

ADVENT CLASSROOM PRESENTATIONS

FOR FIRST GRADE THROUGH MIDDLE SCHOOL

**"THE ADVENT PRAYERS
OF THE CHRISTMAS SYMBOLS"**

In Sixty Minutes or Less!

Presented by

Sr. Elisabeth Tiernan, SNDdeN

In a joy-filled presentation, Sr. Liz will help your students prepare for the birth of Christ through the symbols of the Christmas season. From Santa Claus, to the snowman, to Christmas trees, lights and ornaments, Sr. Liz will invite your children, young and old, to feel themselves surrounded by God. Sr. Liz's storytelling style and use of visuals, lends itself to engaging the children in the wondrous experience of Advent. This presentation may be given anytime before Christmas.

For more information or to schedule a session for your students contact Sr. Liz at
liztiernan@aol.com
(206) 323-5595

Cost: 1-2 hours, \$75 per hour
3 or more hours, \$60
Plus gas.
All fees are on a sliding scale and may be adjusted according to need.

**ADVENT PRAYERS
OF THE CHRISTMAS SYMBOLS**
COLORING CARDS
ALSO AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE.



BEST Practices from the PCL Forum – AVAILABLE NOW FOR FREE

Much of this work is a result of the PCL Forum meeting at the NCCL 75th anniversary Conference and Exposition. There are over 50 ideas. Each one has a short description of the idea and includes the name and email address of the person who wrote it. You are invited to peruse this material and contact the person who submitted it. The materials can be found on the NCCL website (www.nccl.org). They can be permanently found on the *PCL Forum* page under the *About NCCL* tab. However, during this month of Introduction, they appear on the Home page of the NCCL website (www.nccl.org). Here is a sample from page five.

Title: Scavenger Hunt (1st Communion Retreat)

A fun retreat that brings families together; learn more about the church and its history. Allows parents to converse with their children during the parent interviews with their own student. Surprisingly it's a good tool to open the parent's eyes that they themselves need formation. I bring vendors and provide lunch for all participants. The day/schedule/events:

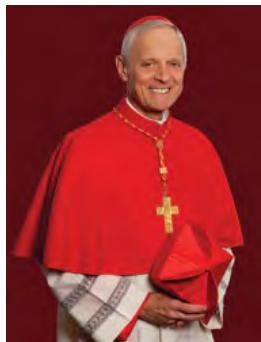
9am-check in

9-1pm-activities include:

- 4 craft centers (1 center in for MS and HS)
- movie (shown every 30 minutes)
- prayer room (index cards with numbers matching the prayer sheet-child has to recite the prayer they selected)
- church tour (every 30 minutes)...very detailed; including the history of the church)
- exit (must stop there to gather their take home material and lunch ticket)

Becky Arcizo: beckyarcizo@yahoo.com

DC's Cardinal Named Relator-General for Evangelization Synod



Pope Benedict XVI has named Cardinal Donald Wuerl, archbishop of Washington, D.C., as the relator-general for next year's synod of bishops on new evangelization.

The synod, scheduled for Oct. 7-28, 2012, will cover "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith."

Archbishop Pierre-Marie Carré, archbishop of Montpellier, France, was named special secretary.

ONE DAY LEFT: YOUR INPUT on the USCCB Conference Priorities



This is a wonderful opportunity as a Diocesan or Parish Catechetical Leader to participate in a Consultation on the Priorities of the Bishop's Conference. This is your opportunity to share the trends you believe should be addressed by the bishops in the upcoming three years. It also gives you the opportunity to indicate your familiarity with the current priorities and the activities that resulted from the current USCCB priorities.

This consultation process was initiated during a preliminary discussion with the Committees on the 2013-2015 Priorities. The Committee on Priorities and Plans asked the USCCB staff to survey a broader Church leadership audience on possible trends and issues that the bishops should consider plus assess how aware dioceses and others are of the present priority activities. Peter Murphy, Director of the Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis indicated that "the input from diocesan and parish staff will be helpful in determining if the USCCB priority activities are impacting the work and ministry of diocesan and parish staff. It will also assist in the development of future priorities."

