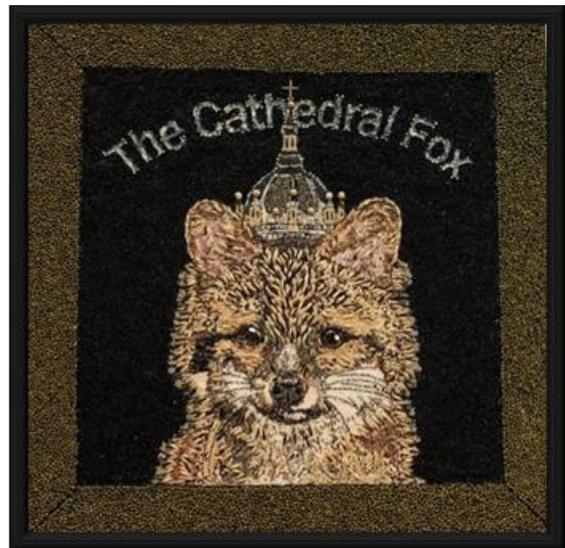


## THE GREAT MINNESOTA GET-TOGETHER: WHERE “MINNESOTA NICE” STILL REIGNS

For twelve glorious days, “Minnesota Nice” has been on full display at the State Fair, the “great Minnesota get-together.” Call me a curmudgeon, but I suspect it will likely fade as quickly as the glorious summer weather. I say this especially given the case that it is an election year. I definitely saw more T-shirts sporting political messages this year than last. I guess that is to be expected, but I surely do not attend the Fair to stir up a **political imbroglio**. I go for the strawberry malts in the Dairy Building, the walleye cakes at Giggles Campfire Grill and the exhibits! Few Catholics whom I know seek out **confrontation** at the Fair or the workplace. Far from it—they merely want to do their jobs. Still, it is critical to understand that our Catholic faith does **not require** us to witness publicly to every tenet of our faith in a secular environment. Just enjoy the Fair!

When people hop on the shuttle bus at the Park and Ride, everyone seems to be in a good mood. Smiles abound; the **anticipation** is palpable and conversations with strangers are easy. In fact, many would say that other fairgoers are not strangers at all— but folks who like some of the same things we do. They “**get**” the Fair— they embrace its sameness, **quirkiness** and predictability. It is all part of its charm! They’re thinking about the foods they will eat, the exhibits they will visit. For example, in the Fine Arts competition in 2021, a total of **2,484** pieces were **submitted**, and 329 works were accepted. You never know what you will find at the Fair! If you visited the Agriculture Building, you may have stumbled upon a different kind of art. Are you familiar with Crop Art? Creating such art is a meticulous process, not unlike a mosaic, with its thousands of pieces of glass.

Unbeknownst to me, **Charlotte Ferlic** of Roseville created an image of the Cathedral Fox out of **23** different **varieties** of grain: red quinoa, soybeans, wild rice, thistle, blue poppy seeds, yellow mustard seeds, black lentils, mung beans (border), and flax, to name but a few. Amazing! And she was entered in the “Class 1 Amateur” category, the rules specify: “Using seeds, stems, etc., in natural colors on supporting background. No paints and dyes of any kind. No irregular forms.” Amateur? Though outside my wheelhouse, I humbly disagree—it’s a **masterpiece**! Is it for sale? ☺ Charlotte earned a **Red Ribbon** (2nd place out of **50** entries) for her efforts. It should have been a Blue Ribbon! She told me she put in over **30 hours** on the piece. Do you think Church fasting and abstinence rules are strict? Consider this from the official rules: “Seeds may be whole, ground, rolled or cracked. If the seed display is either ground, cracked or rolled it cannot exceed 20% of the area of the work.” Whew!



The legend of “Cathedral Fox” lives on!

Our state of Minnesota is increasingly ethnically diverse. The 2020 census shows as much: White alone 61.6%; Black alone 12.4%; Hispanic 18.7%; Asian alone 6%; American Indian and Alaska Native alone 1.1%. We are also **religiously diverse**, though more heavily Christian: **22% Catholic**, 20% Lutheran (N.B. the most heavily Lutheran state in the nation!), 19% evangelical, to name but three. Stearns County is 40% Catholic, making it the largest concentration of any one

religion in the state. Other towns boast a Lutheran heritage, and newer **immigrant** groups have further changed the landscape. This diversity has worked for generations. The Hamline Dining Hall (United Methodist) utilizes hundreds of volunteers and is marking **125 years** at the Fair, the oldest food concession vendor at the entire State Fair. Now that's commitment!

The diversity of our great state is also displayed at the Fair because so many "**outstate**" people come to the cities. Think about it. If you live in the metro area, how often do you interact with people from Stearns or Renville counties? Or have a conversation with a **soybean farmer** from Otter Tail County or a **sheep herder** in Pipestone? But all that can happen at the Fair, and without even a hint of "attitude" on anyone's part. For us "city slickers," the Fair reminds us that there is much more to our state than our favorite local restaurants and sports entertainment. When all is said and done, sure, go for the food and entertainment. But really go to the Fair for the **conversations**. Talk to a stranger— **engage** with someone from a different background than you. You needn't an excuse to engage— not here. Go for it and enjoy all that our state has to offer.

- We are looking for catechists for our children's Religious Education program. It is a wonderful way to give back to your parish. I especially put out a call to any of our parishioners who have graduated from the Catechetical Institute. Your preparation is perfect for such a role. Please e-mail **Jennifer Love**, our Coordinator of Children's Catechesis for more information. See page 7.
- Archaeological smoking gun? Researchers believe they have located the site of biblical Bethsaida. While excavating a 5th century Byzantine Basilica site on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, archaeologists unearthed something far older. It was a **Greek mosaic** inscribed with a petition that asks for the intercession of St. Peter, who is referred to as "the chief and commander of the heavenly apostles."
- With last week's creation of 20 new Cardinals (16 eligible to vote in a conclave), the total number of electors far exceeds the **120-limit** set by Pope Paul VI. It is not the first time the 120 number has been exceeded. **Sixty-four** percent of cardinal electors at a hypothetical September 2022 conclave — 85 out of 132 electors — would be appointees of Pope Francis. A total of 11 cardinals are due to turn 80 in the next year, so that number will quickly drop.
- The RCIA is now the OCIA, the **Order of Christian Initiation of Adults**. This reflects more closely matching the Latin original and better reflecting that an "Order" is a collection of "Rites." I am delighted to announce that we have hired **Marc Jenny** as our Director of Religious Education at the Cathedral. Marc is well known to parishioners. He has both worked in business and served his country in the military. More recently, he completed a master's degree in Religious Education through The Saint Paul Seminary. Classes begin on Thursday, September 22, 2022.

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. John L. Ubel,  
Rector

