



**FORMATION  
EDUCATION AND CATECHESIS  
CATHOLIC CHARITIES  
SAFE ENVIRONMENT  
SIGN UP**

## **FORMATION**

**Diaconate Discernment Day**  
(Deacon Jerry Brennan)

I do not know about you but I often find myself distracted. The weather - will the drive home be safe? How are the markets? Are my kids on the right path? What should my wife and I do for dinner this evening? Food is a great distraction. Before you know it, it's time to go to bed and I have forgotten the most important question: What did God want me to do today?

Not that we are the only ones with this problem. In Exodus 33, when Moses is called by God to rescue the Israelites, Moses asks to see God. Was Moses just trying to make sure the call was authentic? God tells him that no man can live who sees His face and so Moses hides in a crack in the rock as the Lord passed by. Moses could feel God's presence but not be overwhelmed by God's awesome being.

In 1 Kings, Samuel is a young boy. God is calling him to be His prophet. Samuel hears but is confused as to who is calling. He has to listen three times before he recognizes that this is the call of the Lord.

In Chapter 19 of 1 Kings, Elijah is fleeing after he defeats the prophets of Baal because of threats to his life. He hears the Lord not in the thunderous wind, the earthquake or the fire, but in a tiny whispering sound.

The call of these three prophets gives us the crux of our problem with trying to understand and discern our call by the Lord. We would like Him to just shake us and tell us what to do. But to quote a movie "You can't handle it". If we are not willing to

listen in the stillness of our heart to hear the tiny whispering sound, we will not hear God's call. So we each need to find more time in our prayer life to listen.

Sometimes we are distracted. We get pulled in every direction. When we try to listen we are unsure if the voice is authentic. Use the Bible and Church teachings to test whether the voice you hear is the call. Matthew 25 tells us what we are to do to get to heaven: care for the sick, feed the hungry, cloth the naked, visit the prisoner and provide shelter to the homeless. It may seem simple and in one sense it is. But getting our heart to surrender control, to see Christ in the marginalized, takes a great deal of prayer and discernment. You also need to just start doing it. Practice prayer and good works - service becomes habit forming!

If you are a man who feels a call to serve God's people in a sacramental way, you may be hearing a call to the diaconate. If you would like to find out more, please consider attending our **Diaconate Discernment Day** on Sunday, March 14 in Madonna Hall at the Diocesan Center in Lansing at 1:00pm. If you are interested in attending, please [contact me via e-mail](#) or call 517-342-2451.

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#### **FORMATION CALENDAR REMINDERS**

- March 11      Lenten Day of Reflection for Priests - SFRC, Dewitt. [Download registration form from the Diocesan Website](#) - No cost to seniors but please call 517-342-2510 to register.
- March 14      Day of Discernment for Deacon Inquirers, Diocesan Center, 1:00pm. [Contact Deacon Jerry Brennan](#), or call 517-342-2451
- April 16      PPMA SPRING Event, 8:30am - 3:30pm, St. Pat`s, Brighton, *Sowing the Seeds of Justice*, presented by Dan Driscoll of JustFaith Ministries, cosponsored by Office of Lay Ministry. [Contact: Nancy Joseph](#) or call 517-342- 2512
- April 21      Priest Study Day - details TBA
- April 22      Priestly Life and Ministry Committee Meeting, 12:30-3:00pm, Diocesan Center
- May 3-7      Spring Retreat for Priests with Archbishop Harry J. Flynn, Bethany House, Dewitt. Registration will be available on the Diocesan Website.
- May 8      Transitional Deacon Ordination, St. Robert Bellarmine, Flushing, 5:00pm
- May 15      Deacon Aspirant Day of Reflection, St. Francis Retreat Center, DeWitt
- May 21-23    Deacon Candidate Retreat, St. Francis Retreat Center, DeWitt
- June 11      Priest Ordination, St. Mary Cathedral, 10:30am
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- August 6-8    Deacon Retreat, St. Francis Retreat Center, DeWitt
- August 20    Vocations Night Lugnuts Game tickets available through Formation/Vocationsoffice

