

HORIZON

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

Issue #53 June 2011

Diocese of Ogdensburg

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Evangelization: Mission of the Church

Church: A Family of Faith

Feast of Pentecost

"The Spirit of the Lord fills the whole world. It holds all things together and knows every word spoken by man, alleluia" (Wisdom 1:7). The gift that Jesus gave to His disciples on the Feast of Pentecost and passed on to us is the gift of the Holy Spirit. The gift of the Holy Spirit gives us the power to carry on His mission. Jesus also gave the gift of peace and the power to forgive sins, but He also gave these gifts as a mandate. As a Church, a Family of Faith, we have a responsibility to bring peace to others and to be instruments of forgiveness. The breath of the Holy Spirit that we received at Baptism empowers us to make a difference in our parish family, in your own family life, and in the workplace. Is there someone in the parish who feels isolated from the Church or needs support because of some misunderstanding experienced in the Church? How can the parish reach out more effectively to call forth the gifts of newcomers? There will be many visitors who will attend Mass in your parish. How will you make them feel welcome?

Prayer

Pope Benedict XVI has been speaking about our need for God through prayer. Summer days are almost here. There is beauty that surrounds us in the North Country—rivers, lakes, streams, mountains, valleys, etc. What a wonderful opportunity to give thanks and praise to God for such beauty in our travels, celebrating family life with picnics, and other summer activities. The Holy Father also noted the importance of silence. He said: "Let us learn to recognize in silence the God who has revealed himself in Jesus Christ..." He continued to say that "prayer is a way of being, not a series of practices and formulas". What is our posture of prayer before God? During the summer, if there is an opportunity for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in your parish, take some time just to be with the Lord. He says to us, "Be still and know that I am God."

Church Community in Action—Feast of Pentecost

Some simple suggestions to celebrate Pentecost

- Put a red ribbon at the end of each pew (or alternate red and white strips of ribbon.)
- Encourage all those who come to Mass to wear something red. For those who do not wear red, give them a small red ribbon to pin on.
- Alternate the petitions in English and French (where French might be understood).
- Invite parishioners to wear clothing that reflect their heritage.
- Pray or sing the Our Father in Latin or French.
- Give out a red balloon to each family and ask them to attach to the outside of their home as a sign to the community that this house is filled with the Holy Spirit
- Have a potluck supper with dishes from different countries.
- Distribute Holy Spirit bookmarker. (Copy will be attached to this letter).

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 City of Marriage The City of Marriage

Prayer is the thread that keeps a marriage together. Pope Benedict in his recent talk on prayer told husbands and wives: "I hope that your families will respond to the vocation to be a transparency of the love of God." If a husband and wife pray together and as the family begins to grow, the children will learn how to pray as a family. It is the witness of the mother and father's active faith that has the greatest impact upon the future of their children's active faith and participation in the life of their parish. Research has shown that the faith practice of the father has significant impact upon the faith of the children. Parents are faced with so many counter-cultural forces in the upbringing of their children e.g. bullying, violence, sexual lures, materialism, etc that prayer becomes paramount to the stability of family life. Take some time this summer to pray as a family:

- **Family Summer Prayer:**



In our Home...Fr. Brian Cavanaugh, TOR

Lord, We encourage one another,
We build one another up,
We are at peace with each other,
We seek to do good,
We rejoice, We give thanks,
We pray constantly,
Be present Lord, in our Home.
(adapted 1 Thessalonians)

Encourage Family Rituals: Childhood ritual practices last a lifetime and bind us to faith. Prayers before and after meals, bedtime prayers, a blessing on leaving the house, or lighting a candle when someone is ill are rituals that have a long lasting impact on the faith of the family.

The Diocese of Ogdensburg is planning the diocesan-wide event *Celebrate Christ 2011* on Friday and Saturday, September 16-17, 2011 in Massena. The guest speaker is Christopher West, the well-known author of *The Theology of the Body*. The Departments of Family Life, Vocations, Respect for Life, Education and Evangelization are working collaboratively to make this event fruitful among many constituents across the Diocese so that we may truly be a Church: A Family of Faith. There are good reasons why the *Theology of the Body* is in such demand around the world. It is renewing marriages, awakening vocations, healing deep personal wounds, and setting people free to live the life of greatness for which they were created. It is a re-discovery of the very meaning and purpose of life and provides a deeper understanding of our Catholic faith. More information will be forthcoming during the summer months.

Tips for Evangelization

1. **June is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.** The **Feast of the Sacred Heart is Friday, July 1.** To prepare for the feast why not have an evening reflection on the many titles of Jesus from the Litany of the Sacred Heart. Benediction could follow.
2. **Young people from college** will be coming home or to a workplace for the summer. Pope Benedict XVI recently addressed the young people: "I hope you will be able to recognize, in the midst of the many voices of this world, the voice of Christ, who continues to address his invitation to the heart of the one who knows how to listen. Be generous in following him. Do not be afraid to put your energies and your enthusiasm at the service of his Gospel."
3. **Encourage the young adults** to lector, Eucharistic minister, or to be an altar server for the summer months. Is there a summer parish activity in which they can become involved?
4. **Recognize the young adults** who have just graduated from college or have been discharged from the military with a simple ritual celebration to welcome them back into the life of the parish community.
5. **There are many visitors** who spend the summer in the North Country. A way to welcome them is to have coffee and donuts after Mass or invite them to the parish picnic or social gathering.

RESOURCES

Roman Missal Resources

www.usccb.org/romanmissal and www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org. These two websites are excellent for resources for the new changes in your parishes.

www.avemariapress.com is offering a series of books to evangelize your faith community with **the FAITH we profess; the COMMANDMENTS we keep; the SACRAMENTS we celebrate** written by Fr. Peter J. Vaghi. These books would be excellent for RCIA and ideal for adult formation. Each book is \$12.95.

www.catalog.americancatholic.org **Understanding the Mass: 100 Questions, 100 Answers** by Mike Aquilina. He walks the reader through the Mass, explaining the meaning behind the prayers and practices (\$13.95).