

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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Evangelization: Mission of the Church

In these beautiful days of summer, we thank God for the beauty of the North Country—the lush green hills and mountains of the Adirondacks, the valleys of Lewis, St. Lawrence, and Champlain; the many lakes and rivers that provide recreation for the natives and tourists; and the fields and forests that offers a homeland to the birds and animals. How blest we are in this Country of beauty! It is the season to relax and recreate.

In our recreation time, we can praise our God for the many blessings we have received. One of the many blessings we have is in the parish we worship and pray together, even in the visiting parish as we attend Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday morning. We pray in the Creed, “We believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church...” No matter where we attend Mass, it is the same. It is the Holy Spirit that creates the unity and universality of the Church. The unity and universality of the Church overcomes barriers of race, color, creed, and language and opens people’s hearts to work and to serve one another. Pope Benedict XVI recently said, “The Church is, by its nature, one and universal, destined to live among all nations, all peoples and in the most varied social contexts”.

We are the People of God, the Body of Christ, praying and worship together, not as individuals but as a community of believers. It is the Holy Spirit that opens our hearts to the experience of communion. This unity of believers is important in parishes and dioceses because parishes and dioceses are to be in full union with the universal Church and its head, the Pope. The Holy Spirit guides the Church towards unity. This constant movement towards unity is the sign of a true and active Christian. If we move away from the community of believers, the Church, we move away from the Spirit. In these challenging times in the world, Jesus said that we are to be in the world, but not to be of its spirit. This means that we pray to the Holy Spirit to protect and to guide the Church in its unity and universality.

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?

One of the Coordinators shared with me a reflection book of Sunday Scripture readings for Small Christian Communities. This resource looks excellent and might be very useful and helpful with your Small Community Groups. It is from **Quest** called *Summer Reflections*. The format is very similar to the *Why Catholic?* sessions:

- **Gathering**

- Introduction
- Sharing of the Past Week’s Experience
- Opening Prayer
- Focus Question

- **Scripture Sharing and Reflection**
 - Gospel Reading
 - Commentary

- **Faith Sharing and Integration**

The Small Christian shares how the readings are related to their daily lives and relationships.

- **Response in Action**

The Small Christian community decides how the learnings from this session can be lived out in service to others.

Sending Forth
Closing Prayer
Ritual

The *Summer Reflections* are \$4.25 plus shipping. The website is www.sccquest.org.



Both the Vatican Council II documents and the US Bishops' most recent document "Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan" emphasized that the family was to be a "little church". This is a call for every family to bring the presence of Jesus Christ into the home as a family with prayer, attendance at Sunday Mass, and showing Jesus' compassion, love, and forgiveness to one another. Christ is always the center of the family.

Some of the families will be gathering at Guggenheim in August to celebrate the meaning of family life and how to be "little church". The theme of the workshop is "*Family to Family Ministry*". Families do minister to one another with their prayer and support of their friendship. August 12-15, August 17-19 and October 8-11, families will gather at Guggenheim to pray together, play together, and celebrate being family. All families are invited to come and celebrate *Family Life*. The registration form can be found on www.dioogdensburg.org/FamilyLife. May the sacrament of Matrimony and Eucharist which has rooted married couples in Christ be the source that nourishes your daily lives.

Tips for Evangelization

1. Speak out against someone who uses racist or hurtful language.
2. Spend time with a friend who just needs you to listen.
3. Seek out the homebound members of your community and offer to help them.
4. Give your child some helpful language so that he or she can be part of peacemaking with friends.
5. Visit a member of your faith community who is in the hospital.
6. Summer is a good time to update parish websites. Is there a college student or young adult who knows and understands technology who could enhance the website?

RESOURCES

Catholic Update, June 2010: *Seven Keys to Marriage* by John Feister is a 4 page pamphlet that summarizes the US Bishops' Document *Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan* (www.AmericanCatholic.org) \$.39.

The Word Among Us, June 2010 issue has a special Marriage issue www.wau.org.