

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

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Office of Evangelization

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Evangelization: Mission of the Church

Building Evangelizing Parishes

True evangelization exists in the life of the parish. In the document *Go and Make Disciples*, it states that "Evangelization means bringing the Good News of Jesus into every human situation and seeking to convert individuals and society by the divine power of the Gospel itself". Every parish is doing evangelization in some manner and form through the many ministries offered by the parish. Every parish is a family of faith. The parish family provides ongoing faith formation to active Catholic families and reaches out to inactive Catholics especially during Advent and Lenten seasons. The ongoing goal of evangelization is to transform society, the family and institutions.

An effective way to further evangelization in the parish is to:

1. **Give your present ministries a clearer evangelizing focus** e.g. reaching out to those families who have just received the sacraments: newly baptized families; First Communion and Confirmation families; newlywed couples; families who have lost a loved one, etc. What is being done for follow-up outreach to encourage them to remain active in the parish family?
2. **Designate a person as coordinator of evangelization**
3. **Develop an evangelization team or use an existing committee** to help the whole parish evangelize.

The question may be asked, "Why do we need an evangelization team?" The parish family in the life of the Church today is taking on a different look. The family that prays together stays together, especially in the celebration of Sunday Mass. More and more young families and young adults are not as visibly present and active in the life of the Church today. Many young families have their children baptized and/or receive their First Holy Communion and Confirmation but seldom return to Sunday Mass. How do we convince and encourage these families after they have received the sacraments to help them continue their faith journey as a family? How do we invite them to celebrate their faith that becomes within them an inner desire and necessity to live their Christian life?

Attached is a brochure of "How" to establish an Evangelization Team in your parish. The brochure is fleshed out in A "How to" Manual for Evangelization Teams found on www.dioogdensburg.org/evangelization using the link *Equipping Parishes and Catholics*. This document was prepared by Sister Louise Alff, OSF, Archdiocese of Philadelphia and the brochure was adapted from it. Both documents will also be found on the Pastoral Documentation/Evangelization.

I would be most happy to come to any parish council meeting to talk about establishing an evangelization team or adapting an established committee to further develop an evangelization plan for your parish. Focusing on one or two areas of need in the parish that are achievable brings the Gospel to those most in need at the time e.g. Parish telephone ministry; ministry to: shut-ins, widows and widowers, separated and divorced; follow-up with families who have received the sacraments e.g. Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation, Matrimony; follow-up with families who have lost a loved one; home visitation; young adults.

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.



Why Catholic?

The hazy summer days are almost behind us! As we come to the final season of the **Why Catholic? Program**, we prepare for Sessions 7-12 of **Christian Prayer: Deepening My Experience of God** beginning in October.

Sign-Up Sunday

In preparation for the Fall, the **Schedule** is as follows:

- Sessions 7-12— Christian Prayer: Deepening My Experience of God
- Sign-Up and Prayer Commitment Sunday—September 25-26, 2010
- Sessions 7-12--October 10—November 21, 2010

You are encouraged to continue with **Sign-Up Sunday and Prayer Commitment Sunday** in hope that someone might be interested in joining a group. Sessions 7-12 focus on **The Lord's Prayer** would be a wonderful opportunity to delve more deeply into the seven petitions of the prayer. *Posters and Bulletin Vignettes* for **Sign-Up Sunday** will be posted on the Pastoral Documentation.

Retreat

Fr. Bruce Neili, CSP will return to facilitate the **Retreat—Sitting by the Well: Meeting Jesus in Prayer** beginning **October 25-30, 2010**. Father is looking forward to returning to the North Country. He was very well received in last year's retreat and many requested that he come back to share his prayer experiences. All are invited to come. More information will be forthcoming in the September **Horizon Newsletter**.



The grace of the sacrament of Matrimony continues to be effective in every married couple throughout their life. The purpose of this grace is to help and to strengthen the couple's love for each other in their indissoluble unity. By this grace, the couple supports each other to become holy and to bring this holiness to their children. It is in the home, like the Church, that the family comes together to build a "civilization of love" where love and faith meet and grow. The role of parents is so important in the life of the family. They are primary teachers of their children. The family home, "the domestic church", is a community of love where grace and prayer becomes a school of developing human virtues lived out in Christian charity. The theme for this year's Catechetical Sunday, September 19 is "**Matrimony: Sacrament of Enduring Love**". This theme is built upon the United States Bishops' recent document *Marriage, Love and Life in the Divine Plan*. This Divine plan of marriage is God's gift to each man and woman who come together out of love for each other. It is covenant love. The way to enduring covenant love is only in and with Christ, the center of each couple's hearts and minds. This love is achieved through daily prayer that unites the couple together to do God's will. Materials for Catechetical Sunday may be found on www.usccb.org/catecheticalsunday/. Each family is encouraged to pray this prayer in their home:

A Prayer for Family Commitment

Dear God our Father, you have called all Christian families to be a sign of your love to the world. Help us to be generous with the gifts of life and love that you have showered on our family. May we share them so that our homes become true signs of unitive and fruitful love. Let us never forget to thank you each day for all that sustains us and to look to Christ, who comes to us in the events of family life, in the Sacraments of the Church, and in service to the poor. In all of this, our family becomes a living expression of your Church, a hallowed home of life and love. By the power of the Holy Spirit, may all of us—spouses, parents, and children—share, as members of his Body, in Jesus' mission to build a civilization of love. Father, we ask this in Jesus' name in union with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Tips for Evangelization

1. **Parish Wailing Wall:** Place a cork board in the entrance of the Church. In the center put this notice:

"What you see here is an idea inspired by the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem. Here, generations of people have prayed and cried out their needs before God. Our own Wailing Wall services the same purpose. You are invited to tack your needs and prayers and petitions to it so that all who pause may see, be moved and prayer. Also, please take a petition off the wall, keep it for a week and pray for the unknown writer whose heart is broken. Then you might initial it and put it back again so that the person who put it there originally may know that he or she is not alone; that someone gave comfort, sympathy, and concern." Have pins and paper in the corner for people to use. (Idea taken from William J. Bausch's book: *The Hands-On Parish*)

2. **Attend Liturgy Faithfully:** Sometimes we use the term "going to Mass". We join together as a People of God in community to worship, to pray, to support each other. We need each other's prayers and support to go back out to proclaim and to live the Christian life from the Word we have heard and the Eucharist that has nourished and strengthened us for the journey.

RESOURCES

Praying with Your Children: A Guide for Families by Patricia Fosarelli, MD contains many creative strategies for praying with children from infancy through high school. She treats five different age levels in separate chapters using holistic strategies that are age appropriate (\$4.95) <http://www.rpinet.com/products/pyc.html>.

The United States Catholic Bishops' website (www.usccb.org) is creating a website called Marriage: Unique for a Reason which is an initiative of the USCCB Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage, to assist Catholics in understanding the unchangeable meaning of marriage--why marriage is and can only be the union of one man and one woman. This will be an excellent resource for married couples and for families.