August 20-22 Seminarian Summer Gathering - St. Francis Retreat Center, DeWitt  
August 21 Rite of Candidacy, St. Thomas Aquinas, East Lansing, 5:00pm (for both  
Transitional and Permanent Diaconate)  
August 23 Installation to Office of Acolyte, St. Mary Cathedral, Lansing, 5:15pm  
October 1-3 Deacon Convocation, Crystal Mountain  
October 15 PPMA Lay Ministers Convocation,  
Nov 6 Lay Ecclesial Ministers Commissioning, St. Mary Cathedral

## EDUCATION AND CATECHESIS

**REGIONAL MEETINGS - MARCH 2010** - The following DRE/CYM/Pastoral Ministers  
Business Meetings have been scheduled:

Livingston & Washtenaw Regions, 9:30-12:00, Wed. March 10, St. Joseph, Dexter. Contact  
[Marinell High](#) or call 734-426-8483, ext. #203

Lansing Region, 9:30a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Thur., March 11, St. Mary, Charlotte. Contact [Teresa  
Hurd](#) or call 517-543-4319.

Jackson & Lenawee/Hillsdale Regions Wed., March 17, St. Joseph, Adrian. Contact [Aimee  
Phipps](#) or call 517-265-8938.

Genesee Region, 9:00 a.m. -12:00 pm, Thur., March 18, Ss. Charles & Helena, Clio. Contact  
[Chris Maniaci](#) or call 810-686-9861.

Please call one week in advance of the location to which you will attend. We need rsvp for food  
count and program set up.

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**CATECHETICAL FORMATION EVENT:** Lansing Vicariate - Saturday, March 20, 2010, [St.  
James, Mason](#)

Session I:

#3 Lesson Planning

#11 Church

#17 Key People of the Old Testament

Session II:

#4 Catechetical Techniques

#12 Liturgy & Worship

#18 Gospels

Schedule of the Day

8:00-8:30 Registration & Hospitality

8:30-8:50 Morning Prayer

9:00-10:45 Session I

11:00-12:45 Session II

Cost for the day is \$15.00 (Make checks payable to: St.Gerard ORE). Mail to: St. Gerard Religious Education Office, 4437 W. Willow Highway, Lansing, MI 48917. Questions? Please call Kathy Warriner at St. Gerard Religious Education Office 517-321-4179

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**CATECHETICAL FORMATION EVENTS:** Livingston Vicariate - Tuesday, February 23; Tuesday, March 2; Tuesday, March 9, St. Mary, Pinckney  
[Download information and registration form from the diocesan website.](#)

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**CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING RETREAT** - The 2010 Catholic Social Teaching Retreat has been canceled due to lack of registration. We hope to offer this opportunity next year with input from parish CYM's in scheduling and format. This will be discussed at our March regional meetings.

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**YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY TRAINING** - Basic training in young adult ministry will take place at St. Mary Star of the Sea, Jackson, Saturday, February 20, 9:00 - 4:30. Presenters include Pat Rinker, Jen Delvaux, and Sharon Reske. If you are looking to start a young adult ministry in your parish or are looking to train your leaders, you will want to be there. Registration form may be [downloaded from the diocesan website](#) .

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**INTRODUCTION TO EVANGELIZATION** - This two hour workshop will be presented by Peter Ries at St. Mary Star of the Sea, Jackson, on February 25, 7:00 - 9:00pm. This training is for parishes looking to develop an evangelization committee and/or program in their parish. It is our hope that those who move forward with this ministry will also be able to attend the training in evangelization on March 6 in Chelsea or March 7 in Lansing. It is time that we all dedicate ourselves to the great commission given to us in Matthew's gospel - "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age." Registration form may be [downloaded from the diocesan website](#) .

