

## **Bishop's Message for September 2007**

I appreciated reading in a recent *Western Catholic Reporter* about a presentation given by Gerald Weisner, Roman Catholic Bishop of Prince George, at Newman Theological College July 16. Emphasizing the ministry of the laity in his presentation, Bishop Weisner reminded his listeners: "If I am baptized I am called by God to share faith, to lead others in faith, to help others celebrate faith". We Lutherans call it the priesthood of all believers, and it is a good doctrine to keep in mind, especially as we in the church shift into a higher gear of activity with the coming of the fall. The programming we offer in our congregations, and the person-power required to make the programming happen, is sometimes overwhelming and often under-valued. But there are many in our parishes making significant contributions to the life of our faith-communities.

I especially appreciated Bishop Weisner's invitation to take a step back from the onslaught of activities in order to re-capture the essence of our mission: to show people Jesus. Weisner said that we teach Christianity - not by talking about it - but by showing people Jesus. It's not the Christian's duty to discuss Christianity with others so much as to show them what Christianity is really all about. People today are asking us to show them Jesus – not to talk about him so much. Jesus turned the words of Christianity into the deeds of Christian love. That is a good model to follow and goal to set, especially for those involved in ministries of preaching and teaching: show people Jesus.

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