

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

Office of Evangelization

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Evangelization: Mission of the Church

Church: A Family of Faith

New Evangelization and Prayer

A blessed New Year to all of you! As we journey into this new year of 2012, let us open the “door of faith” (Acts 14:27) as Pope Benedict XVI invites us in his Apostolic Letter for the Year of Faith to begin October 2012. As Catholic Christians, we walked through this door of faith at our Baptism. Being baptized into the life of the Trinity, we entered into a relationship of love with the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit. It is in this relationship of love, that we believe and we have hope that we will all fully enter into eternal life.

This journey of faith needs to be nourished with prayer. The theme of Pope Benedict’s Wednesday audiences is the prayer of Jesus. Jesus’ prayer was always centered on the religious tradition of His family of faith rooted in His Father’s plan of salvation echoed in the Psalms. He continued learning how to pray from Mary and Joseph in Nazareth, and taught His disciples how to pray. Jesus Christ is the Master for our prayer to deepen our faith. Only in Him and with Him do we find out what God’s will is for us. Through a deep relationship with Jesus to the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit will the door of faith continue to be widened to invite all people into this same relationship with the Trinity. “Prayer”, the Holy Father said, “opens us to receive the gift of God—His wisdom—which is Jesus Himself, in order to accomplish the Father’s will in our lives and thus to find rest amidst the hardships of our journey.”

It is only in prayer that we recommit ourselves to the vital ministry of evangelization within our parishes. The vitality of our parishes depends on fostering our Catholics with an enthusiastic faith that yields lives of witness. We are called to invite others to know Jesus through the fullness of the Catholic faith. And by the witness of our Catholic faith, we transform the world through the power of the Gospel. Let us commit our lives to daily prayer as Jesus did to His Father asking Him through the power of the Spirit to direct our steps toward leading people through the “door of faith”.

Pastor-Parish Survey—Parish Support for Living and Sharing the Faith

Bible Study/Faith Sharing—Small Communities

From the recent parish survey, there are parishes that have Bible study groups that are small, but effective. When the **Disciples in Mission** and **Why Catholic?** programs were initiated and supported by the Diocese and facilitated through the Office of Evangelization, Small Christian Communities were formed. Prayer, faith-sharing and some outreach projects were initiated within the parishes that became very fruitful. There are still existing Small Christian Communities that want to continue to strengthen their prayer life, to learn about their faith, to build community, and want to take action. There are people in our parishes, in the community, in the social and political arena who need our voices and our actions.

Small Christian Communities can become an effective tool for parish evangelization. If Bible study becomes the focus, then look at what and how you do the study with a focus on evangelization:

1. A commitment to read the Bible (e.g. Gospel of Mark) from the **perspective of Mark’s community and your parish/local community in what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.**
2. A commitment to read the Bible (Gospel of Mark) **in community with others.**
3. A commitment to read the Bible (Gospel of Mark) **critically.**
4. A commitment to read the Bible (Gospel of Mark) **to individual and social transformation** through contextualized Bible study. Some suggested resources—Ascension Press—**Great Adventure Bible Study** (*Gospel of Mark*), RENEW International--*Lenten Longings, Cycle B*

The formula for critical Small Christian Community theological reflection is:

1. Read the **world** together in community,
2. Read the **Word** together in community,
3. Decide **together** in community what the dialogue between world and Word requires,
4. Then **do** it.

This is an important time to renew our faith in hope that our small Christian communities can make a difference in our parish families to grow in their faith as a community of believers.

Church Community in Action—

Lenten Resources

The season of Lent begins on Wednesday, February 22nd. Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving are the best way to rediscover the true meaning of Lent. It is a time to deepen our faith through prayer, study, and faith sharing. It is also a time to walk with Jesus as His disciple learning how to follow Him through daily sufferings and trials to the Cross. Again, the Office will order **Lenten Longings, Cycle B**, RENEW International for those parishes who wish to order the books. Poster for **Lenten Longings B** will be posted on www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org. Other resources that might be useful for your parish are:

- **Great Adventure Bible Study** (*Gospel of Mark*)—Ascension Press
- **Catholicism**—PBS—January 8, 2012—4:00 pm—Episode 1
- **Living the Eucharist**—Paulist Evangelization Ministries
- **Rediscover Lent**—St. Anthony Press Messenger
- **The Challenge of the Cross**—St. Anthony Press Messenger
- **Lent with the Saints**—St. Anthony Press Messenger

See below for more information.

Workshop in April

Due to the Rite of Election on Sunday, March 4, we will have to cancel the Faith Formation Workshop “*Too Few in the Pew*” with Sister Louise Alff, OSF.

The workshops will take place from April 14-16. The poster for publicity and for registration is attached and posted on www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org. **Registration** for the workshop is due **Friday, March 30, 2012**.

| Time | Deaneries | Location | Date | |
|------|--|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| • | Jefferson/Lewis/Hamilton-Herkimer Deaneries | Augustinian Academy, Carthage | Saturday, April 14 | 10:00-12:00pm |
| • | St. Lawrence/Franklin Deaneries | Trinity Catholic School, Massena | Sunday, April 15 | 2:00-4:00pm |
| • | Clinton/Adirondack/ Hamilton-Herkimer/Essex Deaneries | St. Peter’s Emmaus Hall, Plattsburgh | Monday, April 16 | 1-3 pm 7-9 pm |

If there are some parishes not able to attend this workshop in one of these areas, I would be most happy to come to your parish and with other parishes combined to offer the workshop. There is a poster for advertising and registration purposes on www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org.

