



# CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

CATHOLIC CHURCH

## **FORMED on Demand** *Presenting Opportunities to Explore Our Faith*

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**W**e have apps for sharing our photos, tracking workouts and listening to music. But have you considered that there's a similar way to integrate the faith into your daily life?

"FORMED is a free online resource for people to learn about different aspects of the faith through engaging talks and videos," says Jessica Mattson, Ascension's Faith Formation Director. "It reaches people of all ages, and there's even a FORMED app for quick access from your domestic church."

In an "on-demand" world, FORMED is revolutionizing the way we learn about our faith, whether on our own or in groups. Hosted by the Augustine Institute, FORMED offers a repository of orthodox resources, from audiobooks to films and e-books.

"I find it to be such a blessing because I know that it is going to be solid Catholic material," Jessica says. "I know that what the Augustine Institute puts out will reflect what the Church teaches."

The digital materials available through FORMED explore Catholic teachings like the sacraments, the lives



*Many of Ascension's Sacramental Preparation courses and Adult Faith Formation groups draw on FORMED.*

of the saints, Scripture and personal devotions through renowned Catholic speakers and authors such as Fr. Michael Gaitley, Teresa Tomeo and Scott Hahn.

There are also many materials available in Spanish for native Spanish speakers or for anyone learning Spanish and desiring to know and share the faith in a second language.

"Also, the materials they have for children and youth are particularly engaging," Jessica says. "They have some very impressive movies on the lives of the saints, such as the one on St. Augustine."

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

1905 South 3rd Street  
Bismarck, ND 58504-7118  
701-223-3606  
ascensionbismarck.org

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**CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION  
FINANCIAL REPORT  
July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

<b>Liquid Assets:</b>	<b>\$ 349,206.53</b>
Cash in Bank	\$ 116,644.04
Investment-Expansion Fund	\$ 231,587.39
Accounts Receivable	\$ 775.00
Pre-paid Expense	\$ 200.10
<b>Fixed Assets:</b>	<b>\$ 2,125,921.12</b>
Building	\$ 1,718,817.74
Furniture, Fixtures & Equipment	\$ 407,103.38
<b>TOTAL ASSETS:</b>	<b>\$ 2,475,127.65</b>
Accounts Payable	( <b>\$ 1,885.53</b> )
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS:</b>	<b>\$ 2,473,242.12</b>

*Matthew 6:21  
For where your treasure is, there  
also your heart will be .*

**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**

<b>Income:</b>		<b>Expenses:</b>	
Sunday Contributions	\$ 716,331.64	Payroll & Benefits (3 FT/6 PT)	\$ 291,495.38
Special Donations	\$ 700.00	Parochial School Support	\$ 266,789.78
Faith Formation Income	\$ 21,645.84	Building Operating Costs	\$ 74,451.15
SMCHS Carnival	\$ 34,141.16	Office Operations	\$ 37,875.07
BACEF	\$ 21,540.58	Liturgy & Outreach	\$ 24,828.77
Parish Spring Dinner	\$ 8,515.10	Faith Formation Programs	\$ 24,759.58
Votive Candles	\$ 5,292.12	Stewardship Program/Newsletter	\$ 51,172.25
Flower Donations	\$ 3,310.50	Other Expenses	\$ 18,175.14
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 6,462.03	(Parish Events, Cemetery, Kitchen Supplies, etc.)	
<b>Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 817,938.97</b>	<b>Operating Expense</b>	<b>\$ 789,547.12</b>
Offerings for the Poor	\$ 41,593.77	Poor Fund Distributions	\$ 41,574.27
Offerings for Maintenance	\$ 106,901.00	Maintenance Fund Expenses	\$ 125,058.78
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 966,433.74</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 956,180.17</b>