Here is the actual invitation:

The United States bishops are completing a strategic planning cycle this year and beginning work on the next planning cycle. Please consider providing your input regarding the use of material produced in support of the current planning cycle and trends to be considered for the new planning cycle.

You may provide input by completing a survey at the following link:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/USCCB_Priorities

In a phone conversation with Michael Steier, Associate Director of the Secretariat for Evangelization & Catechesis, regarding our willingness to collaborate on this consultation,

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Michael felt that the survey should take less than ten minutes to complete and having taken the survey myself, I would agree with him.

If you would like more information on the USCCB's current priorities, please visit their website <http://www.usccb.org/about/priority-plan.cfm>.

For your input to be considered, it is important that you comply with the **October 31 deadline** and complete the online survey within the next two weeks. **Diocesan directors** are free to send the survey to their parish catechetical leaders as well.

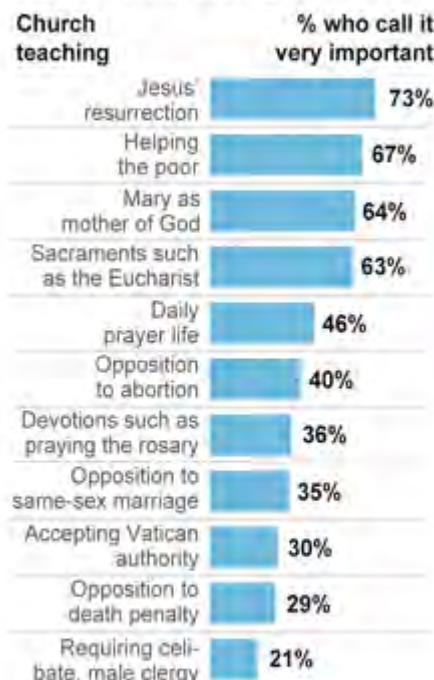
"First Fridays for Food Security" Facebook Event: November 4

First Fridays for Food Security: November 4, 2011



Catholics' views

Catholics' views on the theological or moral issues most important to them often differ from church teachings.



Source: *Catholics in America: Persistence and Change*, a survey of 1,442 U.S. adult Catholics. Margin of error: ±3.5 percentage points.

By Julie Snider, USA TODAY

On Friday, November 4 (the first Friday in November) Catholics are invited to "fast" by limiting meal spending to the amount allotted for a family of their size in the USDA Modified Thrifty Food Plan, which is used as the basis for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly called food stamps). On Friday, November 4, participants can visit the [Facebook event page](#) to leave comments about their experiences and access information and reflections on food insecurity in the U.S. A [handout on the theme of Poverty in the United States for use on November 4](#) (<http://tiny.cc/4o7op>) is also available. First Fridays for Food Security will continue on every first Friday through April 6, 2012.

Religious identity slips among U.S. Catholics

This is what the surveys indicate is what our landscape looks like. One in four Americans call themselves Catholic, but a survey released Monday finds this is more a cultural brand label for many than a religious identity.

An overwhelming majority, 88%, say "how a person lives is more important than whether he or she is Catholic," according to *Catholics in America: Persistence and change in the Catholic landscape*. The survey is part of ongoing

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research by teams of sociologists led by Catholic University sociologist William D'Antonio.

The survey, a comprehensive look at the beliefs and practices of 1,442 U.S. Catholic adults, also finds that 86% say “you can disagree with aspects of church teachings and still remain loyal to the church..” The survey finds Mass attendance has fallen from 44% attending at least once a week in 1987 to 31% in 2011, while those who attend less than monthly rose from 26% to 47%. When asked why they don't go to Mass more often, 40% say they are simply not very religious.

The challenge facing all catechists is how one teaches Catholic doctrine when “More than half of Catholics, including those most highly committed to the church in their personal practices, say it's their own moral views, not those of church leaders, that matter, says survey co-author Michele Dillon, chair of the sociology department at the University of New Hampshire. ‘They see this as their church and they won't be exiled because there is a doctrine they disagree with.’” Here is a chart that identifies some of the changes over the last 25 years.

