

Dear Catechetical Leaders,

As we continue into the Second Week of Lent, the National Conference of Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) has provided us with several resources to enhance our faith formation programs this week. I hope you find many creative ways to share this information, particularly the materials for people with disabilities.

Peace and blessings,

*Anne*

### **Prayers Extended to Those Dead and Suffering from the Storms**



Outbreaks of tornadoes lashed much of the central and southern U.S., leaving death and destruction in their wake. The latest count included 19 dead in Kentucky, 12 in Indiana, three in Ohio and one each in Alabama and Georgia. Tornadoes also were reported in Mississippi, Tennessee, Illinois, North Carolina, and Virginia.

NCCL extends its prayers for the souls of the 36 persons who died in the tornadoes and storms over the last few days. We ask for comfort and consolation for their families. We also pray that the love and generosity of their fellow citizens and commitment to service and justice of their Church family be ever present as they struggle to pull their lives back together.

### **Pope's March Intentions: Women, Persecuted Christians, Especially for Asia**



Christ, particularly in Asia."

The Apostleship of Prayer announced that Pope Benedict XVI will be praying this month that the contribution of women will be justly recognized, and for the perseverance of those who suffer for their faith. His general intention is "that the whole world may recognize the contribution of women to the development of society." And the Pontiff's mission intention is "that the Holy Spirit may grant perseverance to those who suffer discrimination, persecution, or death for the name of

## **March is Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month**

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month was designated to promote a greater understanding of people with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Awareness is now being raised across the county about how hurtful words like *retarded* can be, when used as negative slang. This observance reminds us to recognize people with disabilities as valuable, contributing members of our communities. Check out this video simply entitled *Jonathan's Story* at



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9hVnDuoUS4&feature=email>. It runs about six minutes. If you have a pulse...you have a purpose. Here's a great piece featuring people with Down Syndrome and the theme is *We are more alike than different*. It's a little less than three (3) minutes and you can watch it at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cA3t1HW1Ow&feature=related>

## **People who Experience Disabilities Speak**



*NCPD E-News* invites us to check out this 7 ½ minute documentary with 35 persons with developmental disabilities from different backgrounds answering one question: "If you change one thing about yourself, what would you change?"

It is well worth your time. Be sure to check it out. Plus there are lots of other videos that are available as well. Go to <http://sproutflix.org/content/one-question>.

## **March is Brain Injury Awareness Month**

**ANYTIME, ANYWHERE**

**ANYONE**

**BRAIN INJURIES DO NOT DISCRIMINATE**

- 1.7 million people, including 475,000 children, sustain a TBI in the U.S. each year. 3.1 million individuals live with life-long disability as a result of TBI.
- 52,000 people will die. 275,000 people will be hospitalized. 1.365 million people will be treated and released from an emergency department.
- Just as no two people are exactly alike, no two brain injuries are exactly alike.

*"Since anyone can sustain a brain injury at any time, it is important for everyone to have access to comprehensive rehabilitation and ongoing disease management. Doing so eases medical complications, permanent disability, family dysfunction, job loss, homelessness, impoverishment, medical indigence, suicide and involvement with the criminal or juvenile justice system. Access to early, comprehensive treatment for brain injury also alleviates the burden of long term care that is transferred to tax payers at the federal, state and local levels."*

Dr. Brent Masel, National Medical Director  
for the Brain Injury Association of America

TBIs are caused by falls (35%), car crashes (17%), workplace accidents (16%), assaults (10%), and others (21%).

For more informatkion, please go to <http://www.biausa.org/brain-injury-awareness-month.htm>.

## **Moral Implications**



It's a one page article in the March 5, 2012 issue of *Time* magazine entitled **Rick Santorum's Inconvenient Truths**. He noted that the former senator "was especially vigorous on the subject of prenatal testing, citing studies that show that 90% of Down-syndrome babies are aborted." The author Joe Klein went on to speak about the Santorum's care for three year old Isabella who almost died several weeks ago. Here are his closing paragraphs that I believe are worth pondering, regardless of your political persuasion.

