



## ***Pastor's Column***

*Parochial Year for Evangelization ~ December Tip of the Month*

*December 3, 2017, Second Sunday of Advent*

Last weekend, we officially launched St. Peter's "Parochial Year For Evangelization," as part of our parish's engagement in this fourth and final year of our diocesan pastoral plan, "Know Love Serve," a key focus of which for this final year of KLS being Evangelization. And for the first Sunday of each month throughout this Parochial Year For Evangelization, the Pastor's Column will feature a "Tip of the Month" as well as a "Saint of the Month" who seems very well to exemplify the given tip of the month.

Our first tip of the month: *know* Jesus (and *know* Mary). In order to evangelize effectively and thus share the joy of the Gospel with family and friends in the hope and expectation of bearing fruit in our labor, we must first *know* He Whom we strive to proclaim. We cannot give what we do not have. If we do not *have* a deeply personal relationship with Jesus, then how can we reasonably hope and expect to *give* (to *share*) that relationship with others?

And so, evangelization must begin by allowing ourselves first to *be* evangelized. We must be disciples of Jesus Christ, and becoming disciples (being "discipled") begins with simply knowing the Lord to Whom we surrender ourselves in the spirit of discipleship.

We can know Jesus by reading His Word, given to us of course in Sacred Scripture. Perhaps a good Advent project that we can undertake this year in preparation for Christmas is this: reading a chapter each day, starting today, from the Gospel narrative of St. Matthew, so that by the end of the month, we will have read this entire Gospel narrative and thereby will have gone that much further toward knowing the Author and Subject of the Gospel: Jesus Christ.

We should also strive to know Mary, His Mother. For it is *through* Mary, *through* her prayers and intercession, that we can most assuredly get *to* Jesus. Mary, after all, knows Jesus best of all the people who have ever lived – being His Mother, of course! Who better therefore to help us get to know Jesus better than by getting to know her who knows Him best? It is for this reason, then, that Mary, Mother of God, is our "Saint of the Month," for she best exemplifies our evangelization "tip of the month." And her special Feast Day this month of course is the Solemnity of her Immaculate Conception, a Holy Day of Obligation on Friday, December 8.

A suggestion on how to get to know Mary better: pray the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary throughout this Advent season, and also learn about her Seven Sorrows. In her joys and in her sorrows – that is, in the fullness of her own humanity (and her own motherhood) – we can get to know her better, and *through* her get to know also her Son, our Lord Jesus Christ.

In summary then: our first tip of the month, for this month of December, as our Parochial Year For Evangelization begins: get to know better both Jesus our Lord and Mary His Mother. In so doing, may it be that we enjoy a blessed and fruitful beginning of our Parochial Year For Evangelization, striving first to become more active and intentional in our down discipleship of Jesus Christ, that we may then share our love for Jesus more effectively with family and friends.

~Fr. Lewis