PROFILE OF AMERICAN CATHOLICS		
CHANGES OVER 25 YEARS (PERCENT)		
	1987	2011
RACE		
White (non-Hispanic)	86%	63%
Hispanic	10%	32%
Black, Asian, and other non-Hispanic	5%	5%
MARITAL STATUS		
Married	62%	54%
Never married	22%	20%
Divorced, widowed, separated	15%	15%
Living with partner	--	10%
AGE		
55 or older	27%	34%
45-54	12%	19%
35-44	18%	21%
25-34	26%	16%
18-24	17%	10%

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GENDER			
Female		52%	50%
Male		48%	50%
EDUCATION			
Some high school and less		21%	14%
High school graduate		40%	32%
Some college		20%	19%
Associate degree		--	7%
College graduate		12%	18%
Graduate and professional degrees		8%	9%
CATHOLIC EDUCATION			
Grade school		52%	37%
High school		25%	19%
Catholic college/university		8%	8%
INCOME			
Under \$10,000		12%	7%
\$10,000-\$19,999		20%	11%
\$20,000-\$29,999		19%	12%
\$30,000-\$39,999		13%	10%
\$40,000 or more		19%	60%*
No answer, refused		18%	--

*Among this 60%, 22% reported incomes of \$100,000 or more.

American Catholics and Giving to the Poor



Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly opened their program this week with a conversation about the [Survey on American Catholics](http://tiny.cc/w0nn4) (<http://tiny.cc/w0nn4>). They also made the connection with the new Vatican document issued by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, that called for sweeping changes in the global financial system in order, it said, to put "the common good" at the center of economic activity. I am amazed that so many Catholics feel no obligation to serve the poor, especially with our emphasis on catholic social teaching. The program runs about 4 ½ minutes.

All Souls' Day – the *Day of the Dead*



Religion & Ethics Newsweekly also broadcast a short program they first aired in 2007. You might find this a two minute piece a quick overview of what the day means and how it is celebrated.. Check it out at [Day of the Dead](http://tiny.cc/x05hk) (<http://tiny.cc/x05hk>).

Mexico: Day of the Dead



The Day of the Dead celebration in Mexico is a celebration of loved ones who have passed.

This is a 3 minute video that helps explain the customs.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3obZze-V0YI&feature=fvsr>

All Who Wander Are Not Lost



It is not overly long. It is the reflections of a person who decided to take a walk, 60 miles in five days. You might even call it a pilgrimage. Here is how the author explains the motivation. But even more important are the learnings. You can read the complete article at [Reflections from a five day walk](http://tiny.cc/i7ylp) (<http://tiny.cc/i7ylp>).

For me, the walk was many things. It was an expression of wandering. It was a pilgrimage from [one](#) sacred circle to [another](#). It was a birthday gift to myself and a gratitude gift to everything around me. It was a change of pace, a physical challenge and a mental exercise. And most of all it was simply — a walk.

There was no explicit goal other than to put one foot in front of another, and I held a simple, fundamental intention to **s l o w d o w n**. And once I slowed down, then to **listen**. And if I listened well enough, then perhaps I could discern how to **serve**.

I. Slow Down

Thomas Merton identified rushing as a most fundamental form of violence in our society, especially for those working for social change.

II. Listen

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Do we have space for non-destination ways of acting in our culture? (I'm reminded of Gandhi's response to the well-known moral quandry: "do the means justify the ends?" He answered that means are ends in the making.)

III. Serve

I believe that to truly serve is to live one's gifts, and I'm learning that service, like running and playing instrument, deserves practice along the way to discovering what the essence of those gifts are, and how to deliver them.

All Saint's Day



This 4 ½ minute movie is a tribute to our great heroes, the saints. Set to the song by Casting Crowns, "Lifesong," this tribute includes a variety of images of saints from the Apostles to the present day, meeting its crescendo in the alleluiah verses with images of the Queen of Saints. Towards the end of the video, the creator pays tribute to some personal heroes whose causes for beatification and/or canonization are still pending. There is only one tragedy: Not to be a saint. Check it out at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MxZE2Tx6Dpk&feature=fvsr>

Here are the lyrics to the *Casting Crowns* song.

