

# FAITH FORMATION ONLINE RESOURCES FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS AND PARISH CATECHISTS

October 18, 2010

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## Religious Education Resources from NCCL

### Professional Webinar Development Series – Getting Ready for Advent

**Fr. Ron Raab** (recent addition to the line up!): **November 2nd 3:00 - 4:00pm**

**Webinar Sign Up Link:** <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/441882561>

**"The Unsheltered Heart: Come Explore the Spiritual Riches of Advent with Ronald Patrick Raab, C.S.C."**

Take a break from the professional track this month with Fr. Ronald Patrick Raab, C.S.C., of the Downtown Chapel in Portland, Oregon to refresh your own spirituality in preparation for the Advent season!



Advent is a new beginning for all people. It is a time to awaken within us a deep desire for Christ's presence and to awaken our hearts to God's faithfulness. Join Fr. Raab for an hour of guided reflection on how to prepare your own heart to be unsheltered, open, vulnerable, and free.

**Partnering Organizations:** NALM, NCCL, NACC, JustFaith

## Digital Discipleship: Transforming Ministry Through Technology

**INTERACTIVE CONNECTIONS 2011 Conference** - National catechetical and ministry leaders will cover a wide variety of topics including the use of meeting and teaching technologies via web for parishes and dioceses, social networking and web innovation, creating digital stories, and using web-based technology in the catechetical process. A full program is available online.

Keynote speaker John Roberto, president of Life Long Learning and editor of *LifeLong Faith*, will focus on *Envisioning and Designing the Future of Faith Formation*.

**Dates:** January 31 – February 3, 2011

IC 2011 collocates with the Florida Educational Technology Conference to benefit from over 200 sessions featuring current and emerging technologies, as well as best practices developed through research and experience. The FETC Expo features over 300 vendors offering new ideas and contacts for resources.

**Conference Location** is the Doubletree Resort – International Drive, Orlando. Call 800-327-0363 to reserve rooms at special conference rate of \$89 per night.

2 CEU's from the University of Dayton are included in the registration.

Visit <http://intconnect.eventbrite.com> OR [www.intconnect.net](http://www.intconnect.net) or contact Sr. Caroline Cervený, [c.cervený@verizon.net](mailto:c.cervený@verizon.net) . Call: 727-744-4684

## Leadership Lessons from Ants

When one finds food, others immediately gather to help bring it to storage. When one gets wounded, the rest evacuate, re-group, and pull the injured to safety. There's no formal supervision, yet ants somehow accomplish enormous tasks. That's right, ants. Sitting at a highway rest-stop one afternoon, nonprofit founder Ndubuisi Ekekwe discovered that the way ants work together has profound implications on successful team structures and project management. Inspired by these insights, Ekekwe re-evaluated his leadership model, and eventually re-launched a project he had originally given up on. He identified 6 elements that ants can teach us about leadership and good business. "As I watched them, the theses project flashed to my mind. Wouldn't it be good to trust others to help you? Right there, I made the following decisions on the project:

- **The ants worked as a team:** I will form a team, bringing professionals together.
- **The ants trusted one another:** I must do away with the notion that only by working alone can I ensure quality.
- **The ants were open:** I will share the idea with like-minded people. I later got a Boston area professor to lead the design. When ants discovered food, they informed others, who came along and helped.
- **The ants were partners and of different sizes:** I will bring help and make the task our project, not mine. As much as possible, each team member will get assignment based on his capability.
- **The ants were diligent and focused:** The team must keep working, even slowly. Deadlines will give us focus.
- **The ants regrouped:** I will be open to try new ideas if present ones are not working.

You can read the whole article which originally appeared in the *Harvard Business Review* at [http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2010/10/business\\_lessons\\_from\\_the\\_ants.html](http://blogs.hbr.org/cs/2010/10/business_lessons_from_the_ants.html).