**TOTAL INCOME – TOTAL EXPENSES = \$ 10,253.57**

**CHURCH ROOF STATUS**

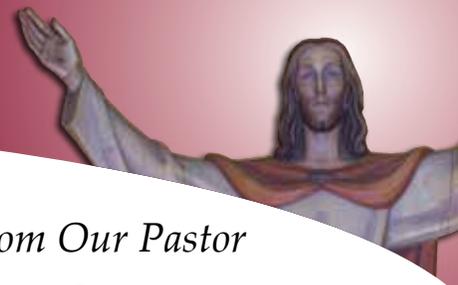
Parishioner Donations	\$ 51,230.00
Insurance Proceeds	\$ 47,415.50
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b> .....	<b>\$ 98,645.50</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b> .....	<b>\$ 87,845.00</b>
<b>SURPLUS</b> .....	<b>\$ 10,800.50</b>

**WE DID IT!**

Thanks to your generous contributions, we placed the surplus of funds into our existing Repair & Maintenance Fund for future projects.  
*Keep using your gold "Repair & Maintenance" Envelopes!*

**POOR FUND DISTRIBUTIONS**

Abused Adult Resource Center	\$ 2,975.66
AID, Inc.	\$ 8,919.33
Community Action	\$ 8,919.33
Meals on Wheels	\$ 1,389.83
Ministry on the Margins	\$ 4,762.33
Ronald McDonald House	\$ 792.00
Salvation Army	\$ 7,926.49
Welcome House	\$ 3,966.66
Rides to Mass	\$ 264.00
The Banquet	\$ 1,658.64
<b>TOTAL PARISH DONATIONS</b> .....	<b>\$ 41,574.27</b>



*A Letter from Our Pastor*

# Christ Becomes One With Us Through the Eucharist

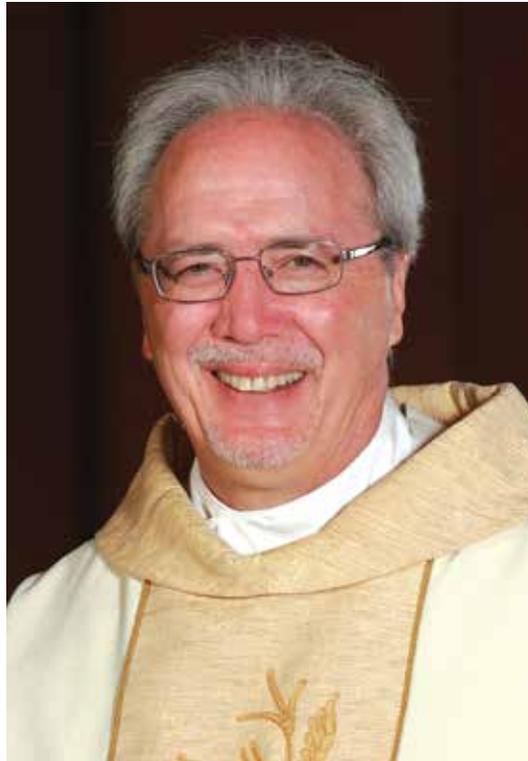
Dear Parishioners,

**A**ny of us who are old enough to remember the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, had to have been marked by that experience. As I reflect on this solemn date in our country's history, I also faithfully reflect upon our celebration of the Eucharist. As Catholics, we are offered the Eucharist to keep it alive by consciously being bread broken and wine poured out for others each day of our lives. We are called to become what we receive.

Throughout the calendar year, certain dates are commemorated to inspire us to remember and honor those who may have been lost. These kinds of days — like 9/11 — are testimony to the reality that we, as human beings, are consciously connected to one another. There are unfortunately some who would have us believe that we are independent, separated from those around us.

For us as Catholics, the reception of the Eucharist is the most intimate union with God Himself on this earth. It is through the Body of Christ that we are unified to God and one another, and reminds us that we are invited to be bread broken and wine poured out for our world.

We gather as a community around the table of the Eucharist. We receive the gift of Christ's Body and Blood so that we may become the embodiment of God's love among us. As we receive Christ, we should recommit ourselves to following in Jesus' footsteps and reaching out to those around us with mercy,



encouragement and compassion. By doing that, we reaffirm our identity as disciples and our Baptismal commitment to be His Body and Blood given for others.

