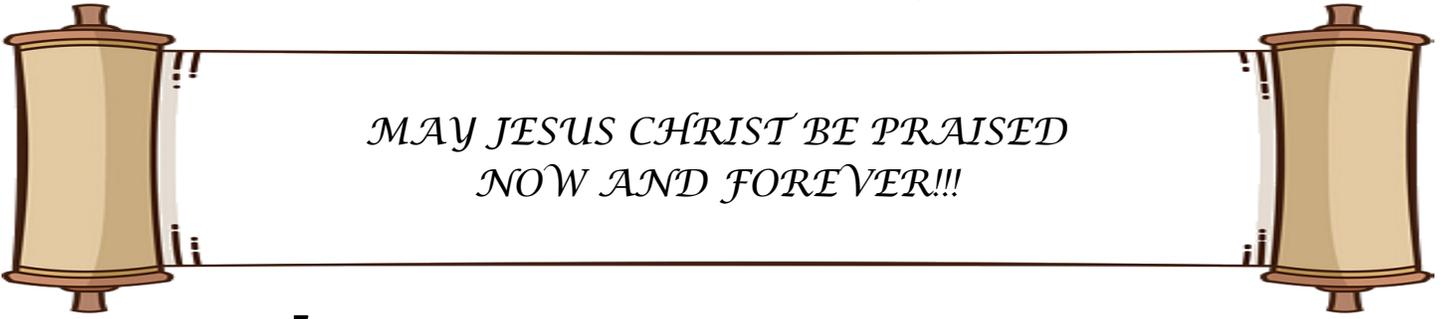


March 10, 2019 – First Sunday of Lent

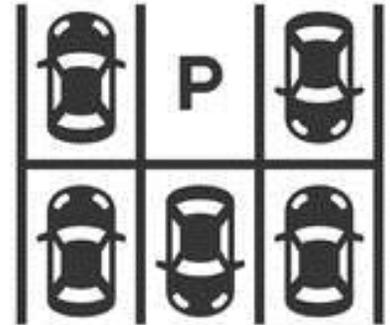


MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED
NOW AND FOREVER!!!

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

Parking Lot Parents

Sr. Patricia McCormack IHM in her book: *Engaging Parking Lot Parents: a Catechist's Guide to Fostering Parents Participation* provides many interesting insights into how we can re-engage fallen away Catholics and at the same time prevent our Church from losing the next generation. Insights from her book will be in bold and my thoughts will be in the normal font.



The New Evangelization involves outreach to those who were baptized, confirmed, and received First Eucharist but have no personal experience of Jesus.

At my first parish I met an older woman named Pearl. Pearl would often say to me "I am just a dumb convert Father," and there was a part of me that loved to hear her say that, because it gave me a chance to respond "but Pearl, you have been Catholic longer than I have." When I met Pearl, she had been a Catholic for over thirty years and I was only twenty-six years old at the time. I think an important part of being Catholic is realizing that there is always more to learn.

Evangelization speaks first to the heart before trying to reach the head.

When I was newly ordained my first pastor Fr. Rosy was a big football fan. It did not take me long to realize that on most Sunday afternoons, I could find him sitting on a couch in the rectory watching the football game. From time to time, I would sit down and watch a game with him despite not having any no previous interest in football. Fr. Rosy slowly taught me to appreciate the game by telling me what made the game exciting and about fantastic plays that he had seen on (television or in person). I am sure that he would have killed any enthusiasm I had for football, if had started teaching me about football by listing all the rules. As my enthusiasm for football developed my desire to know the rules of the game also increased. I think in a similar way we need to talk to people about what is great about being Catholic and why being Catholic will benefit them instead of trying to enforce rules on them. We do not dis the rules, because they make the game possible but we also do not beat people over the head with them.

Catechists need to evangelize without antagonizing, offending-embarrassing, speaking down, adding stress, or implying guilt. In short, the goal is to energize rather than add to parent burdens.