I am haunted by the smiling photos I've seen of Isabella with her father and mother, brothers and sisters. No doubt she struggles through many of her days--she nearly died a few weeks ago--but she has also been granted three years of unconditional love and the ability to smile and bring joy. Her tenuous survival has given her family a deeper sense of how precious even the frailest of lives are.

All right, I can hear you saying, the Santorum family's course may be admirable, but shouldn't we have the right to make our own choices? Yes, I suppose. But I also worry that we've become too averse to personal inconvenience as a society--that we're less rigorous parents than we should be, that we've farmed out our responsibilities, especially for the disabled, to the state--and I'm grateful to Santorum for forcing on me the discomfort of having to think about the moral implications of his daughter's smile.

## **Preparing Evangelization Synod: Council Stresses Family's Role**



The 12th Ordinary Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops held its seventh meeting, highlighting the important role of the family in evangelization. Archbishop Nikola Eterovic, secretary general of the Synod, led the preparatory meeting for the Oct. 7-28 synod that will consider evangelization and the transmission of the faith. The council worked on a draft of the "Instrumentum laboris" or working document of the forthcoming Synod, pausing to examine the issue of "the recipients of the new evangelization and the identity of Christians in their relationship with Christ."

A communiqué from the council noted that "debate was particularly intense concerning the primacy of the faith at this time in history, characterized as it is by a crisis in faith which is also a crisis in the transmission of faith. Mention was made of the 'fruitlessness of current evangelization,' also due to the influence of modern culture which makes the transmission of the faith particularly difficult, and represents a challenge for both Christians and the Church. "In this context, the Year of Faith will be a good occasion to develop to gift of the faith received from the Lord, to live it and transmit it to others."

"The primary place for the transmission of faith was identified as the family," the communiqué added. "There the faith is communicated to young people who, in the family, learn both the

contents and practice of Christian faith. The indispensable efforts of families are then extended by catechesis in ecclesial institutions, especially through the liturgy with the Sacraments and the homily, or by giving space to parish missions, popular piety, movements and ecclesial communities."

### Researcher's advice to pastors: Spend more time on church suppers



Harvard public policy professor Robert D. Putnam has a tongue-in-cheek suggestion for pastors: "Spend less time on the sermons, and more time arranging the church suppers." That's because research by Putnam and Chaeyoon Lim, assistant professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, shows that the more church friends a person has, the happier he or she is. "Church friends are super-charged friends, but we have no idea why," Putnam told a Feb. 16 summit on religion, well-being and health at Gallup world headquarters in Washington. "We have some hypotheses, but we don't know for sure."



The researchers found that nonchurch friends do not provide the same benefit in terms of well-being and that other measures of religiosity -- belief in God or frequency of prayer, for example -- do not serve as a reliable predictor of a person's satisfaction with life. "People who frequently attend religious services are more satisfied with their lives not because they have more friends overall (when compared with individuals who do not attend services) but because they have more friends in their congregations," the two researchers wrote in the *American Sociological Review*. And churchgoing alone without making friends does not improve well-being, they found. "In short, sitting alone in the pew does not enhance one's life satisfaction," Putnam and Lim wrote. "Only when one forms social networks in a congregation does religious service attendance lead to a higher level of life satisfaction."

At the summit, Gallup unveiled its latest studies on how religion affects well-being, both in the United States and worldwide. You can download the presentation deck used by Robert Putnam, Ph.D. and Chaeyoon Lim, Ph.D., during the Gallup Summit on Religion, Wellbeing, and Health at <http://www.gallup.com/consulting/152876/robert-putnam-chaeyoon-lim-presentation.aspx>.