## Perspectives on Time and How It Shapes Your Outlook on Life

Time just passes by, regardless of how we feel about it... right? Not according to Philip Zimbardo. He's been studying how people think of time for decades and has some amazing findings. For instance, did you know your cultural background could determine how fast you walk? Or that children's use of technology makes class pass by more slowly? Here's an animated look at how our time-orientation shapes our families, careers, and happiness. Watch this ten (10) minute video at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A3oIiH7BLmg>.

## Study Guide for Catholics on Climate Change



The National Catholic Rural Life Conference (NCRLC), a member of the Catholic Climate Covenant Coalition, has updated their resource, *Climate Change: A Catholic Response Study Guide*. It can be used for individual reflection, but it is also appropriate for students and/or parish study groups. This updated web resource provides links to much more information about climate change, Catholic teachings and shared Christian praxis. The Study Guide can be accessed on the NCRLC website. Please [check it out](http://www.ncrlc.com/news.aspx?ID=88) (<http://www.ncrlc.com/news.aspx?ID=88>).

### **New Saint - Mother Giulia Salzano – “I will always catechize”**

Mother Giulia Salzano intuited that the Lord was giving her a unique charism for her time: catechesis. And she accepted this mission wholeheartedly, founding a congregation of catechists and teaching the faith till her death. "Donna Giulietta" (Lady Juliet), as she was known in Casoria, Naples, was one of six who was canonized this Sunday.

"I will always catechize, until I have one thread of life left," Mother Giulia (1846-1929) once said. "And I assure you that afterwards I will be very happy to die teaching catechesis." In fact, the day before her death at age 83, she tested more than 100 children preparing for their first Communion.

Giulia was born in southern Italy in 1846 to Diego, an army captain of Ferdinand II, king of Naples, and Adelaide Valentino. Her father died when she was 4 and so she was entrusted to the Sisters of Charity from the age of 7 until she was 15. Then she began to teach in the school of Casoria, province of Naples, where she moved with her family in October of 1865. These experiences awakened in her a special interest in the catechism and the education of young people, as well as devotion to the Virgin Mary.

Father Nuncio D'Elia, postulator for her cause of canonization, said that the "intelligence of the faith that guided her in her teaching made her realize that children also needed 'Christian doctrine.'"

"She intuited that the Lord was giving her a unique charism for her time: catechesis," Father D'Elia said, describing this charism as "original and prophetic." It was "cultivated in the centrality of love of the Sacred Heart and of the Virgin Mary. Hence, she let no occasion go by without catechizing." On account of her charism she can be considered a Prophetess of the New Evangelization.

## **Pope Benedict XVI - Families Teach Meaning of Life**



The family is fundamental because it is the first place where people learn the meaning of life, Benedict XVI is affirming. "The relationship between parents and children -- you know -- is fundamental," the Holy Father affirmed. He noted that "it is the torch of faith that is passed on from generation to generation, this flame that is also present in the rite of baptism, when the priest says: 'Receive the light of Christ ... the paschal sign ... the flame that you must always keep alive.'"

"The family is fundamental because it is the place where there germinates in the human soul the first perception of the meaning of life," Benedict XVI affirmed. "This perception grows in the relationship with the mother and with the father, who are not the owners of the life of the children but the first collaborators with God in the transmission of life and the faith," he added.

The Bishop of Rome went on to explain that "the family is the 'little Church' because it transmits God, it transmits the love of Christ, by the power of the sacrament of matrimony." He added that "the family, to be a 'little Church,' must be well integrated into the 'big Church,' that is, into the family of God that Christ came to form."

"The greatest gift that we have received is to be Church," the Pontiff affirmed, "to be in Christ the sign and instrument of unity, of peace, and true freedom."

## **Benedict XVI Affirms Witness of Catholic Women**



In a message sent through his secretary of state, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, to members of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations, Pope Benedict XVI acknowledged the contribution of Catholic women who witness to their faith in the life of the Church. The union is currently celebrating 100 years with an assembly in Jerusalem, which began Monday at the Pontifical Institute Notre Dame of Jerusalem.