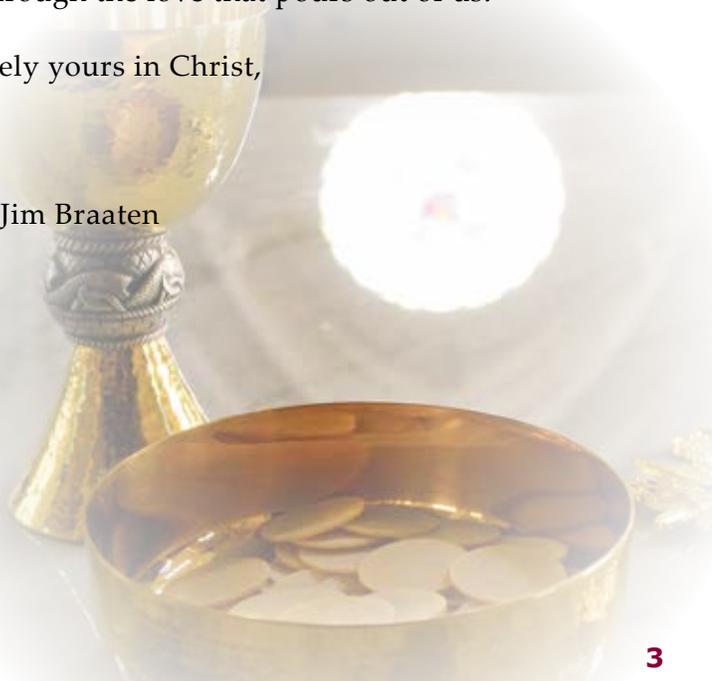
Unfortunately to some, the Eucharist has been diluted to the point that it is viewed as merely a ritual or a symbol. As Catholics, we know that it is Christ's real presence among us — we are to accept that gift and personally become Christ's presence everywhere we go and in everything we do.

The very word "Eucharist" means "thanksgiving." When we live a Eucharistic life, it has everything to do with gratitude. Let us be thankful for the Eucharist and thankful for one another, and let us demonstrate

that through the love that pours out of us.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. Jim Braaten  
*Pastor*





## Edmund Peliska: A Young



*Edmund Peliska really enjoys being part of a big family, and feels that it carries many blessings.*

Even though Edmund Peliska is only a sophomore in high school, he already has an impressive grasp on what is most important in life — faith, family and fellowship. His heart may be young, but it is mature enough to be passionate about loving God and others.

“I believe it is a good thing to help out at your parish, and that everyone should try to do so, no matter what your age is,” he says. “It is very important to help support your church community, because if you weren’t helping out, they probably wouldn’t be able to do what they do.”

Edmund Peliska, son of James and Noreen, moved here about a year ago from Naples, Fla., when his father began working as a chemistry professor for the University of Mary. Although he is a relatively new parishioner, he has already “put his hands to the plow” and begun using his gifts at Ascension as an altar server.

“At first, I didn’t want to be an altar server, but my mom made me give it a try at our parish in Florida,” he says. “I’m so glad she did. I really enjoy it now. It’s a lot of fun and it helps me feel more involved in the Mass, and it helps my devotion to the Eucharist.”

He also helps operate the video system during our parish Masses.

“There are projectors used during the liturgy, and I stay behind the computer, changing the slides,” he says. “I am pretty good with computers. I even like building them. I enjoy using my talents to help the church.”

Edmund enjoys developing his musical gifts, as well. He plays percussion in a band at St. Mary’s Central High School, and when he was 8 years old, he started playing the bagpipes on his own initiative.

“I tried playing other instruments, but I didn’t enjoy them as much as the bagpipes, so I stuck with them,” he says. “Our family is very musical, and most of my siblings play some kind of instrument. Two of my sisters play the violin, one of my sisters plays the clarinet, and my brother plays the guitar.”



## My Heart on Fire for the Lord

He really enjoys being part of a big family, and feels that it carries many blessings.

"I live with my parents, my grandparents and my aunt," Edmund says. "I am glad my parents are helping take care of my grandparents. We do neat things together. Recently, we went camping in the Black Hills."

All in all, living in North Dakota has proven to be a true blessing to Edmund and his family, for numerous reasons.