## Application Date for National Certification is Extended to May, 2012

All information regarding national certification for parish catechetical leaders can be found at the Alliance website (<http://www.lemcertification.org/>). You can find answers to



- What
- Why
- Who
- How

You can also download the following documents:

- National Standards and Specialized Standards
- Indicators
- Process for Certification

Initial Applications and Completed Portfolios are ordinarily accepted before the March 1 and October 1 deadlines each year. **In our inaugural year, the first deadline has been extended to May 1, 2012.**

## Cardinal Dolan Updates Bishops on HHS Mandate Controversy



Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York voiced dismay in the Administration's handling of the church as the White House and the church seek to work out religious freedom problems found in a mandate in the new health care reform bill. The mandate drew church ire when it required that all employers, including religious ones, pay for contraceptives – including abortifacients – and sterilization for employees despite church teaching against them. He also promised to provide educational materials to parishes and to pursue legislative and judicial efforts to restore respect for religious freedom in the nation.

The letter can be found at <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/upload/Dolan-to-all-bishops-HHS.pdf>.

Given church concerns about religious freedom, Cardinal Dolan wrote, “the President invited us to ‘work out the wrinkles.’ We have accepted that invitation. Unfortunately, this seems to be stalled: the White House Press Secretary, for instance, informed the nation that the mandates are a fait accompli (and, embarrassingly for him, commented that we bishops have always opposed Health Care anyway, a charge that is scurrilous and insulting, not to mention flat out wrong.”)

Cardinal Dolan also said that “The White House already notified Congress that the dreaded mandates are now published in the Federal Registry ‘without change.’ He added that “The Secretary of HHS is widely quoted as saying, ‘Religious insurance companies don’t really design the plans they sell based on their own religious tenets.’ That doesn’t bode well for their getting a truly acceptable ‘accommodation.’”

Cardinal Dolan also described a recent meeting at the White House between bishops' conference staff and White House staff, and said "our staff members asked directly whether the broader concerns of religious freedom—that is, revisiting the straight-jacketing mandates, or broadening the maligned exemption—are all off the table. They were informed that they are. So much for 'working out the wrinkles.' "The White House seems to think we bishops simply do not know or understand Catholic teaching and so, taking a cue from its own definition of religious freedom, now has nominated its own handpicked official Catholic teachers."

Cardinal Dolan warned the bishops that "given this climate, we have to prepare for tough times. ... some want us to close everything down rather than comply (in an excellent article, Cardinal Francis George wrote that the administration apparently wants us to 'give up for Lent' our schools, hospitals, and charitable ministries); some, like Bishop Robert Lynch wisely noted, wonder whether we might have to engage in civil disobedience and risk steep fines; some worry that we'll have to face a decision between two ethically repugnant choices: subsidizing immoral services or no longer offering insurance coverage, a road none of us wants to travel."

Cardinal Dolan added that "we know so very well that religious freedom is our heritage, our legacy and our firm belief, both as loyal Catholics and Americans. There have been many threats to religious freedom over the decades and years, but these often came from without. This one sadly comes from within. As our ancestors did with previous threats, we will tirelessly defend the timeless and enduring truth of religious freedom."

### **Work To Reduce Nuclear Arms, Maintain Middle East Stability**



The U.S. bishops urged U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to work to reduce nuclear arms and maintain security in the Middle East in a March 2 letter about Iran from Bishop Richard E. Pates of Des Moines. Bishop Pates chairs the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the United States Conference of Catholic bishops (USCCB).

The full letter is attached at [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/global-issues/middle-east/iran/upload/Letter-to-Secretary-Clinton-on-Iran-2012-03-02.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/global-issues/middle-east/iran/upload/Letter-to-Secretary-Clinton-on-Iran-2012-03-02.pdf).

Bishop Pates acknowledged "the difficult situation involving our nation, the international community and Iran" including Iran's refusal to acknowledge its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty to open its facilities for inspection. "Their refusal exacerbates suspicions that Iran is developing its nuclear capability to produce weapons rather than energy," he said. Bishop Pates noted that the Conference of Bishops has always expressed "strong objection to Iran's acquiring nuclear weapons."

He voiced concern over what he called "an alarming escalation in rhetoric and tensions," including Iran's threat to close the Strait of Hormuz to commercial traffic and speculation on the

possible use of force against Iran, including an Israeli pre-emptive strike on Iranian nuclear facilities. “The Bishops’ Conference urges the U.S. Government to continue to explore all available options to resolve the conflict with Iran through diplomatic, rather than military, means,” Bishop Pates said.

