

August 27, 2010
Memorial of St. Monica

Dear Fathers,

On this day we remember St. Monica who persevered in prayer and fasting for the conversion of her son, Augustine, who later became a priest, bishop and saint. Like St. Monica, many among the faithful in our diocese have persevered in prayer and fasting. Each fall since 2007, they have joined with people of other faiths to raise awareness of the scourge of abortion on our state. They have prayed in their homes, in churches and adoration chapels, and on the sidewalk outside the abortion facility in Fargo. They have fasted from food, or from the distractions of modern day life, offering that sacrifice for the conversion of souls so that unborn babies may be saved from death by abortion. You too, as their priests, have prayed, fasted and sacrificed. I commend you for your example and thank you for your faithful witness.

The 40 Days for Life North Dakota campaign will soon begin again, running from Sept. 22 through Oct. 31. I know what a busy time this is for you in the parishes, yet I ask that you schedule one more very important thing on your calendar: your hour of prayer outside the abortion facility. I encourage you to tell your parishioners when that hour will be so that they may join you, or pray in union with you from wherever they may be at that time. You can sign up for your hour of prayer by calling (701) 356-7979 in Fargo or (701) 284-6601 in Park River, by emailing phc@polarcomm.com or by going online at www.40daysforlifend.com.

On Sunday, Sept. 26, I will lead our annual Eucharistic procession to the abortion facility, the Walk with Christ for Life. Because the Walk begins at a later time of day this year (at 4:30 p.m., following a 3:30 p.m. Mass) and precedes Presbyterate Days, I hope that you will be able to join me. Then, near the end of the 40 Days for Life campaign, on Thursday, Oct. 28, at 2 p.m., I will again pray outside of the abortion facility. This time of prayer will follow our Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting; thus I will invite representatives from your deaneries who attend the meeting to join me in prayer, if they are able.

Please make every effort to encourage your parishioners to pray and fast during the 40 Days for Life North Dakota campaign. Youth groups, men's and women's groups, and many individuals have been blessed by the sacrifices they have made as witnesses to the dignity of all human life.

May God bless you in the weeks ahead and may the Holy Spirit help you and the faithful persevere in prayer and fasting for the conversion of those who choose to deny the truth of the dignity of the unborn.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Samuel J. Aquila, D.D.
Bishop of Fargo