"I really like Ascension Parish, mostly because everyone is really friendly," he says. "In Florida, you could feel somewhat disconnected to others when you went to church, but I don't feel that way here. I am also so glad I get to go to a Catholic high school. It really helps me to be in a Catholic environment, and I already have some great Catholic friends."

And the Peliskas are a blessing to us! May we include them in our heartfelt prayers.

**"I believe it is a good thing to help out at your parish, and that everyone should try to do so, no matter what your age is. It is very important to help support your church community, because if you weren't helping out, they probably wouldn't be able to do what they do."**

— Edmund Peliska

## FORMED on Demand

*continued from front cover*

Many of Ascension's Sacramental Preparation courses and Adult Faith Formation groups draw on FORMED. This year, the parish will be using a study called *Forgiven* for parents preparing their children for First Reconciliation.

Through faith formation opportunities at the parish, adults can go deeper into the Catholic teachings of the faith while in community, which is what Valerie Kolbinger began doing when she joined the parish two years ago.

"I thought that getting involved like this would be a good way to meet other adults and grow in my faith," says Valerie, who recently participated in a Jeff Cavins Bible study. "I'm fairly new to the parish and am

excited by all the opportunities for adult faith formation throughout the year."

Maybe you want to listen to short and engaging talks about the Saint of the Day with your family. Maybe you want reliable answers to faith-related questions when you're at work, or you or your child are preparing for a sacrament and want orthodox supplemental resources.

Whether in your home or with other faith community members, FORMED reminds us how vital it is to bring wholesome Catholic content into our daily lives.

"I think it is so important to continue to grow and explore our faith," Valerie says. "We always have something more to learn."

If you would like more information about FORMED, please reach out to Jessica Mattson at 701-258-5692 or [jmattson@ascensionbismarck.org](mailto:jmattson@ascensionbismarck.org). Access FORMED at [formed.org](http://formed.org) with the parish's code: Z79KWG.



# A Look Back at Our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Ascension Parish hosted our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on June 20 at the Bismarck Municipal Country Club. We thank all those who helped to organize this special event and especially thank all who have shared their time and talent with our parish community.



## Upcoming Events — September 2018

**Sept. 5**

Catechist Workshop — 6-9 p.m.

**Sept. 19**

Faith Formation Classes Begin

**Sept. 11-15, Sept. 18-22, & Sept. 25-26**

Parish Pictorial Directory  
Photo Sessions

**Sept. 26**

Faith Formation Grill-Out — 4:45-6:45 p.m.

**Sept. 12**

Opening Faith Formation Mass  
and Grill-Out — 5:30 p.m.

**Sept. 27**

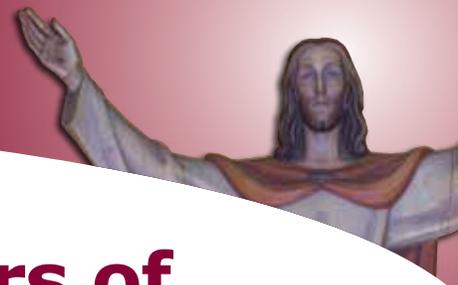
Biblical Walk-Through the Mass  
Adult Class Begins — 7 p.m.

**Sept. 18**

RCIA Begins — 7 p.m.

**Sept. 29-30**

Ninth Grade Confirmation  
Retreat — Medora



# Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion to the Homebound

## *Bringing Jesus to the Members of Our Community*

It's easy to take things for granted when you have your health. From accomplishing what you want during the day, to going to wherever you'd like, most of us don't give a second thought to the ease and freedom that exists in our daily choices. But when someone is homebound due to age or illness, whether in their own home or a nursing home, they lose much of their independence. And for those who are unable to travel to Mass, they often miss the opportunity to be united with Christ in the Eucharist, as well.

At Ascension, however, our Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion — EMHCs — to the Homebound work hard to ensure that in the midst of their suffering and loneliness, our homebound parishioners know that they are not forgotten by the Lord or their Church family.

Parishioner Deb Salwei began as an EMHC at Mass and has now been serving to bring Holy Communion to the homebound in recent years.