“Before military options are considered, all alternatives, including effective and targeted sanctions and incentives for Iran to engage in diplomacy and cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), need to be exhausted,” he added. “In Catholic teaching, the use of force must always be a last resort. Iran’s bellicose statements, its failure to be transparent about its nuclear program and its possible acquisition of nuclear weapons are serious matters, but in themselves they do not justify military action,” Bishop Pates said.

### **The Catholic Relief Services Collection Helps ‘Jesus In Disguise’**



The Catholic Relief Services Collection prioritizes families, values their fundamental role in society and strives to protect them. The national date for this collection, which touches over 100 million lives through the six worldwide agencies it supports, is set for the weekend of March 17-18.

“The Catholic Relief Services Collection keeps Jesus’s message of caring for the least of these in the forefront through the good works done for Catholics worldwide. Even though times are hard, I encourage Catholics throughout the United States to continue to donate and support this important collection,” said

Bishop Kevin J. Farrell of Dallas, chairman of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Committee on National Collections.

The theme of the Catholic Relief Services Collection is “*Jesus in Disguise: How will you help?*” This year the focus continues to be on the family. The collection helps families by providing basic humanitarian aid and life-skills training to those in need, protecting poor families all over the world, advocating for policies that strengthen families abroad, and resettling and welcoming refugees forced from their homes. Additional information on The Catholic Relief Services Collection can be found at [www.usccb.org/about/national-collections](http://www.usccb.org/about/national-collections).

### **Keeping Kids Catholic**

In the February 27 issue of *America* magazine, Elizabeth Kirkland Cahill, the mother of four children from 11 to 19, “identifies four practices we have engaged in to proclaim the Gospel within our own little domestic church.” I believe her thoughts are worth sharing with other parents.

**Constancy.** Meal after meal, we begin with grace. Night after night, we sit on the side of the bed and say prayers (until the inevitable moment, usually somewhere around the dawn of the teenage years, when we are gently told: “Mom, Dad, I think I’ll say prayers

by myself"). Perhaps most important, Sunday after Sunday we go to Mass. It is not optional; we go always and everywhere, whether the roads are icy or it is 99 degrees outside or people are tired.

***Involvement.*** This entails deepening the commitment and investing time and energy. In our current parish, I have given a series of talks on Scripture and with my husband have lent support to both the music program and various building projects. In our last parish, I was both a Eucharistic minister and a lector. I established a Christmas pageant and founded a Bible study group, both of which are going strong nearly 15 years on. Perhaps most important, for several years (until we moved away) I took Communion each Sunday to a group of older Catholics in a nearby assisted-living facility. My children almost always accompanied me. They prayed with us, stood by quietly while I distributed Communion, then handed out bulletins and chatted with the small, predominantly female congregation. We visited the rooms of those who could not make it downstairs for the group Communion service. ...They saw tired, old eyes light up when they entered the room on a Sunday morning. And they witnessed the profound gratitude of these older Catholics both for the human connection with us and for the gift of Christ in Communion.

***Intellectual engagement.*** Although embarrassing to admit..., I was once something of an intellectual-religious snob.... Since that time, and throughout my continuing spiritual journey, I have been irresistibly drawn toward engagement with ecclesiological, theological and spiritual questions. My kids watched me pursue deeper understanding of these during the four years I recently spent earning a master's degree at the Yale Divinity School. They know that I think hard about issues of church and faith. They expect that I will query them over Sunday lunch about the Gospel reading or mention a prayer that especially struck me. And while they may roll their eyes when I launch another screed about the role of the laity, I hope they are getting the subliminal message that such questions matter.

***Honesty.*** As a corollary to intellectual engagement, ...I have been known to explain, expand upon or take issue with statements made in a homily. Although I try to offer a balanced view, I will also be forthright about how important I think it is for priests and bishops, as well as the rest of us, to follow the Gospel. I love the Catholic faith. When I was confirmed as a Catholic, I felt I was joining in on a great starry conversation that started in the early church and has been carried on by the likes of Augustine, Teresa of ávila and Thomas Merton....