The Pontiff expressed "thanks for the many blessings that have been bestowed on the Church through the witness of faithful Catholic women living and working in the world, transforming it from within, and proclaiming the Gospel in word and deed." He acknowledged that during "its 100 years of history, the members of World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations have contributed to the Church's mission at local, national and international levels, enriching the Church with the fruits of feminine holiness" ("Mulieris Dignitatem," 31).

The world union is comprised of almost 100 Catholic women's organizations representing more than five million women active in more than 60 countries which are recognized by their national episcopal conferences. The Pontifical Council for the Laity has erected the organization as a public international association of the faithful. Its aim is to promote the presence, participation and co-responsibility of Catholic women in Church and society in order to enable them to fulfill their mission of faith and to work for human development and peace in the world.

### **Items on the USCCB Fall General Assembly – November 15-18**



The annual Fall General Assembly of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) will be November 15-18, at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront Hotel. The meeting will begin with Mass at 8 a.m. on Monday.

At the assembly, the bishops will hear addresses by the president of the USCCB, Cardinal Francis George of Chicago, and the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Pietro Sambi. On Tuesday, they will elect the next president, vice president, treasurer-elect and general secretary of the USCCB, as well as the chairmen-elect of six committees.

Other items on the agenda include discussion and votes on:

- A common agreement between the bishops' conference and four Reformed churches to recognize each other's baptism
- The request of the Pro-Life Activities Committee to begin drafting a brief policy statement against physician assisted suicide
- The 2012 assessment, with a recommendation that it be increased by 3 percent
- Discussion and vote of the 2011 Conference budget.

The bishops will also receive a formal introduction of Professor John H. Garvey, the new president of The Catholic University of America, and hear reports and presentations on:

- The Church's response to the earthquake in Haiti
- The Review and Renewal of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development
- The work of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage
- Informational update on World Youth Day 2011
- The needs of the Archdiocese for the Military Services
- Integrating new media into diocesan communication structures.

For more information on the election of the USCCB general secretary, visit [www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2010/10-167.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2010/10-167.shtml). For more information on the elections of chairmen-elect, visit [www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2010/10-160.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2010/10-160.shtml).

## **Krista Tippett on *Being* - Fragility and the Evolution of Our Humanity**



I had already heard of Xavier Le Pichon. His deep Catholic faith has always been compatible with the notion of evolution. He finds evolution not merely theologically acceptable but scientifically and spiritually "ingenious." Though, well into the 20th century, his own field of geology had retained a "fixist" view of the map of the world. There was no knowledge of tectonic plates, in constant motion, that had across time configured and reconfigured the earth's crust and entire continents. Xavier Le Pichon became a pioneer in deep ocean exploration that first revealed all of this. He was a key figure at one of those historical moments where science not only overturns its own assumptions but changes the way all of us see the world.

And yet in this program, he tells how he traveled to Calcutta and spent a period of weeks volunteering with Mother Teresa and the Brothers of Charity. In an essay in English, "Ecce Homo," he describes how an encounter with a dying child transformed his life forever. The story of how he then gave his life over to facing human suffering, while continuing his scientific career, is itself remarkable. Krista said that she left with so much to ponder from the lessons Xavier Le Pichon has drawn from that choice ever since — by the synergy he has found between what spiritual community and geophysics teach him about the way the world works.

And yet Xavier Le Pichon has turned his attention to history, philosophy, and the life sciences in recent years — looking at what Neanderthal skeletal remains reveal about human compassion, and looking at the remarkable historical moment around the sixth century BCE when many pivotal spiritual figures — Buddha, Lao Tzu, and Confucius — first appeared simultaneously across the Earth. And, he has concluded that it is precisely our capacity to care and orient our collective life around the weak and suffering among us that has made us human as well as humane. This capacity, he proposes, has defined the evolution of what we call our "humanity" as much as any other physiological or cultural trait we possess. You can listen or download this program at <http://being.publicradio.org/programs/2010/fragility>.