The word Catechists simply means one who teaches the faith and so in one sense we are all catechists. We are all called to share our stories and what we know about the faith in order to encourage others to follow Jesus. As Sister points out that this should not be a burden to us or even a burden to those who want to become followers of Jesus.

Create activities that are non-threatening. Plan for information to be self-correcting so that no parent is embarrassed by performance.

Learning about the faith does not have to be hard work. In fact, there are many ways to learn about the faith that are fun and exciting. For example, the Pinata was created to teach children the faith. The Pinata represents evil so it is

shaped like a monster or a donkey (evil is a stupid mistake and a donkey is considered by many a stupid animal). The Pinata is colorful because evil is often very attractive. The person is blindfolded because we cannot always see evil. We are given a stick (sword) because we must fight evil off and when evil is defeated everyone receives the sweet reward (candy) of heaven. I have come to find in my own life that I am a visual learner and so using visual learning cues help me.

Here are Ten family practices to help integrate faith practices into family life.

- 1. Establish a Prayer Center. Use a window sill, a tiered corner shelving unit, a table, the top of a filing cabinet—someplace that the family members pass daily. Display the Bible, a rosary, prayer tools, etc.**
- 2. Provide a Prayer Dish, that is, a lidded container to hold prayer intentions. At mealtime or bed time, pray “for the needs that are included in our prayer dish.”**
- 3. Maintain a Liturgical Centerpiece on the dinner table. Use the liturgical color of the season with a thought -a-day calendar or a miniature easel to hold a focus picture or quotation, and/or place symbols related to feasts that occur during the year.**
- 4. Hang a Family motto banner above the entrance to the common room i.e. “Love one Another”**
- 5. Choose a Family Mantra: For instance: “God is good all the time” – and “All the time, God is good!”**
- 6. Punctuate mealtime with prayer before and after meals.**
- 7. Customize Ritual Blessings for – wake up, bed time, leaving the house, etc.**
- 8. Employ a Conversation starter**
- 9. Choose a feast day to be an Annual Marker Day for your family.**
- 10. Designate one meal a week for God Table Talk.**

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Sunday

It is absurd for the Evolutionist to complain that it is unthinkable for an admittedly unthinkable God to make everything out of nothing and then pretend that it is more thinkable that nothing should turn itself into everything.

Gilbert K. Chesterton

Monday

The version found written on the wall in Mother Teresa's home for children in Calcutta:

People are often unreasonable, irrational, and self-centered. Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. Be kind anyway.

If you are successful, you will win some unfaithful friends and some genuine enemies. Succeed anyway.

If you are honest and sincere people may deceive you. Be honest and sincere anyway.

What you spend years creating, others could destroy overnight. Create anyway.

If you find serenity and happiness, some may be jealous. Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, will often be forgotten. Do good anyway.

Give the best you have, and it will never be enough. Give your best anyway.

In the final analysis, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

-this version is credited to Mother Teresa

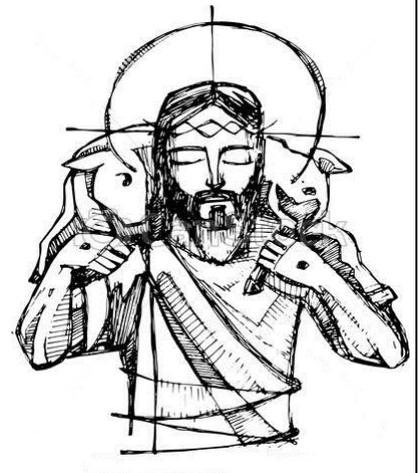
Tuesday

You'll never find the solution if you don't see the problem. - Gilbert K. Chesterton

Wednesday

When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.

Gilbert K. Chesterton



Thursday

In prayer, it is better to have heart without words, than words without heart. Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin entice a man to cease from prayer. The spirit of prayer is more precious than treasures of gold and silver. Pray often, for prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge for Satan. - John Bunyan

Friday

When belief in God becomes difficult, the tendency is to turn away from Him; but in heaven's name to what?
Gilbert K. Chesterton

Saturday

There's another reason why you should love your enemies, and that is because hate distorts the personality of the hater. We usually think of what hate does for the individual hated or the individuals hated or the groups hated. But it is even more tragic, it is even more ruinous and injurious to the individual who hates. [...] For the person who hates, the true becomes false and the false becomes true. That's what hate does. - Martin Luther King, Jr.



BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

March 10 2019 First Sunday of Lent Lectionary: 24 Gospel LK 4:1-13

Filled with the Holy Spirit, Jesus returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the desert for forty days, to be tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and when they were over, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, *one does not live on bread alone.*" Then he took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a single instant. The devil said to him, "I shall give to you all this power and glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I may give it to whomever I wish. All this will be yours, if you worship me." Jesus said to him in reply, "It is written: *You shall worship the Lord, your God, and him alone shall you serve.*" Then he led him to Jerusalem, made him stand on the parapet of the temple, and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written: *He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you, and: With their hands they will support you, lest you dash your foot against a stone.*" Jesus said to him in reply, "It also says, *You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.*" When the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from him for a time.

Spiritual Reflection: German Protestant Minister and martyr Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: "The deceit, the lie of the devil consists of this, that he wishes to make man believe that he can live without God's Word. Thus, he dangles before man's fantasy a kingdom of faith, of power, and of peace, into which only he can enter who consents to the temptations; and conceals from men that he, as the devil, is the most unfortunate and unhappy of beings, since he is finally and eternally rejected by God." Notice how all the temptations of the devil involves some form of selfishness.

Spiritual Questions:

1. How does your biggest temptation relate to your desire to be loved?
 2. How does selfishness and selflessness relate to love?
 3. How often do you test God? Why?
 4. Do you serve God alone?
 5. What is the difference between trusting God and testing God?
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PRO-LIFE

A Prayer For Personal Conversion

O gracious Master, infuse in our hearts the spotless light of Your Divine Wisdom and open the eyes of our mind that we may understand the teachings of Your Gospel. Instill in us also the fear of Your blessed commandments, so that having curbed all selfish desires, we may lead a life that promotes the dignity of each human person. May everything I do and think become pleasing to you., or You, O Christ, our God, are the enlightenment of our souls and bodies; and to You we render glory, together with Your eternal Father, and with Your all holy, life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and forever.



St. Monica Society

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

PRAYER FOR FALLEN AWAY CATHOLICS DURING LENT

God of times and seasons, you have brought us again to Lent for the study of Your Word, for the remembrance of the temptation of Your Son, and for the contemplation of His Cross. The birds know their seasons; forbid that we be blind to our times. Grant us a Lenten blessing upon us and upon our brothers and sisters who have fallen away from the true faith so that no one will miss this time of growth and repentance. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



DUC IN ALTUM:

CAUTION

Only read this section if you want to go deeper in your faith

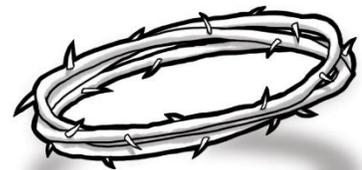
CAUTION

Take time to compliment three people a day this week and make sure that they are "pure" compliments.

CATHOLIC PRAYER:

BENEDICTION OF THE LITANIES FOR LENT # 1

Lord Jesus, you have come to save us from our sins. - Lord, have mercy.
You fasted to encourage us to do penance. - Lord, have mercy.
You suffered temptation to give us strength. -Lord, have mercy.
You were transfigured to give us hope. -Lord, have mercy.
You suffered insults to bring us salvation. - Lord, have mercy.
You accepted death to bring us life with you. -Lord, have mercy.



LITANIES FOR LENT # 2

Christ, our Lord, you endured the agony in the garden to strengthen us in prayer. - Christ, have mercy.
You carried your cross to save us. - Christ, have mercy.
You were nailed to the cross to heal our wounds of sin. - Christ, have mercy.
You died on the cross to bring us eternal life. -Christ, have mercy.
You were raised to life so that we could live with you for God - Christ, have mercy.