## **LATEST– Most-Up-To-Date Information on *Embrace Grace***



If you want to be sure you have the most current information on the happenings at the NCCL 76<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference and Exposition, please go to <http://www.nccl.us/home.html>. You can access everything from the daily schedules to presentation overviews as well as topics and presenters for more than fifty (50) Learning Sessions, how to register, secure lodging and book your transportation from the airport. This site is updated on a regular basis.

## **White Papers: *The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith***

This is the third year that NCCL invites members to consider developing a white paper around a topic of interest. White papers are an opportunity for writers and thinkers to put their thoughts and ideas into a scholarly work that is used to educate members, to help people understand an aspect of how theory might be translated into practical ideas or even how to make decisions regarding changes they may wish to undertake or even solve a problem or shed light on a dilemma. This year's topic is based on the Catechetical Sunday theme or 2012: Catechists and teachers as Agents of the New Evangelization. Michael Andrews, Director of the Office of Catechesis for the Catholic Diocese of Lansing is serving as chair. All submissions and any questions can be directed to him at [MAndrews@dioceseoflansing.org](mailto:MAndrews@dioceseoflansing.org). Further information on this year's topic and the requirements can be found below.

### **Call for White Papers on the New Evangelization**

As we eagerly anticipate the 2012 Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization, we are happy to announce the focus of our call for White Papers to be submitted by NCCL members between now and March 15. Submissions will be reviewed for possible posting on the Conference Website for members to read. Workshop sessions will be provided at the NCCL Annual Conference May 7-10, 2012 in San Diego, California to reflect upon and unpack the insights gleaned from these papers.

### **Theme and Options**

The topic for this year's White Paper is: "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith."

You are invited to submit your own White Paper in this year's theme. In your paper, you may write a theological paper addressing the Church's teaching on the New Evangelization. Alternatively, you may focus on one or more aspects of the New Evangelization for one or more settings, including age or ethnic groups, and employing diverse approaches and catechetical formats.

### **White Paper Requirements**

However you choose to develop your paper, please be sure that it reflects the theme "'The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith'" and that it is clearly written. Theological positions should be supported by ample references to one or more of the following sources: Sacred Scripture, the Catechism of the Catholic Church,

the National Directory for Catechesis, liturgical documents and texts, papal teaching, patristic writers, and the saints.

All white papers will be reviewed for possible posting. The top submissions will be announced in late March and winning authors will be invited to summarize their work at the 2012 NCCL Annual Conference in San Diego.

**The deadline for submitting White Papers is March 15, 2012.**

### **Young Professional Catechetical Ministers Scholarships & Young Adult Initiative - March 5 Deadline is TODAY, Monday, March 5**

**Young Professional Catechetical Ministers Scholarship** seeks to bolster young people engaged in catechetical ministry to become more involved with the mission of catechesis. If you are a full time paid professional minister who has 5 years or less experience and is 30 years of age or younger, you are eligible to receive a reduced registration fee of \$75. You will need to be nominated by your immediate supervisor/pastor, recommended by your diocesan catechetical office, not have received this award or the YAI scholarship for a previous NCCL conference and be able to cover the additional expenses not included in this award.

**Young Adult Initiative** seeks to encourage young people to consider this ministry. To be eligible for free registration, candidates must:

- be under 40 years of age
- have some ecclesial ministry experience
- never have been a professional parish or diocesan catechetical leader
- be able to cover the additional expenses not included in this award (perhaps they can secure money from their diocese or if they are in school, from their school)
- be nominated by their diocesan catechetical director
- not have received this award for a previous NCCL conference.

For more information go to the NCCL homepage [www.NCCL.org](http://www.NCCL.org). Nomination forms should be e-mailed to Michelle Tomshack ([mtomshack@dwc.org](mailto:mtomshack@dwc.org)) and Mark Buckley ([mbuckley@stbedechurch.com](mailto:mbuckley@stbedechurch.com)), NCCL Membership Committee co-chairs. **Deadline for submission: March 5, 2012.** NCCL's Membership Committee will determine the awardees and notify them via e-mail by March 16, 2012.