### **Live Boldly**



I read an interesting blog this week on *The Daily Good* and I couldn't help but agree with the author about the importance of taking an actual step, about doing something to move an idea forward rather than to just keep talking and dreaming. Her antidote to being discouraged or defeated is to Be Bold! Here are the opening lines and closing lines of her post.

*Whatever you do, or dream you can, begin it.*



*Boldness has genius and power and magic in it....Thinking is easy, acting is difficult, and to put one's thoughts into action is the most difficult thing in the world. -Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

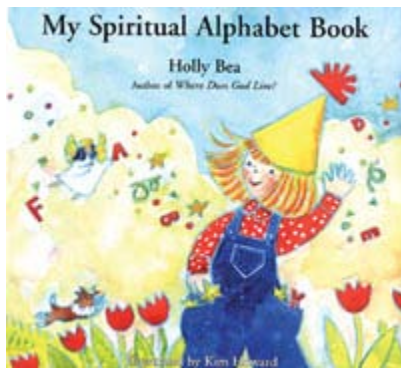
For over 20 years I have had this quote hanging on my wall, “Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, the providence moves too. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamt would have come his way.”

...Boldness that puts thoughts into action are day by day choices that honor our commitments; that is why they are so hard. The victories are small and mostly internal. In the end, it is truly how things get done.

There is no overnight success in life; it just looks that way because we are mostly not privileged to witness all the small commitments that were made that eventually ended in the public recognition that appears to be success. The success lies in Thoreau's advice to live the life you've imagined through the steady, daily work of boldness. Start by loving yourself enough to dream

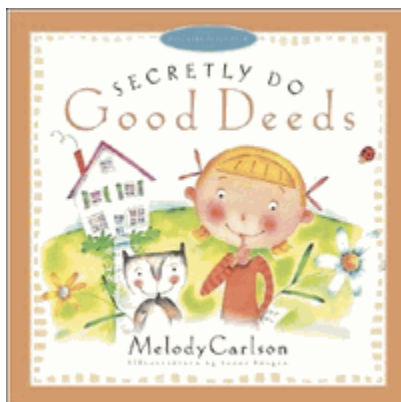
Read more: <http://www.care2.com/greenliving/living-boldly.html#ixzz10kGsWluT>

### My Spiritual Alphabet Book



Unique in its approach, *My Spiritual Alphabet Book* combines a playful rhyming text with warm and joyful illustrations to introduce young children to the world of spirit. Moving through summer to autumn, winter, and spring, four exuberant and often humorous youngsters relate to God's unseen world by way of the many gifts that surround them in all seasons. With an emphasis on positive interaction with all creatures and the natural environment, this book will invite discussion and inspire the imaginations of children. Order [My Spiritual Alphabet Book](#) ISBN-13: 978-0915811830.

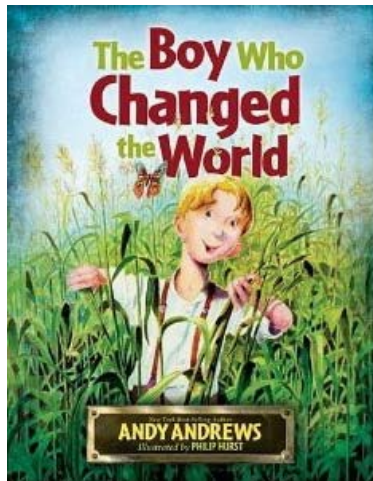
### Secretly Do Good Deeds



One day someone did something no one could see. It was a gesture quite small, yet the happiness it spread was really very big. Most of all, it taught that doing "secret somethings" really make people smile - especially the one doing them.

"But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Matthew 6:3-4. Why not order [\*Secretly Do Good Deeds \(Just Like Jesus Said Series.\)\*](#) ISBN-13: 978-0805423846

## The Boy Who Changed the World

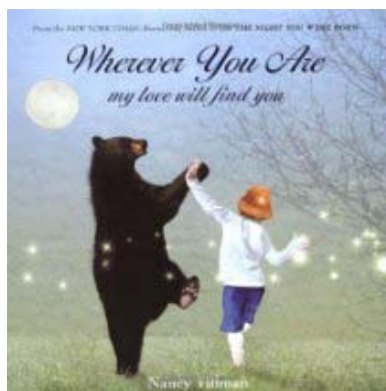


This book can be used when you talk of the genealogy of Jesus in the line of David. It helps to understand that Jesus was influenced by the prophets and the Scriptures. It is easy to understand why Jesus often used words from the Hebrew Scriptures and the prophets of the Old Testament.

*The Boy Who Changed the World* opens with a young Norman Borlaug playing in his family's cornfields with his sisters. One day, Norman would grow up and use his knowledge of agriculture to save the lives of two billion people. Two billion! Norman changed the world! Or was it Henry Wallace who changed the world? Or maybe it was George Washington Carver?

This engaging story reveals the incredible truth that everything we do matters! Based on [\*The Butterfly Effect\*](#), Andy's timeless tale shows children that even the smallest of our actions can affect all of humanity. The book is beautifully illustrated and shares the stories of Nobel Laureate Norman Borlaug, Vice President Henry Wallace, Inventor George Washington Carver, and Farmer Moses Carver. Through the stories of each, a different butterfly will appear. The book will end with a flourish of butterflies and a charge to the child that they, too, can be the boy or girl who changes the world. ISBN-13: 978-1400316052. Why not order [\*The Boy Who Changed the World\*](#).

## Wherever You Are, My Love Will Find You



Tillman's self-described mission to let children know that they are loved is well manifested here. Formulaically similar in format and tone to [\*On the Night You Were Born\*](#) (2006) and Eric Metaxas' [\*It's Time to Sleep, My Love\*](#) (2008), which Tillman illustrated, this picture book presents a heartfelt, greeting card-worthy rhyme matched with fanciful mixed-media images of a child who cavorts across brilliantly hued landscapes and is joined by wild animals, from peacocks to pandas, along the way. On every spread, the speaker promises undying adoration and support: "My love is so high, and so wide and so deep, it's always right there, even when you're asleep." Some may find

this too sweet and sentimental but I liked it. But the appeal of a title such as this that encourages an adult and child to snuggle affectionately together with a book is undeniable and can also be



used to explain God's love for us as well. ISBN-13: 978-0312549664. You can view some of the illustrations and text at [http://www.amazon.com/Wherever-You-Are-Love-Will/dp/0312549660/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1286465991&sr=1-1](http://www.amazon.com/Wherever-You-Are-Love-Will/dp/0312549660/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1286465991&sr=1-1) or you can simply order [\*Wherever You Are: My Love Will Find You\*](#).

## **With My Own Two Hands**

"I can change the world with my own two hands. Make a better place with my own two hands. Make a kinder place with my own two hands." Musician Ben Harper reminds us of how powerful we can be. Watch his four (4) minute video to get you in the groove



to make the world a better place with YOUR own two hands (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEnfy9qfdaU&ob=av3e>). You can read the lyrics at Ben's website <http://www.benharper.com/#/song/my-own-two-hands>.

## **Litany of Remembrance**



Every week, Joyce Rupp writes a *Spiritual Reflection* for a weekly Catholic newspaper. I thought her *Litany of Remembrance* was one that all of us might pray. To read this and her past reflections, please go to <http://ncronline.org/blogs/spiritual-reflections>.