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**EVANGELIZATION TRAINING FOR YOUTH & ADULTS** - [Registration materials](#) are online for this training with Frank Mercadante of Cultivation Ministries. Saturday, March 6 will be at St. Mary, Chelsea, and Sunday, March 7 will be at St. Gerard, Lansing. High school youth must register as a parish group with appointed adult leadership from their Church. Permission slips and health forms are available on the [Youth Ministry website](#) . Adults may register individually.

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**MIDDLE SCHOOL RALLY** - This year`s Middle School Rally is March 13, 2010, C.I.A. "Christ In All", at Lumen Christi Catholic High School, Jackson. Our keynote is Bob Rice. Fr. Jerry Vinke will be celebrating Mass with us. Inspirational message, Metro Inflatables, music, dance, great food and an awesome celebration of faith are featured. The parish Rally pack, brochures and posters to print can be downloaded from the [Office of Youth Ministry website](#) . Two posters and five brochures have been mailed to each parish. Please contact [Pat Rinker](#), Office of Youth Ministry for more information.

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**DIOCESAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP CAMP (DYLC)** - Youth or youth ministers: please

download [the registration material](#) and make sure to meet the submittal deadline of March 17 (with deposit). This is the best possible leadership formation we can offer our teens. An email will be sent directly to youth ministry leaders with alternate Summer opportunities, including service opportunities, Steubenville info and other formation opportunities. DYLC is the only available opportunity whose primary focus is Catholic Leadership formation.

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**STATE YOUNG ADULT CONFERENCE** will be held March 19 & 20 at the Ramada Hotel and Conference Center in Lansing, MI. Young adults 18-35 will be attending from groups throughout Michigan. Check out the [MICYAC webpage](#) for information updates monthly. Keynote speaker is Sr. Ann Shields from Renewal Ministries. Bishop Boyea will celebrate Mass. Noelle Garcia will have a concert Friday evening. Full slate of workshop, descriptions and speakers will be posted soon on the [MICYAC web page](#).

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**NATIONAL CATECHETICAL CONFERENCE** - The National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) will meet in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 19-22, 2010. The theme of the conference is *Catechesis: An Oasis Amidst Diversity*. It will include keynote presentations, major breakout sessions and opportunities for round table learning activities. Religious education, Christian Initiation and adult faith formation are included among the many workshops. More information and registration materials can be downloaded from the [NCCL website](#). If you plan to attend, please [contact Michael Andrews](#) or call 517-342-2479. Catechetical leaders from the Diocese of Lansing will gather to meet during the conference.

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**WORLD YOUTH DAY 2011** - Information for the Diocesan group going to Madrid, Spain in August, 2011 can be viewed and downloaded [from the diocesan website](#). A direct mailing has been sent to parishes who have expressed interest. Deposits must be paid with initial registration by March 3. Contact [Mary Lou Hahn-Setta](#) or call 734-475-3250 to get your group started with the Diocese of Lansing. Information for groups from St. Francis AA, St. John, Davison, and Siena Heights University will be posted as information arrives.

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## **EDUCATION AND CATECHESIS CALENDAR REMINDERS**

### **February**

- 15 YA Council, 6:30pm
- 16 DRE Advisory Committee, 9:30am - 12:30pm
- 17 Ash Wednesday
- 18 Pastoral Ministers and Administrators Retreat, Bethany House, DeWitt, 9:00am - 3:00pm
- 20 Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, St. Mary Cathedral, 9:30am
- 20 Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, Christ the King, Ann Arbor, 2:00pm
- 21 Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, St. John the Baptist, Howell, 3:00pm
- 23-24 Queen of the Miraculous Medal, Jackson School Accreditation

### **March**

- 6 Youth Events Committees and DYAC, St. Mary, Chelsea, 9:00am
- 6 Evangelization Training, St. Mary, Chelsea, 11:00am - 4:00pm
- 7 Evangelization Training, St. Gerard, Lansing, 12:40 - 5:40pm

