

# HORIZON

*"From the rising of the sun to its setting let the name of the Lord be praised" Psalm 113:3*

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Diocese of Ogdensburg

[www.dioogdensburg.org](http://www.dioogdensburg.org)

Office of Evangelization

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## Evangelization: Mission of the Church

### Church: A Family of Faith

"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35).

As we continue the Lenten journey as a Church: A Family of Faith, the Gospel readings from both Matthew and John's Gospel set the tone for the community of believers to remember again the profound example Jesus left for the Church. The Holy Week Gospel readings that speak about the disciples' weak faith, of denial and betrayal, shook the faith of the community. In John's Gospel, Jesus gave this commandment to the disciple after the Foot Washing on Holy Thursday. He placed this commandment here because it is a love commandment by which the community that gathered around Jesus would continue when He was no longer with them in bodily form. Jesus' act of loving service in the ritual of the Foot washing was to express how the disciples were to treat each other within the community so that those outside the community would be able to distinguish the meaning of love characteristic of Jesus' followers. The act of loving service of Jesus laying down His life through His suffering and death would be the ultimate act of love for all people. During the holiest week of the Church Liturgical Year, let us come together in worship and with love to **celebrate** Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross at Mass, to **contemplate** His love, to continue our call to **conversion** and to allow the Risen Lord to **consume** us into Himself. Then as the Body of Christ, we become ever more a Community of Love for one another. During Holy Week, bring your family to the Holy Week services, especially on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Vigil. The Church is the place where we can learn to hear God's Word of His unconditional love for us all as a family of faith.

### Church Community in Action—

Attached is an evaluation for all the parishes that used **Lenten Longings**. Your input will be very helpful for future planning.

Sister Patricia Thomas, OP, from RENEW International will be the facilitator for the workshop from **April 3-9, 2011 "What Does It Mean to Be An Evangelizing Parish"**. Sister Patricia will engage the participants suggesting evangelization strategies for the parishes and help them develop an evangelization plan. This workshop is for all Pastors, Leaders of all parish ministries, especially members of the Parish Evangelization Team, Coordinators and Facilitators of Small Communities, Catholic School Principals, Religious Education Leaders and teachers, RCIA, and for all other interested parish members. **Posters for publicity and registration are attached and on [www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org](http://www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org)**. If you wish to attend the workshop and have not already registered with your pastor or parish coordinator, you may register through my office [elyng@dioogdensburg.org](mailto:elyng@dioogdensburg.org).

#### The schedule for the workshops is as follows:

| Deanery      | Location                                | Date               | Time          |
|--------------|---|--------------------|---------------|
| Lewis        | St. Peter's Church Hall, Lowville       | Sunday 4/3/2011    | 1-3pm         |
| Jefferson    | SSJ Motherhouse, Watertown              | Sunday 4/3/2011    | 6-8pm         |
| St. Lawrence | Trinity Catholic School, Massena        | Monday 4/4/2011    | 7-9 pm        |
| Franklin     | Holy Family School, Malone              | Tuesday 4/5/2011   | 7-9 pm        |
| Clinton      | St. Peter's Emmaus Hall, Plattsburgh    | Wednesday 4/6/2011 | 1-3 pm;7-9 pm |
| Adirondack   | Holy Ghost Parish Center, Tupper Lake   | Thursday 4/7/2011  | 6-8 pm        |
| Essex        | St. Patrick's Parish Center, Port Henry | Saturday 4/9/2011  | 10-Noon       |

*O Mary, Star of Evangelization, enlighten us with the radiance of your Son, walk with us in faith, strengthen us in hope, and unite us in love as we strive to become disciples in mission. We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.*



## *The Gift of Marriage*



The Family Life Office, under the direction of Deacon Gary and Gayle Frank, guide families and those preparing for marriage a variety of ways of being of service to the Church: A Family of Faith. The Church takes seriously the importance of the sacrament of Matrimony. In the Diocesan Marriage Preparation, the pastor and the facilitators for the marriage preparation help the engaged couple understand the commitment they undertake to make their marriage sacramental, valid and licit, a marriage that lasts forever. To find the dates for the next *Pre-Cana Schedule* go to [www.dioogdensburg.org/familylife](http://www.dioogdensburg.org/familylife).

*Dinner for Two* is for couples that are interested in providing a marriage enrichment evening for other couples in their parish. Check with your pastor about this opportunity for couples to come together for an evening of marriage enrichment. Contact Deacon Gary and Gayle Frank for more information [gfrank@dioogdensburg.org](mailto:gfrank@dioogdensburg.org).

These opportunities can only strengthen the sacrament of Matrimony. There is a strong pressure by special interest groups to legalize same-sex unions. It is to convince legislators that marriage is something that can be redefined to suit the latest social trends. President Obama and Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. have announced that the administration would no longer defend the courts legal challenges to the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). The teaching of the Church has always been that marriage is between a man and a woman. It is the bedrock of society. Historically governments have protected the rights of marriage because of its contribution to the common good. To continue to protect marriage based on a man and woman, we have an obligation to contact our legislators to support the Defense of Marriage Act.

## *Tips for Evangelization*

1. **Parish life** is at the heart of the Church experience. One way to strengthen this Church experience is to be a **Welcoming Community**. **How?** There should be a **greeter** at every entry way into the Church, meeting every person with a smile of welcome. Visitors and those who have been away from the Church want to feel as if they **belong**. As a Church: A Family of Faith we are called to reach out with our hearts the love of Christ for one another.
2. Another way to strengthen **Parish Life** is to do better what we are already doing:
  - a. **Prayer is important**—pray more reverently and fervently e.g. Stations of the Cross, attend Holy Week services.
  - b. **Good Liturgy is important**—be attentive to the new changes in the Roman Missal. Read, study, pray, understand the meaning of the changes. Be more attentive to the celebration of the Liturgy.
  - c. **Reading Scripture is important**—reflect on the Book of Exodus and understand how Jesus is the New Moses in the Gospel of Matthew.
  - d. **Community life is important**—become involved in one of the social ministries of the parish. Invite a friend or a relative to come to Church with you during this season of Lent and on Easter Sunday.

## **RESOURCES**

### **Roman Missal Resources**

[www.usccb.org/romanmissal](http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal) and [www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org](http://www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org). These two websites are excellent for resources for the new changes in your parishes.

**New from Rev. Alfred McBride, O. Praem. ([www.catalog.americancatholic.org](http://www.catalog.americancatholic.org))**

**Staying Faithful Today** speaks about the crisis of fidelity to God, self, friendships, country, marriage, and celibacy. What is a Catholic to think, believe, and do to stay faithful today?—good for reflection and sharing (\$13.99).