### **Carl and Janaan Scholarship – March 16 Deadline**

Janaan Manternach established this scholarship fund in memory of her husband, Carl J. Pfeifer and the collaborative work and faith they shared, as evidenced by the words engraved on their wedding rings, "Life, Love, Joy." Any NCCL member whose spouse is also involved in church ministry is eligible to apply for this scholarship. This is a scholarship that is based both on the couple's catechetical ministry and their collaborative commitment to serve the church. The scholarship provides free registration for one NCCL member and spouse to attend the NCCL national conference and meeting. Applicants are requested to share how they creatively help

their catechists address the six tasks of catechesis and what working together has done for them and their faith life. The application is available on the NCCL Home Page ([www.NCCL.org](http://www.NCCL.org))

### **“Like” Us (NCCL) on Facebook**



Here's a few words from Marinell High, Director of Religious Education at St. Joseph Parish in Dexter, MI. Her goal is to double the number of NCCL members who “Like” us on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/NCCLonline?emulatemode=2) (<http://www.facebook.com/NCCLonline?emulatemode=2>). If you want to respond to her personally, you can contact her at [marinell\\_high@stjos.com](mailto:marinell_high@stjos.com).

I am an avid Facebook user. It is a very easy and efficient way for me to keep up with the lives of my children and grandchildren. I check Facebook each morning and each evening (and sometimes in between) just to see if I can get a look at one of the cute ones in my life:). Facebook was also the communication tool that I used to stay in touch with a dear friend whose husband was dying. Somehow it seems easier than email in these instances. For all of these reasons it is not hard for me to check out the NCCL Facebook page. As a member I clicked "like" sometime ago and now each post on Facebook comes to my personal page. Because I am not in the middle of office or program busyness when I am on Facebook I am more likely to take the time to read an article or take advantage of a podcast.

### **NCCL invites you to submit your best practices to its YouTube Channel**



In the spirit of our national conference roundtables, we invite membership to submit its best practices in evangelization and catechesis. Please submit your entries to Bryan Reising ([breising@dnv.org](mailto:breising@dnv.org)) and Juliann Donlon-Stanz ([Jdonlon@gbdioc.org](mailto:Jdonlon@gbdioc.org)) for review and they may be a part of the NCCL YouTube Channel. Practitioners in parishes, Diocesan level personnel, scholars, publishers, and other resource people can submit their videos. Thank you for sharing your gifts!

### **We Are Catholic**

Joseph K. of <http://defend-us-in-battle.blogspot.com> writes that

“The Catholic Church is my home, and it is a beautiful place of absolute truth. Unfortunately the world has tried to define it in ways that are far from the truth. I was inspired to make this video in an effort to reach out to some truth seeking teens who are trying to answer the question of what it means to be Catholic. I don't expect this to appeal to all, but hopefully it will grab some of you and help you realize what being Catholic is... "all about."



It's about four minutes and you can watch it at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wk4OCzre\\_IY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wk4OCzre_IY).

The song was written by Matt Nathanson and this song appears on [Some Mad Hope](#). The lyrics can be found below (since I could never understand them, except for the WE ARE)

I tasted, tasted love so sweet  
And all of it was lost on me  
Bought and sold like property  
Sugar on my tongue

I kept falling over  
I kept looking backward  
I went broke believing  
That the simple should be hard

All we are we are  
All we are we are  
And every day is a start of something beautiful

I wasted, wasted love for you  
Trading out for something new  
Well, it's hard to change the way you lose  
If you think you've never won

'Cause all we are we are  
All we are we are  
And every day is a start of something beautiful

And in the end the words won't matter  
'Cause in the end nothing stays the same  
And in the end dreams just scatter and fall like rain

'Cause all we are we are  
All we are we are  
And every day is a start of something beautiful, something real

All we are we are  
All we are we are  
And every day is a start of something beautiful, beautiful

