



NEWS ARCHIVE:

Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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Highlighting the ministries of the BAA: Bishop Bolen speaks about the Appeal at deanery meetings across the diocese

BY KIPLY LUKAN YAWORSKI

The ministries supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal (BAA) are being highlighted in a series of meetings across the diocese of Saskatoon with Bishop Donald Bolen in the fall of 2011.



Seventy-five parish representatives from across the Kerrobert Deanery attended the first session held Sept. 20 at Assumption of Our Lady Catholic Church in Kerrobert, which began with Mass with the bishop, pastor Rev. George Chatholil, VC, and other priests from the area.

During the information session that followed, Planned Giving Officer Jocelyne Hamoline of the Diocese of Saskatoon Catholic Foundation, presented a video highlighting ministries such as hospital chaplaincy, native religious ministry, rural catechetics, youth ministry, education of seminarians, and vocations. The Catholic Foundation administers the Bishop's Annual Appeal, which is starting in parishes this month, as volunteers call and visit parishioners across the diocese, seeking support.

In his presentation, Bolen described the importance of the BAA to the life of the diocese, stressing that the many ministries funded by the Appeal are designed to support and enhance the work of the parishes in evangelization, ministry, service and outreach.



“The Catholic Pastoral Centre is a complete hub of activity,” he said. “And the activity which goes on there is carrying out the work of the gospel; it is carrying out, in one aspect or another, the mission of Christ.”

About 75 attended the first meeting held in Kerrobert Sept. 20.

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Ministry areas supported by the BAA include outreach and programs that simply can't be accomplished by individual parishes acting alone, Bolen noted.

He cited prison ministry, and described accompanying diocesan Restorative Justice coordinator Dianne Anderson into the Correctional Centre.

"You get a sense that the Church is being brought into the prisons through that ministry," he said. "Jesus says 'when I was in prison, you visited me.' Jesus sends us into those places – into the suffering and the pain and the grief – and asks us to be there as Church. Individual parishes can only do so much in that regard, but as a diocese we can support parishes in that. As a diocese we can do a great deal."

That is also true of many other ministries, where combining resources means more can be done when the diocese acts together, he said – areas such as justice and peace, rural catechetics, a liturgy commission, ecumenism, youth ministry, vocations promotion, a diocesan resource library, adult faith formation, ministry development, marriage and family life, and vocation promotion – all funded by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

Bolen acknowledged the huge contribution of dedicated parish volunteers in ensuring the success of the Bishop's Annual Appeal, which was established by Bishop James Mahoney in the diocese more than 25 years ago. The thriving life of the church in the diocese of Saskatoon can be directly attributed to the work of the Bishop's Annual Appeal over the years, and its ongoing support of ministry, outreach and programming, he added.



This year, the goal for the Bishop's Annual Appeal is \$1.5 million, which will simply allow the diocese to continue with ministries already in place, Bolen said, while adding that there is a strong desire to meet other needs if the resources can be found.

At the Kerrobert meeting, speakers from the diocesan Communications and the Rural Catechetics offices also briefly described their ministry.

As well, long-time Lay Formation volunteer team member and Kerrobert deanery resident George Rolheiser of St. Donatus described the diocese's adult faith formation program, which, with the support of the Bishop's Annual Appeal, has sent forth some 700 graduates since it began in 1987 – having an impact in families, parishes, organizations and communities.

"It's a program that I feel very strongly about," said Rolheiser, who has been involved as a Lay Formation team member for the past 20 years, recently having attended his 200th weekend. "There is a spirit that gets a hold of people there," he said. "It's the best thing I've ever done. The program itself I can't say enough about."

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Lay Formation participants gather at Queen’s House in Saskatoon for one weekend each month from September to June over two years to deepen their understanding and knowledge of faith, their prayer life and spirituality, and their experience of Christian community. The Saskatoon diocesan program is shared with a Ukrainian Catholic eparchial program and an Aboriginal Catholic Lay Formation program.

“What probably hits you the hardest is the community that you have,” Rolheiser said. “You laugh and you cry and you pray – it’s a wonderful experience. I can’t recommend it strongly enough.”

Other recent BAA meetings have included a session for the Saskatoon City and Saskatoon Rural deaneries Sept. 22 at St. Anne parish in Saskatoon; the Outlook deanery Sept. 27 at Immaculate Heart of Mary parish in Outlook; and the Wadena deanery Sept. 28 at St. Mary parish in Wadena.

Upcoming BAA public meetings with the bishop will be held in the Eatonia Deanery, Oct. 11 at Little Flower parish in Leader, and in the Humboldt Deanery Oct. 12 at St. Augustine parish in Humboldt.