

# 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

### Church: A Family of Faith

Lent is the journey of the heart! As a family of faith, these forty days are an opportunity to renew again the desire to grow in holiness through daily prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. The parish family will offer a variety of Lenten activities e.g. Stations of the Cross, daily Mass, penance services, small community faith-sharing experiences of the Sunday readings, reflection on Matthew's Gospel, preparation for the changes in the Roman Missal etc.

There is an ever-increasing concern for the number of families, individuals in the parish, especially young people, who are not attending Mass or not actively involved in the parish. There are studies indicating that as many as 70 percent of young people leave the Church by the time they are 22 years old. And by the time they reach the age of 29, they leave the faith as well. Without becoming pessimistic, there are young people who are Catholic but are not as attached to the Church as they were in the years between 1940-50. They are not a lost generation and have not abandoned their faith.

In a recent conference "*Lost? Twenty-somethings in the Church*" held at Fordham University, there were more than 700 young people who were engaged in discussion of their Catholic faith and their connection with the Catholic Church. One participant said that young people in their 20's seek community. "They want someone to know, listen to and treasure their story. They want to know that being a part of a faith community makes a difference in their lives. When you are part of a true faith community, you can't be lost: Someone will come looking for you because they will miss you if you are not there."

The parish is a community, a family of faith. When the parish family gathers together for the celebration of the Eucharist, in the living presence of the Risen Lord, we gather as a family and we miss those who are not sitting with us in the pew. This includes not only those who are away from the Church, but those military men and women deployed, those sick in hospitals, in nursing homes, the shut-ins, and those in prisons. Our Baptism calls all of us to be evangelizers. Let us go forth to reach out to ONE PERSON or ONE FAMILY to let them we know we care about them. Parish evangelization strategies for parishes can be found in [www.dioogdensburg.org/evangelization](http://www.dioogdensburg.org/evangelization) under the Link: *Church: A Family of Faith/Lenten Longings 2011*. There is an Outline of Matthew's Gospel that lists parish evangelization strategies.

### Church Community in Action—

Anne Scanlan presented to the 297 participants came to a deeper understanding of what it means to be Church: A Family of Faith through the lens of Matthew's Gospel. It is our love relationship with Jesus Christ and with each other that is important in being a community of faith. Our faith is communal and we do what we do because we are the Body of Christ. Our actions as a Christian build up the Body of Christ. We are the hands and feet of Christ which brings the Gospel message to others.

The next workshop from **April 3-9, 2011** "**What Does It Mean to Be An Evangelizing Parish**" will focus on Pope Benedict XVI's "New Evangelization" and on how the parish may structure evangelization strategies to reach out more effectively to the parish family. This workshop is for all pastors, leaders of all parish ministries, especially members of the Parish Evangelization Team, coordinators and facilitators of small communities, religious education leaders and teachers, RCIA, and for all other interested parish members. **Registration for this workshop is due on Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>. Posters for publicity and registration are attached and on [www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org](http://www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org).**

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

- **Follow-Up Faith Formation Workshop— Date: April 3-9, 2011**  
~Theme: "**What Does It Mean to Be An Evangelizing Parish Family**"  
**Designed for:** *Pastor, Evangelization Team, Parish Council Members, Deacons, Family Life Ministers, Coordinator/Facilitators of Small Community Faith Sharing Groups, and other Leaders of Parish Ministries*

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
Hamilton-Herkimer	St. Mary's Church, Indian Lake	Sunday 5/15/2011	2-4 pm

**Website—Church: A Family of Faith and Parish Evangelization** will provide Lenten resources and information about the changes in the *Roman Missal*.

*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 Perspectives Journal** from the National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers (NACFLM) provides quarterly publications to support family life. The mission of NACFLM is to be a prophetic voice for family life in the Church and in Society, to foster professional development, and to provide mutual support for those who minister with families. In the Winter 2011 issue, the Journal focuses on Serving Military Families: **“Strong Marriages-Strong Army”** by Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Mike Strohm and Patricia R. Johnson. The article stresses that the Army has increasingly focused their attention on the way they can support both soldiers and families with the emphasis on the words “Soldier” and “Family”. Army chaplains from all different faiths have developed a program called *Strong Bonds*. The program addresses “the importance of resilient relationships to stabilize the stressful environment of military service.” To read the rest of the Journal go to ([www.nacflm.org](http://www.nacflm.org)).

## *Tips for Evangelization*

In November 11, 2010 issue of **Origins** there was an article called *Young Adults and the Catholic Church* by Father Robin Ryan, former director of the Chicago vocations discernment program Catholics on Call. He made some helpful recommendations that might be helpful in reaching out to young adults. Some of these recommendations lean towards religious vocations but can also be helpful to live a full Catholic Christian life:

1. Listen closely to young adults to discover the values and concerns that drive them e.g. moral issues, church teachings, etc.
2. Focus on assisting young adults with their vocational discernment in a pressure-free environment. Walk with them and give them space to discern.
3. Do not assume that young adults are familiar with Catholic teachings and practices e.g. ways of praying. Help them to befriend the tradition in a nonideological way.
4. Take advantage of opportunities to connect young adults who are considering a church vocation with peers who have similar aspirations.
5. Offer print and online information about religious communities that has a clear Catholic focus and identifies the specific mission of the community in a compelling way.

## **RESOURCES**

**Welcome to the Roman Missal Booklet** is a resource for all parishes to reflect on the Lenten Sunday readings, reflection from USCCB on the Liturgy, Eucharist reflection by Pope Benedict XVI, reflection question and parish evangelization strategies. This will be posted on [www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org](http://www.pastoral.dioogdensburg.org).

### **Roman Missal Resources**

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