



Casting the Net of the Good News

I just got back from saying Mass for the summer Middle School Camp at the Powell Butte Retreat Center, and my spirits are high. I recognized faces from *eight* parishes around the Diocese—small (Fort Rock), medium (Heppner), and large (Klamath Falls). Earlier in the summer young people from *fourteen* parishes came to the Upper Elementary School Camp. These numbers are encouraging: Powell Butte is becoming the gathering place for evangelization that it was meant to be. More and more of our youth have felt the pull of the Gospel net there, and they keep coming back for more.

No small part of this uptick of interest is due to the efforts of David O’Neil, diocesan Director of Youth Ministry from September 2012 through April of this year. In addition to the Powell Butte Summer Camps, David devoted a great deal of effort to youth retreats throughout the Diocese and built an impressive network of youth ministers whom he supported with excellent resources. In May David, his wife Say, and their two children left for Georgia. There, as Director of Missions for the Life Teen organization, David will oversee the training of Life Teen missionaries to parishes throughout the country. Funding from the Bishop’s Annual Appeal will help bring Life Teen programs and resources to the Baker Diocese this coming year, so we have not seen the last of David and his many talents.

Stepping into David’s shoes on August 1st will be Tommy Shultz, a native of Kalamazoo, Michigan, and a recent graduate of Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. Throughout his high school and college years Tommy acted in plays and musicals. At ease on stage, he became a traveling magician in the Pittsburgh area and brought his magic tricks to youth retreats as well. Tommy has carefully studied the Theology of the Body inspired by St. John Paul II and has spoken at numerous conferences on that topic. In 2012-2013 he brought the message of purity to thousands of Catholic and public school students across the state of Pennsylvania. He is currently developing a pornography recovery program based on the Theology of the Body.

As he continues to build up Youth Ministry throughout the Diocese, Tommy will extend his retreat-giving, parish-networking efforts to include Young Adult Ministry to college students and young men and women in the work force. Finally, Tommy will collaborate with Barry Metzentine, Director of Evangelization and Catechesis, to prepare parents to prepare their children for the reception of the sacraments. (Please note that funds from the Bishop’s Appeal help underwrite these programs. The greater the response to the Appeal, the more we can do to enhance these outreaching ministries.)

In June the Sisters of St. Mary of Kakamega from Bend, Redmond, and Ontario spearheaded the well-attended “Come and See” retreat at Powell Butte to promote vocations to the priesthood and religious life. The young people kept me in the confessional there for several hours with honest, searching, and deeply sincere confessions that I would never have been able to make at their age. I

was not surprised. I learned long ago to expect such openness to grace in hearing the confessions of the young. They have taught me why we rightly call them the hope of the Church. That is why it is so important to cast the net of the Gospel into the troubled waters of their world.