I remember the children of the world. As Jesus called to the children to come to him, so I gather in prayer the children of my world who are hurting. I embrace them with loving kindness and with a desire to mend the systems that bring such pain to their young lives. I remember the children:

... who will go hungry today,  
... whose parents are on drugs,  
... who have no one to teach them to read,  
... who are handicapped and unattended,  
... who do not know love,  
... who live in filth and degradation,  
... who have no friends,  
... who are not listened to,  
... who have never been sung to or read to or taken by the hand or experienced earth's  
    mystery and beauty,  
... who do not have anyone to tuck them into bed at night,  
... who are shunned or mistreated because of their color, their religion, or the place where  
    they live,  
... who have no awareness of their inner goodness,  
... who have stopped believing in love,

... who are filled with anger and hate,  
... who are receiving a poor education,  
... who are ill or in pain,  
... who are grieving the death of a loved one,  
... who are suffering from AIDS or drug-related diseases,  
... who feel lonely, desolate, and unloved,  
... who are filled with fear for their lives,  
... who hear only harsh words and hostile language,  
... who have been bruised, beaten, and mutilated,  
... who are victims of incest, rape, and pornography,  
... who hide in fear from the sounds of war,  
... who are ill and have no medical attention.

Yes, I pray for the children of my world today and I pray for each man and woman of this world, including myself, that we will do our part to create better living conditions for these children. Show us the way and prod us into action, God of justice and compassion!

### **And Only One Returned – What if it Were None? - Story to be Saved**

This story was included in the homily I heard last Sunday. It was so powerful I had to find it. Once again Google responded. Here is the story. Painful to read and yet an example of how little many of us are grateful for our very lives. You may wish to put this in your file of actual stories that affirm the true stories in Scripture.

Most of us have felt the sting of ingratitude, but few have felt it as painfully as Ed Spencer has. He was a divinity student at Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. On September 8, 1860, Spencer was drawn into a situation that changed the direction of his life. That night he was awakened by the shouting of fellow seminary students, who reported that there was a shipwreck near the shores around campus. A cruise ship had collided with a lumber freighter and was sinking.

Ed jumped out of bed, dressed in a hurry and ran to the shore. It was a stormy night and the waters were tossing vigorously. Few people were willing to brave these turbulent waters and dangerous undertows. Ed was a strong swimmer, from his childhood days of swimming the Mississippi near his home in Rock Island.

He jumped right in and proceeded to pull people to shore one after the other. Ed had to battle not only the waters, but also painful piercing into his body from pieces of debris from the ships. By early morning he had personally rescued fifteen survivors. As he was warming himself by a fire along the shore with a cup of coffee, a cry came that there were two more survivors clinging to part of the ship, hanging on for dear life. Despite his exhaustion, he jumped in and barely made it to the shipwreck. He managed to draw them in with his last ounces of strength, after which he collapsed on the shore. That night, 287 people lost their lives but of the 98 who were rescued, Spencer rescued seventeen of those people.

Ed Spencer never returned to his courses at seminary following that night. As a result of his heroic efforts he became paralyzed and he was an invalid for the rest of his life. As an older man living in California, a Los Angeles newspaper interviewed him and asked him what he recalled about the rescue. Spencer replied, "Only this; of the seventeen people I saved, not one of them ever thanked me."

### **Just for Fun – *It's a Book***

I read this book and just laughed. While it is being marketed for children ages 4-8, I think adults will enjoy it more. If interested you can buy *[It's a Book](#)*; however I would encourage you to watch a one minute trailer for the book which pretty much sums up the entire book though you miss many of the illustrations. Watch as a book-loving ape and a tech-savvy donkey exchange words. It's why some of us still read actual books in print. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4BK\\_2VULCU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4BK_2VULCU)

**Below is a link to a gorgeous video celebrating**

**God's presence in the gift of creation**

It has been described as one of the most beautiful & meaningful streaming videos ever created.  
[www.andiesisle.com/creation/magnificent.html](http://www.andiesisle.com/creation/magnificent.html)