- 8 Evangelization Training for Catholic School students, Lansing Catholic
- 9 CYM Advisory, 9:30am
- 10 Vicariate DRE/CYM/PM Meeting, TBA
- 10 Principals` Meeting, 10:00am- 4:00pm
- 10 Diocesan Worship Commission, 10:30am - 3:00pm
- 11 Vicariate DRE/CYM/PM Meeting, TBA
- 13 Middle School Rally, Jackson Lumen Christi Catholic H.S.
- 15 Certification Review Board, 10:30am - 2:00pm
- 16-17 St. Mary Star of the Sea, Jackson School Accreditation
- 17 Vicariate DRE/CYM/PM Meeting, TBA
- 18 Vicariate DRE/CYM/PM Meeting, TBA
- 18 Diocesan Board of Education and Catechesis, 6:15pm
- 19 Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- 19-20 State Young Adult Conference, Ramada Inn, Lansing
- 23-24 St. John the Evangelist, Jackson School Accreditation
- 25 Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord
- 28 Palm Sunday of the Lord`s Passion

**April**

- 1 Chrism Mass, St. Mary Cathedral, 10:30am
- 1 Holy Thurs day
- 2 Good Friday of the Lord's Passion, Diocesan Central Service Offices closed
- 3 Holy Saturday
- 4 Easter Sunday
- 5 Easter Monday, Diocesan Central Service Offices closed
- 6-8 NCEA/NPCD Annual Conference, Minneapolis, MN
- 13-14 St. Mary, Mt. Morris School Accreditation
- 17 Youth Events Committees, TBA, 10am
- 19 YA Council, Newman Center, St. Michael Church, Flint, 6:30pm
- 19-22 NCCL Annual Conference, Las Vegas, NV
- 20-21 Queen of the Miraculous Medal, Jackson School Accreditation
- 24, State Encuentro, Grand Rapids Diocesan Center
- 25 Scout Ceremony and Reception, St. Mary Cathedral
- 25-28 FDLC Region VI, St. John Retreat Center, Plymouth
- 27 Diocesan Evangelization Advisory Committee, 9:30am - 12:30pm
- 27-28 St. Peter School, Eaton Rapids Accreditation

## **CATHOLIC CHARITIES**

**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE** -Matthew 25:36 encourages us to visit the imprisoned. We are told that we visit the Lord Himself when we do so. God loves all of us (see Luke 15) and so it is with joy that we enter the prison to visit those confined.

Frequently, those who are in prison have no one who will visit them. This is so for a variety of reasons. It may be that the person has committed a crime which has caused shame to a family and they will not visit or, perhaps, the family lives at a great distance from the prison and cannot afford to make the trip to the prison. Smaller groups are

"lifers" whose families have died or moved away. Whatever the reason, many welcome the opportunity to be involved with outreach volunteers who bring them God`s Word and a friendly smile.

There are many people in prison who have a hunger for the faith. Outreach Volunteers share their faith with those within the prison walls who are seeking as well as those who desire to grow in their faith. It is our deep concern that the number of volunteers has diminished with the downturn in the economy. We have received calls from prison chaplains who are concerned about the lack of volunteers as well.

The Office of Restorative Justice is concerned with all aspects of the continuum of crime and incarceration. As a church, we are concerned with the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of all. In the USCCB statement on Responsibility, Rehabilitation, and Restoration, the Bishops remind us that our work is to focus on the restoration of "a sense of civility and responsibility to everyday life, and promote crime prevention and genuine rehabilitation." (If you would like a free copy of this statement, contact the Office of Restorative Justice at 517-342-2495.)