"Lifesong"

Empty hands held high
Such small sacrifice
If not joined with my life
I sing in vain tonight

May the words I say
And the things I do
Make my lifesong sing
Bring a smile to You

Let my lifesong sing to You
Let my lifesong sing to You
I want to sign Your name to the end of this day
Knowing that my heart was true
Let my lifesong sing to You

Lord I give my life
A living sacrifice
To reach a world in need
To be Your hands and feet

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So may the words I say
And the things I do
Make my lifesong sing
Bring a smile to You

Hallelujah
Hallelujah
Let my lifesong sing to You

"The difference between the Gospel written and the lives of the saints is the same as the difference between music written on a page and music played out loud." - Saint Augustine

Litany of Saints – Chant



This Litany of the Saints, in English, was recorded in the Franciscan Friary in Pantasaph in North Wales.

This version is 3 ½ minutes and can be heard at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LI7tHS6zneE&feature=related>.

Litany of Saints – *Ora Pro Nobis*



The song is by Matt Maher, he uses icons from *Monastery Icons* as his background. Only 2 ½ minutes, it is a very reflective litany. Icons are reminders of the spiritual world. They are windows into eternity; a holy space depicting sacred reality in the course of humanity. Check it out at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZWt5y301BSY&feature=related>

Litany of Saints – *All You Holy Men and Women Pray for Us*



In this video, the creator included pictures to match the Litany sung by Christi Chiapetti at the '08 Youth Rally in Yonkers NY when Pope Benedict XVI was at St. Joseph's Seminary.

Watch and listen at
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbqkOcVcD9Q&feature=related>

Litany of Saints in Latin – *Litaniae Sanctorum*

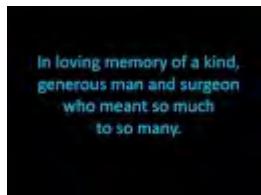


For those of you who are my age and older this may bring back many memories.

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<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiM9uJIN64g&feature=related>

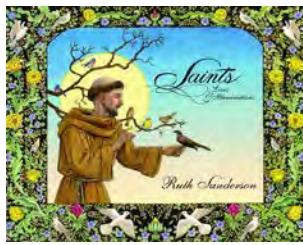
All Soul's Day



Here is less than a minute from the Catholic Medical Mission Board that encourages us to celebrate the memory of someone dear to you.

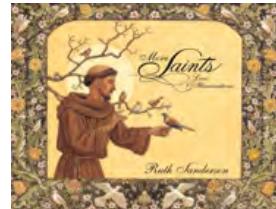
Say a prayer and if you can, why not go to Mass today and be a full, active, conscious participant. Need some ideas about who to remember, watch for a minute <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWa7HFE48c0&feature=fvsr>

Saints: Lives and Illuminations

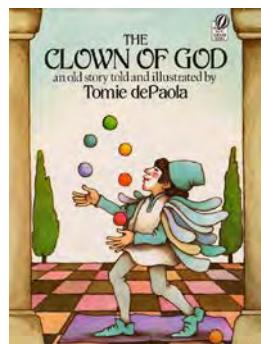


The lives of saints continue to be a source of inspiration for many children. The author, Ruth Sanderson has chosen saints from the Eastern Orthodox tradition as well as from the Roman Catholic Church. This book includes" forty brief biographies, opulently illustrated. The pencil-and-oil portraits are done in the manner of Renaissance art, with deep but bright colors, stylized frames, and the saints' faces delineated by halos." [Saints: Lives & Illuminations](#) is now available in paperback.

This sequel to *Saints* follows the same pattern, offering one-page profiles of 36 saints, each illustrated with a portrait. The first book covered saints of the first millennium; this one surveys the second. Consequently, there will be more familiar names here, including St. Francis, Joan of Arc, Padre Pio, and Blessed Teresa of Calcutta is entitled [More Saints: Lives and Illuminations](#) and available for purchase.