"A lot of them express gratitude that you're there because they can't make it to Mass and they really miss Jesus," Deb says. "They'll tell you they're so grateful for you to come so they can have that connection with Jesus that they're looking for. You can just tell it lifts their spirits when you come, when His Presence comes in.

"For a while, I was giving Communion to a lady who had dementia and it was always amazing how she always could remember it and it meant a lot to her," Deb adds. "The reverence is there even though her mind wasn't there all the time."

Sometimes EMHCs to the Homebound only visit one person, sometimes more, all based on their schedule and availability. In most cases, visits include a brief time of prayer, and even a reading from Scripture. Deb has enjoyed getting to know the people she's been able to visit over the years.

"It's a different connection than just seeing someone at church," she says.

According to Deb, not only has this service been impactful for those receiving Communion, but she has also found her own faith to have grown deeper.

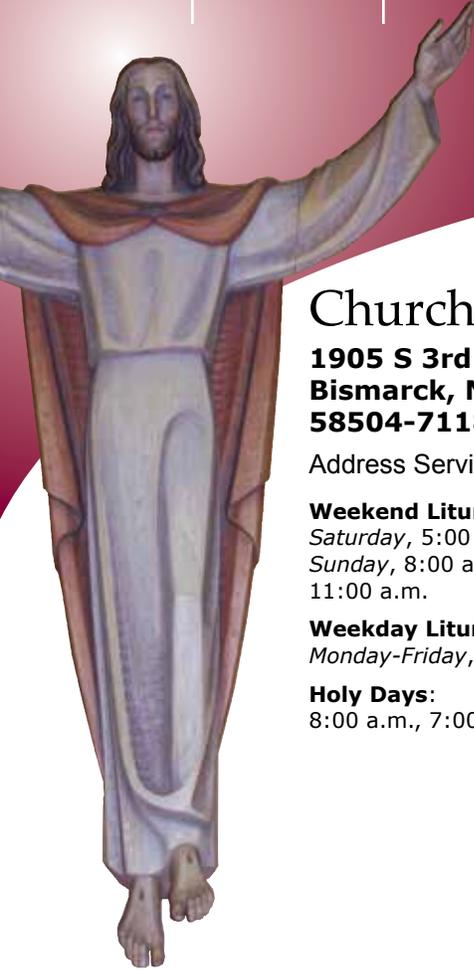
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*Those who serve to visit the homebound members of our parish remind them of the love of God and their community.*



*Homebound Minister Bob Urlacher brings Communion to those who are unable to attend Mass.*



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## Church of the Ascension

**1905 S 3rd St  
Bismarck, ND  
58504-7118**

Address Service Requested

**Weekend Liturgy**

*Saturday, 5:00 p.m.*

*Sunday, 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m.,  
11:00 a.m.*

**Weekday Liturgy:**

*Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.*

**Holy Days:**

*8:00 a.m., 7:00 p.m.*

# Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion

*continued from page 7*

"It's re-strengthened my faith knowing that no matter what age you are, or if you're healthy or sick, we all need Jesus," she says. "The realization that we can take it for granted, if we can have [Communion] whenever we want, we can take Him for granted."

Deb encourages parishioners who may feel drawn to this ministry to consider serving as an EMHC to the Homebound.

"I think sometimes people are afraid to do it because they're out of their comfort zone doing stuff like this," Deb says. "But I think that a little bit of discomfort is far

outweighed by how much of a reward it is, getting to know people in our community and church and having the honor of bringing Jesus to them. Don't be afraid to be uncomfortable."

For those who may be ill or homebound, Deb hopes that they will not hesitate to ask to have the Eucharist brought to them in their home.

"It's no bother," Deb says. "Give someone a chance to serve you as Jesus directed them to. I love doing it.

"You're still part of our church family and our community," she adds. "You're not forgotten!"

If you would like more information, or to become involved in this ministry, please contact the parish office at 701-223-3606. If you or a loved one would like to have Holy Communion brought to you in your home, you may also request this via the parish office.

**Stewardship** is the grateful response of a Christian disciple who recognizes and receives God's gifts and shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor.