, and turning in the four directions at the Great Amen. The collection went toward the Steven Ballantyne Memorial Fund established to help participants attend the Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation program.

“What a great day to celebrate this commissioning, on the (feast of the) Ascension of Christ, who sends his apostles across the world to bring the Good News,” said Thévenot. “For two years these graduates have been trying to understand what we all must, in all of our lives: what is our mission, and how do we go about being the missionaries we are called to be?”

In his homily, Lavoie pointed to the images of a tipi and of a journey to provide insight into the Lay Formation experience. “When I put up a tipi, I never do it alone, it’s a great gathering, with many others,” Lavoie noted.

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**Graduates from the diocese of Prince Albert...**



**... from the archdiocese of Keewatin-LePas...**



**... and the diocese of Saskatoon were annointed June 5 in Saskatoon.**



In addition, every tipi starts with three poles that are crucial if the structure is to stand. Spiritually, the three poles of faith, fellowship and self-awareness are nurtured and developed during the Lay Formation process, he said.

“These graduates have been living a real strong faith in Jesus Christ, in his passion and death and resurrection, and what he achieved for us, and what he came to give us,” Lavoie said.



He then described the community and fellowship experienced in the program. “These are profound weekends of living together, sharing traditions – the eparchy, the diocesan stream, the Aboriginal stream – trusting each other more, forgiving each other, just growing together as community.”

The final “pole” of this spiritual tipi is self-awareness, a critical component of the formation process, Lavoie said. Spiritual direction and counseling, trauma recovery and grief support are made available to participants. The goal is “to help them get to know themselves better, to love themselves more, (to grow in) self esteem and self worth,” he said. “We get to know who we are.”

In addition to the image of the tipi, another image for the Lay Formation program and for Christian life is that of a journey, Lavoie described. “This is a spiritual journey, and the journey is the paschal mystery,” he said.

“It’s the journey that Jesus modeled for us in his last time on earth.” Lavoie listed the six stages of Christ’s paschal mystery, which every Christian is called to recognize and to live out in their own life: suffering, death, resurrection, appearances (a time of mourning loss, letting go and learning about the new reality), Ascension and Pentecost.

“That’s our story too. It’s got to be our story. All of us have been hurt, we’re not in perfect families, and we can stay stuck in anger and resentment. All of us have suffered loss, whenever there is hurt in our lives, there’s going to be loss,” he said.



“Ascension is whenever I forgive someone, through the power of that Spirit. Then I ascend, and I let that anger ascend. And we open our hearts and minds to receive the Spirit of Jesus of new life, and that’s Pentecost for us. Then we’re set free and we’re strong, and we’re whole, and we’re well. Then we can be bearers of hope to the world and witnesses to this new reality that Jesus gives us.”

During the Diocesan and Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation missioning June 5, the graduates held candles lit from the Easter candle, and renewed their baptismal promises.

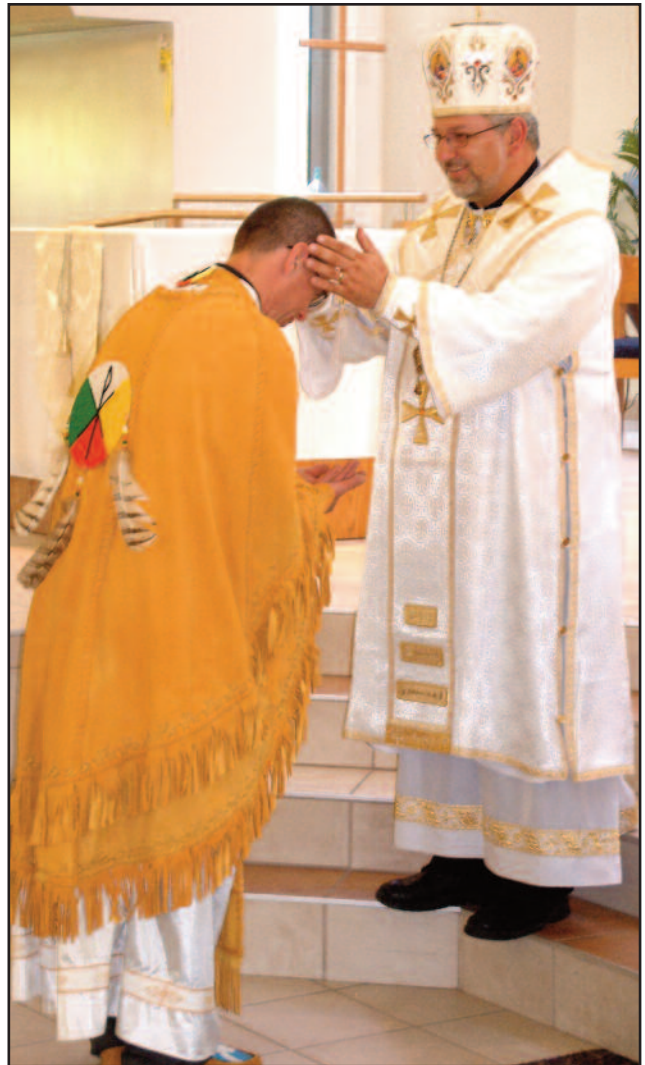
In presenting the graduates, Lay Formation coordinator Kathy Hitchings described the baptismal call to share in Christ’s ministry as priest, prophet and shepherd king. “We are called to a life of holiness, prayer and action. Such a mission requires ongoing formation and renewal,” she said.

“Over the past two years, these members of our church have diligently and conscientiously deepened their knowledge of our faith, and intensified their spiritual lives through the Lay Formation program. Today they ask the Lord’s blessing on their efforts. They ask to be renewed in the spirit as you send them forth to proclaim the good news to serve and to worship in spirit and in truth.”

Graduates then came forward to be anointed by their particular bishop. Two diocesan seminarians, Colin Roy and Daniel Yasinski, who took part in this year’s Lay Formation program as part of their parish internship in the Saskatoon diocese, also came forward for a blessing from Bishop Bolen.

Fr. Ivan Nahachewsky of St. George Ukrainian Catholic parish in Prince Albert, who took part in the Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation program, was then blessed by Bishop Bayda.

Graduates of Lay Formation from the archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas included Angela Ballantyne and Valerie Morin of St. Gertrude parish in Pelican Narrows; Nola Bear of Our Lady of Seven Sorrows in Sandy Bay; Darlene George of St. Louis parish in Patuanak; Stella and Mervin Rediron of St. Mary Magdalene parish at Beauval; and Doris Woods of St. Leo the Great parish in Buffalo Narrows.



**Bishop Bryan Bayda of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saskatoon, blesses Fr. Ivan Nahachewsky, who participated in the Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation stream.**



Graduates of the program from the diocese of Prince Albert included Michael Averyt, Audrey Dessureault, and Nancy Merasty-Ballantyne of Sacred Heart Cathedral in Prince Albert; Alison Harvey of St. Lucy parish in Arborfield; and Verna Swiftwolfe of St. Charles parish, Moosomin First Nation.



**Bishop Don Bolen of Saskatoon blesses seminarians Colin Roy and Daniel Yasinski who spent the past year in the Lay Formation program, during their internship year in the diocese. This fall they return to their seminary studies.**

Graduates of the Lay Formation program from the diocese of Saskatoon were Marie Knutson of Sacred Heart parish in Eston; Marlene VanDresar and Lois

Weninger of St. Augustine parish in Humboldt; and a number of participants from Saskatoon: Brian Anderson and Eileen Bear of Our Lady of Guadalupe parish; Lynne Gillies of Holy Family; Perlita Manipon of St. Paul's Cathedral; MaryAnne Morrison of St. Patrick; Sandra Richelhoff and Judy Schmid of St. Francis Xavier; Lynne Spitzig of St. Philip Neri; Sheila Trumpy of Holy Spirit; and Joyce Walker of St. Mary parish.

Ukrainian Catholic eparchial participants included Brenda Bohach, Sarah Buchko, Wendy Friedrich, Christine Gartner, Oristeen Kulyk, Daria Malin, Bernadette Popowych, and Brian Thomson of Ss. Peter and Paul in Saskatoon; Judith Kurulok of Dormition of Mary in Saskatoon; Laura Herauf-Ignatiuk and Vincent Ignatiuk of Resurrection parish in Regina; Angela Malowany of St. Josaphat parish in Kamsack; and Albert Provost of St. George parish in Prince Albert.

The Lay Formation coordinating team includes Mona Goodman, Kathy and Ivan Hitchings, Carol Kohnke, Sr. Bonnie Komarnicki, Sr. Marijka Konderewicz, Anne LaFleur, Agnes Pelletier, Leah Perrault, George Rolheiser, Irene Sharp and Henry Spilchuk.

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