The Office of Restorative Justice works to move the hearts of the Catholic community to recognize victims of crime, those incarcerated and their families as brothers and sisters. This office seeks to treat all persons involved with, or touched by crime as worthy of time, compassion and spiritual healing and to create programs necessary to facilitate restitution and rehabilitation. Specifically, this office targets the needs of the ex-offender, offenders under sentence, victims of offenders and families of offenders. Restoration to society as a productive member for the ex-offender, counsel and support for victims, support and reunification with the offender, if possible, for families, and the benefit of the sacraments for those incarcerated are the primary goals of this office.

For further information on how you can volunteer, call the Office of Restorative Justice at 517-342-2495.

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**DEAF/HH MINISTRY** - Catholic Deaf/HH Ministry will host a Lenten Retreat for deaf Catholics at the De Sales Center in Brooklyn, MI from Friday evening, March 12 to Sunday, March 14, 2010. Fr. Michael Depcik, OSFS will be the presenter. Contact [Rose Smith](#) or call 517-342-2532.

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**MULTI-CULTURAL EVANGELIZATION** -Justice for Immigrants: With the expectation that comprehensive immigration reform could soon be considered by Congress, it is important that supporters of reform make their voices heard on Capitol Hill. For this reason, the Justice for Immigrants Campaign has initiated a postcard campaign to urge Congress to pass reform legislation. For more information, and to participate in either an online or snail mail post-card campaign to your national legislators, please go to: <http://www.justiceforimmigrants.org/>

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**LIFE JUSTICE**

Thank you for making the 37th annual [March for Life](#) the biggest and most enthusiastic ever! The number of marchers who made the journey to our nation's capital to "Stand Up Now and Unite for the Life Principles" far exceeded the record number of participants that attended last year.

Next year, the anniversary date of the Roe v. Wade decision will fall on a Friday. So mark your calendars--we will make our pro-life presence known to the lawmakers in Washington, the citizens of the United States, and people around the world, on Friday, January 22, 2010.

In 2011 and 2012, the anniversary date will fall on a weekend, a time when lawmakers are typically away from Washington. For those reasons, we have scheduled the March for Life to be held on Monday, January 24, 2011, and Monday, January 23, 2012.

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**RECENT ADVANCES IN ADULT STEM CELL RESEARCH AND OTHER ALTERNATIVES TO EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH / CLONING**

**Brain Damage:** "[Stem cell research gives hope to stroke patients](#)," PhysOrg, December 8, 2009

**Bone / Cartilage:** "[Stem Cell `Glue` Save Nearly Amputated Climber`s Leg](#)," FOX News, December 16, 2009

**Eye / Ear:** "[Stem cell eye treatment gives victim of fight his sight back](#)," The Times of London, December 23, 2009

**Heart:** "[Researchers Launch Phase II Trial of Stem Cells and Acute Heart Attack](#)," Science Daily, December 8, 2009

**Immune System:** "[UCLA researchers demonstrate that stem cells can be engineered to kill HIV](#)," Insciences, December 7, 2009

**Multiple Sclerosis:** "[Multiple Sclerosis Patient Finds Hope Through Stem Cell Treatment](#)," PR Newswire, December 6, 2009;

"[Stem cells`reverse` MS in Canberra man](#)," Sydney Morning Herald, December 14, 2009

**Sickle-Cell Anemia:** "[Sickle Cell Breakthrough Allows Adult Transplants, Study Says](#)," Bloomberg, December 9, 2009

(Articles compiled by Richard M. Doerflinger, Associate Director of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, 3211 Fourth Street NE, Washington D.C. 20017, 202-541-3070; fax 202-541-3054)

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**Persons with disAbilities and their Caregivers Retreat Day** - Saturday, March 6, 2010 at St. Peter Parish, Eaton Rapids at 2:00 ending with 5:00pm Mass at St. Peter Church. Reservations are required for this event. Contact [Joann](#) at Ministry with Persons with disAbilities or call 517-342-2497 to RSVP or find out more information.