The Clown of God

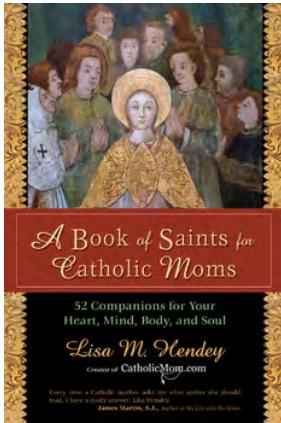


As I was thinking about saints, I couldn't get *The Clown of God* out of my mind. Never found a child that didn't like it. I realize that Christmas is almost two months away but we did have a sprinkling of snow in DC and so this will be one of my first recommendations for a Christmas story. It's a great way to teach how important it is to have a pure heart of unselfishness when you give because what's in your heart is more important than what you actually give as a gift. As one mother wrote, "the first time I read it I had my two year old daughter on my lap. When we got to the part where Giovanni begins to juggle for the baby Jesus, I got so choked up with tears that I could barely continue to read. My daughter

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held my hand and said 'it's O.K. - see the baby is smiling'." You can purchase [The Clown of God](#). You will love the art of Tomie dePaolo.

A Book of Saints for Catholic Moms



I am not sure why I thought that a book on Catholic saints for mothers would all be women but I was proven wrong. This is the second book by Lisa Hendey for Catholic mothers. For each of the 52 saints (one for each week of the year) saint, she offers a variety of topics: a brief biographical sketch, reflections on lessons learned from the saint, popular traditions associated with him or her, a quote from the saint, a week's worth of Scripture verses that are associated with the spirit of that holy person, activities to do either alone or with your children, a prayer asking for the saint's intercession, and questions to ponder throughout the week. It's another saints book but one designed for mothers. You can order [A Book of Saints for Catholic Moms: 52 Companions for Your Heart, Mind, Body, and Soul](#).

All Saints and All Souls

Unsure of what day to celebrate the life of Erma Bombeck, I will probably pray for her on both November 1 and 2. I miss her delightful sense of humor. This is one of my favorite columns.

IF I HAD MY LIFE TO LIVE OVER

I would have talked less and listened more.

I would have invited friends over to dinner even if the carpet was stained and the sofa faded.

I would have eaten the popcorn in the "good" living room and worried much less about the dirt when someone wanted to light a fire in the fireplace.

I would have taken the time to listen to my grandfather rambling about his youth.

I would never have insisted the car windows be rolled up on a summer day because my hair had just been teased and sprayed.

I would have burned the pink candle sculped like a rose before it melted in storage.

I would have sat on the lawn with my children and not worried about grass stains.

I would have cried and laughed less while watching television, and more

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while watching life.

I would have gone to bed when I was sick, instead of pretending the earth would go into a holding pattern if I weren't there for the day.

I would never have bought anything just because it was practical, wouldn't show soil or was guaranteed to last a lifetime.

Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I'd have cherished every moment, realising that the wonderment growing inside me was the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle.

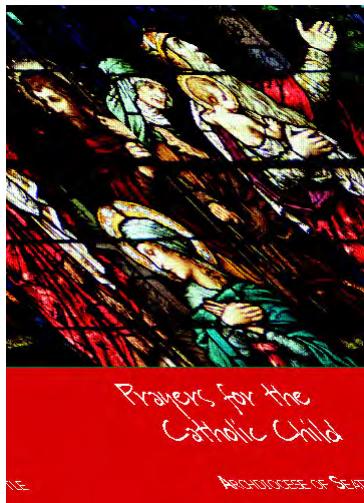
When my kids kissed me impetuously, I would never have said, "Later. Now go get washed up for dinner."

There would have been more "I love you's" and more "I'm sorry's"

... but mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute . . .
look at it and really see it . . . and never give it back.

— [Erma Bombeck](#)

Prayers for the Catholic Child Prayer Book – Revised Edition



“Prayers for the Catholic Child” is a tool for parents to teach the essential prayers of the Catholic faith and a means to keep a record of their children’s progress in learning to pray. This book has been designed for parents to reference easily the prayers that children will be taught in grades K-8 during their formal instruction in Catholic schools and parish religious education programs. It also includes examples of Blessings from “The Catholic Household of Blessings and Prayer.” This prayer book concludes with a brief overview of Catholic doctrine, including the Precepts of the Faith, the Beatitudes, Commandments, Virtues, Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit, the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, the Seven Capital Sins, and the Four Last Things. It includes the revised prayers from the 3rd Translation of the Roman Missal.

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