## Designing For Generosity

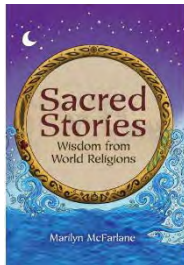


What would the world look like if we designed for generosity? Instead of assuming that people want to simply maximize self-interest, what if our institutions and organizations catered to our deeper motivations? This compelling TED talk (eighteen [18] minutes) explores this question and introduces the concept of Giftivism: the practice of radically generous acts that change the world. The video is charged with stories of such acts, ranging from: the largest peaceful transfer of land in human history, to a pay-it-forward restaurant, to a 10-year-old's unconventional birthday celebration, and the stunning interaction between a victim and his teenage mugger. With clarity and insight, it details the common threads that runs through all these gift manifestations, and invites us to participate through everyday acts of kindness -- in an uplifting global movement. It's an idea that supports our

belief that we are all part of God's family. You can watch it at

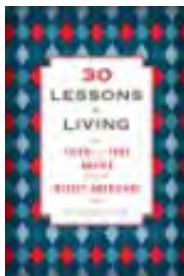
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kpyc84kamhw>.

## Sacred Stories: Wisdom from World Religions



I think this is a great book if you are teaching world religions. The book features stories from Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Native American, and Sacred Earth. Each of the stories is accompanied by sidebar facts and spot illustrations that show the key tenets of a particular belief system, while the comprehensive glossary and resource list enable you to expand your explorations. If interested, you can order [Sacred Stories: Wisdom from World Religions](#).

## 30 Lessons for Living: Tried and True Advice from the Wisest Americans



I like this book and if you are over 50, I believe you will enjoy being reminded of these important lessons. The author Pillemer is a Cornell gerontologist and has the access and opportunity to talk to and study a wide variety of people who can thoughtfully reflect on their life. The author pulls it all together in a book that is broken down into several major themes having to do with such things as marriage, parenting, careers, health, and most generally how to achieve happiness. In each theme he shares the most recurrent comments into five pieces of advice. Each chapter also ends with a "refrigerator list" of thematically organized advice.

I wasn't sure how younger readers would react and then I read this review from someone in their thirties.

“As a liberal artist in my mid-thirties, I have to admit that while I was curious to see what the experts had to say, I was initially skeptical of how relevant I might find their



advice to my own life. I suspected it might be outdated, preachy, too conservative for my taste, or too generic. On the contrary, I found the experts' words - as well as Pillemer's insightful synthesis - profound and often very moving."

If interested, you can order [30 Lessons for Living: Tried and True Advice from the Wisest Americans](#).

### **eCatechist Monthly Newsletter Now Available for FREE**



Dan Pierson, who compiles the *Notable Resources* for our bi-monthly magazine, *Catechetical Leader*, is introducing the eCatechist Newsletter. Here is the invitation with a link to subscribe if you so desire.

## **eCatechist Newsletter for March 2012**

eCatechist.com offers ideas, inspiration and resources for catechists, catechetical leaders and parents. [www.eCatechist.com](http://www.eCatechist.com)

### **Highlights of the eCatechist [Newsletter for March 2012](#)**

["Keeping the Sabbath: Remembering Your Name"](#) by Maria McGuire

[Why Stay Catholic?](#) by Michael Leach - Book Review

[A Media Feast for Lent](#) by Tricia Tranel and Kim Feldman

[Creative Arts: Doorway to Exploring the Life of Faith](#) by Christine Valters Painter (Advice to Catechists)

[Catechists Read 2012 Catalog](#) in PDF

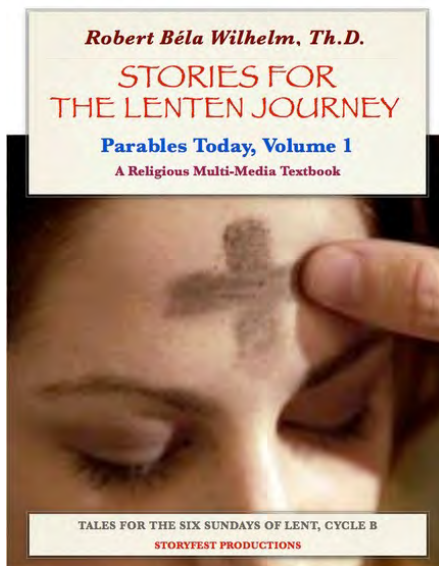
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Dan Pierson, founder  
[www.eCatechist.com](http://www.eCatechist.com)