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**Autism Resources** - National Catholic Partnership on Disabilities (NCPD) offers a list of autism-specific ministry resources and foundational documents and concepts in disability ministry. NCPD works collaboratively to ensure meaningful participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of the life of the Church and society. For more information visit the [NCPD website](#) .

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**Natural Family Planning** - Note: There will be a charge of \$10.00 per couple, for all Introduction to Natural Family Planning Classes. All couples registered with the Natural Family Planning Office should pay before taking the class. All checks should be made out and mailed to: Diocese of Lansing, 228 North Walnut Street, Lansing, MI 48933.

The Introduction to Natural Family Planning classes will be offered as follows:

Thursday, February 18, 2010, 7:00pm, [St. Joseph, Dexter](#) ;

Saturday, February 20, 2010, 10:00am, [Queen of the Miraculous Medal, Jackson](#) ;

Thursday, February 25, 2010, 7:00pm, [St. Agnes, Fowlerville](#) ;

Sunday, March 7, 2010, 4:00pm, [St. Gerard, Lansing](#) .

Pre-registration is required for all participants. For more information [contact: NFP Program](#) or call 517-342-2587.

In the Diocese of Lansing, several methods of Natural Family Planning are taught. Pre-registration is required for the following classes:

Billings Ovulation Method: Call Maria, 517-523-3526, or view the schedule on [the diocesan website](#) .

Sympto-Thermal Method: taught by the Couple to Couple League (CCL). [Visit their website](#) to find classes in Michigan.

Creighton Model Fertility Care System is available at the [Hope Fertility Care Center of Mid-Michigan](#). Contact [Amanda Venema](#) or call 517-242-3710. Also contact The Caritas Center in Ypsilanti, Mary Bieniasz, 734-712-1990.

Family of Americas Ovulation Method: Looking for 6 couples who would like to take the class at no charge . Call the NFP Office for more information, 517-342-2587.

## **SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

**VIRTUS FACILITATOR TRAINING** will be held March 12-13, 2010, at [Bethany House, DeWitt, MI](#). It begins 6:00pm Friday, March 12 and ends 5:00pm, Saturday, March 13.

Qualifications for facilitator candidates: attend one Protecting God's Children Awareness Session for Adults; complete a background check; public speaking ability; background in education, social work, psychology, counseling or criminal justice helpful, but not necessary.

Contact [Sally Ellis, Diocese of Lansing Safe Environment Coordinator](#), or call 517-342-2551, for application form.

Parishes, schools and agencies are encouraged to have a certified VIRTUS facilitator onsite. The diocese covers the cost of the training, including Facilitator Manual, overnight accommodation at Bethany House, dinner Friday evening at 7:00 p.m., breakfast Saturday at 8:30 a.m., and lunch Saturday at noon.

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**Shield the Vulnerable** safe environment [online training is available now in Spanish](#). Shield the Vulnerable is for volunteers who are unable to attend a live session of Virtus Protecting God's Children Awareness for Adults.

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**Protecting God's Children Awareness Sessions for Adults** - Pre-register for a session at [VIRTUS Online](#) . Please do not call the hosting parish to pre-register.

Monday, February 22 - 6:30pm, [Holy Rosary Parish, Flint](#). Facilitators: Elaine Oullette and Paul Schlegelmilch

Tuesday, March 2 - 6:30pm, [St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Ann Arbor](#) (Parish Activity Center).Facilitator: Linda Miller

Sunday, March 7, 2010 - 10:15am, [St. Mary Magdalen Parish, Brighton](#). Facilitator: Robin Shepherd

Saturday, March 13 - 1:30pm, [St. Francis Retreat Center/Bethany House, DeWitt](#). Facilitator: Cheryl Hecksel

Duration of all sessions is 3 hours. For more information, contact Safe Environment Coordinator, Sally Ellis, or call 517-342-2551.

## **SIGN UP**

If you know of someone at your parish or school who would like to subscribe to VOICES Alive! encourage them to sign up at the website of the [Catholic Diocese of Lansing](#) .