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

A recent conference was held in Rome called “The fecundity of *Familiaris Consortio*: From John Paul II to Benedict XVI”. The conference marked the upcoming 30th anniversary of Blessed John Paul’s apostolic exhortation: *Familiaris Consortio: On the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World*. The conference spoke about the real path to encountering one’s identity is in encountering someone else. And in this context it is in the role of the family. “According to the words of John Paul II,” he said, “the body manifests a significant announcement. In the call to give of oneself, in the communion with another person, the sign of this difference opens the way to one’s own identity. We can find our identity only ... in an encounter with another person, and in the encounter with God.” “*Familiaris consortio*” was promulgated Nov. 22, 1981, following the 1980 synod on the family. The document identifies the role and meaning of the family in society, and addresses some of the unique challenges that the institution of the family faces in modern times. It also offers in-depth insights into the particular role of the Christian family within the Church. The objective of the conference was to revisit “*Familiaris consortio*” 30 years after its publication in order to promote a renewed awareness of its content. In particular, the conference examined the profound role of the family in the mission of the Church, and the diversity of graces that the family brings to the Church as a whole.

DVD—Become What You Are—The Offices of Family Life and Evangelization would be happy to facilitate small groups for discussion and faith sharing. The questions are for families, youth and young adults and for parish members. Contact Gary and Gayle Frank – gfrank@dioogdensburg.org or Sister Mary Eamon – elyng@dioogdensburg.org.

RESOURCES FOR LENT

- **Lenten Longings, Cycle B**—RENEW International—Sr. Catherine Nearney, SSJ-- *For the Life of the World*—Year B: Participants are called to commit to works of justice and to the ongoing conversion of hearts (\$6.95). The topics are:

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| Session 1 | Remembering, Reforming, Repenting | Session 4 | Become the Message |
| Session 2 | Recognizing the Gift, Trusting the Giver | Session 5 | Learning to Love Like God |
| Session 3 | The Freedom to Be Foolish | Session 6 | The Point of Such Extravagance |

- **Great Adventure Bible Study** (*Gospel of Mark*)—Ascension Press—by Mary Healy interprets the Gospel of Mark according to Sacred Tradition (\$19.99).

- **Walking Through the Mass**—Ascension Press—Dr. Edward Sri was a success in parishes that used this book in preparation for the changes in the Roman Missal—Student Pack \$19.95; 3 DVD set--\$74.95; Leader’s pack \$20.95; Bundle Price: \$99.95.

- **Living the Eucharist**—Paulist Press— www.livingtheeucharist.org —is a Lenten Six-Week Program for Cycle B for small groups to understand the mystery of the Eucharist, participate more fully in Sunday Mass, and leave Mass with a renewed zeal to let the light of Christ shine. The topics prepare for each of the Lenten Sunday readings. The topics for the six weeks are:

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|---|--|
| Session 1: Why We Gather for Sunday Eucharist | Session 4: The Dynamic Role of the Holy Spirit |
| Session 2: Who’s At the Table | Session 5: How Do I Respond? |
| Session 3: What Happens at Sunday Mass? | Session 6: What Changes? |

- **Participant book**--\$4.95 (pkg. of 10) \$49.50; Small Group Leader Guide--\$6.95 –I have a Parish Starter Kit if any parish is interested in using the program.

- **Catholicism Series**—Fr. Robert Barron —WPBS—Watertown Station will show four Episodes concerning the faith of the Catholic Church. Fr. Barron takes people on a pilgrimage to the different parts of the world where Catholicism began and continues to flourish. The dates and times are as follows:
 - January 8, 2012—4:00 pm—Episode 1—Amazed and Afraid—The Revelation of God Become Man**—journey to the mysterious and sacred sites of the Holy Land.
 - January 15, 2012—4:00 pm—Episode 2—Happy Are We—The Teachings of the Church**—journey from the Heights of Mt. Sinai to the mysterious sites of Istanbul, from the glittering streets of Parish to the glorious Sistine Chapel.
 - January 22, 2012—4:00 pm—Episode 3—That Which Nothing Greater Can Be Thought—The Ineffable Mystery of God**—travel to the ruins of Ephesus and to the great Marian shrines of Lourdes and Guadalupe
 - January 29, 2012—4:00 pm—Episode 4—Our Tainted Nature’s Solitary Boast—The Mother of God**—The Catholic Church’s missionary endeavor begins with the adventures of St. Peter and St. Paul.

- **Rediscover Lent**—St. Anthony Press Messenger, Matthew Kelly explains how our Lenten devotions influence our understanding of Catholicism throughout the year (\$19.99). If ordered from this Office, I am able to get a discount for the parishes, depending on the number ordered. (I have ordered the book for the Office and will list the contents once the book comes in).

- **The Challenge of the Cross**—St. Anthony Press Messenger, Alfred McBride, O. Praem, follows the traditional fourteen stations and adds a fifteenth station on the Resurrection. Each station includes an opening prayer, a scriptural reflection, a prayer to meet the challenge of the cross, a Scripture to ponder, and a closing prayer (\$3.99).

- **Lent with the Saints**—St. Anthony Press Messenger, Greg Friedman, O.F.M., draws on his love of the saints to connect us to the Scriptural readings of Lent, offering daily lectionary reading, a saintly connection, a suggested action, and prayer(\$3.99).