

Catholic radio station begins airing across southwestern North Dakota

Radio listeners who have wanted a talk show with a Catholic perspective can dial in Real Presence Radio FM 101.9 KZZQ.

By: [Linda Sailer](#), The Dickinson Press Published October 21, 2012

Radio listeners who have wanted a talk show with a Catholic perspective can dial in Real Presence Radio FM 101.9 KZZQ.

The radio station began programming to Dickinson and surrounding areas Tuesday. The signal tower is near Richardton and programs are on a 24/7 basis.

“Our mission actually is to evangelize through the medium of radio,” radio executive director Steve Splonskowski said. “We’re non-profit, non-commercial — all donations come from listeners only. We’re not even supported by the diocese.”

Real Presence Radio is a lay apostolate governed by a board of directors, he said.

A majority of the programming is by satellite feed from EWTN Global Catholic Television Network. Programming includes a mix of devotionals, prayers, call-in programs, the daily Mass, the rosary and chaplet of Divine Mercy.

An additional six hours of local programming per month is hosted by priests from the Fargo and Bismarck dioceses.

“The topics are about events in local churches,” Splonskowski said. “Our programs are all Catholic all the time.”

Rev. Patrick Schumacher, pastor of St. Wenceslaus Church in Dickinson, is a local program host. He invites different co-hosts for discussions.

“I like to do current events and local issues,” he said. “This time of year I like to interview political candidates. We like to talk about relevant things — we like to mix things up that way.”

It’s been Schumacher’s dream to get a radio station into southwestern North Dakota.

“It’s the most Catholic area of the state — it’s been a long goal for us and we are very excited and happy this is coming our way,” he said.

The start-up cost for the Dickinson-area station is \$400,000. Through local fundraising efforts, \$250,000 has been raised toward that goal, he said.

Once the Dickinson-area radio station went online, it became part of the Real Presence Radio family. Ongoing fundraisers include a banquet and two live radio drives in the spring, he said.

The ministry was started by a group of individuals from the Diocese of Fargo. Operations out of Grand Forks began in 2004. Stations were added in Moorhead, Minn., Bismarck, Williston, Minot and now Dickinson.

“We look for opportunities when stations become available,” he said. “When the door opens, we walk through it. We try to follow the Lord’s lead.”

Real Presence Radio purchased the FM 101.9 license and equipment and is renting the tower, he said.

Splonskowski said a majority of the programming is dialogue with a minimum of music.

“There are numerous Christian radio stations with an almost all music format — that market is adequately filled, but Catholic dialogue is sparse,” he said.

Splonskowski has received positive feedback since Real Presence Radio was initiated.

“People’s lives have been touched and they are drawing closer to our Lord, living more fulfilled lives,” he said. “Each year, we have new programs and retire old programs.”

Priscilla Keogh, Dickinson, serves on the committee that has spearheaded fundraising efforts since August.

The radio station is an opportunity to reinforce the values of the Catholic faith, she said.

“It’s things that the church stands for, what we believe as Catholics — this is a great place for information,” she said.

One of her favorite programs is designed for people of other denominations who have questions, she said.

“It’s such an educational station — I’ve learned so much more about our faith,” she said. “It’s been our goal since we got going to see this day.”

Knights of Columbus Council 6308 hosted a breakfast for the station on Oct. 14. Grand Knight Dennis Meyer hopes to make the breakfast an annual fundraiser to help with expenses.

“I think it should be a great asset to the community,” he said.

Donations may be sent to: Real Presence Radio, P.O. Box 13703, Grand Forks, ND 58208.

Real Presence Radio may be heard online www.yourcatholicradiostation.com.

http://www.thedickinsonpress.com/event/article/id/62315/publisher_ID/6/