### **A FREE Offer from Dr. Robert Bela Wilhelm of Storyfest Ministry**



Dear Colleague in Ministry,

Lent is about gratitude and generosity. Rather than focusing on what I am going to "give up" this Lent, I am focusing on what I am "giving away." And what I would like to give away is my "Stories for the Lenten Journey", a new iBook that is available free all through the Lenten season for Catholics engaged in teaching, preaching, and other ministries of the Word.

These stories and Scriptural commentaries are for each of the Sundays in Lent this year.

"Stories for the Lenten Journey" can be downloaded free from iTunes and read on any iPad, iPod, or iPhone. Simply go to iTunes and enter my name in the search window -- "Robert Bela Wilhelm". All my books and CDs are listed. **Choose the one that is free during this Lenten Season -- the iBook (not the CD) "Stories for the Lenten Journey."**

Click for the free download and have the six stories and Scriptural reflections for your journey through Lent this year. And please share this information with everyone you serve. It is absolutely free for anyone with an iPad, an iPhone, an iPod.

If you do not have an iPod, iPhone, or iPad, ask a friend or colleague who does have one to download it for you.

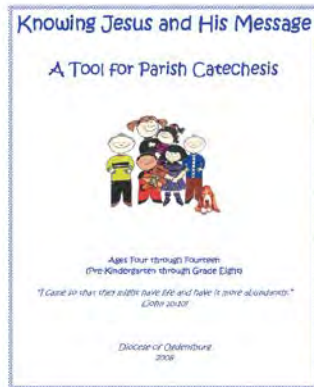
This is my gift to you this Lent. The practice of gratitude and generosity is my Lenten discipline.



Accept this gift and help me in my Lenten discipline.

Dr. Robert Bela Wilhelm

## **Knowing Jesus and His Message – Conociendo a Jesús y su Mensaje**



This is an excellent resource. Immediately following the Learning Session on this resources at the NCCL Conference and Exposition in Atlanta, the NCCL Bookstore sold over twenty (20) copies of the book in English and Spanish.



Based on the protocol used to evaluate elementary religion series, the book used fifteen standards for Pre-K and K through Grades 7 & 8. Included with the binder is a CD with all the materials available for duplication. This is an ideal help for any elementary catechist regardless of the series you might be using. Check out the following and use the Order Form.

- **PREFACE - Knowing Jesus and His Message** (<http://tiny.cc/nysql>)
- **EXPLANATION - Knowing Jesus and His Message** (<http://tiny.cc/xuvw8>)
- **Standards - Explained** (<http://tiny.cc/65wmc>)
- **Normas y Fundamentos** (<http://tiny.cc/zfrg2>)
- **ORDER FORM - Knowing Jesus and His Message** (<http://tiny.cc/9j0mb>)

## **The “U” in Jesus**

This came across my email this week and I thought it was worth contemplating in this Lenten season, especially with the increased emphasis on evangelization.



THE U IN

JESUS



Before

U were thought of or time  
had begun,  
God

stuck U in the name of His  
Son..



And

each time U pray, you'll see  
it's true,  
You

can't spell out JesUs and not  
include U.

You're a pretty big part of  
His wonderful

name,  
For U, He was born; that's  
why He




came.



And




His great love for U is the  
reason He died.

It even takes U to spell  
crUcified..

    
Isn't




it thrilling and splendidly  
grand  
He rose

from the dead, with U in His  
plan?

    
The

stones split away, the gold  
trUmpet blew,

And this word resUrrection is  
spelled with a

U.  
    
When

JesUs left earth at His  
Upward ascension,  
He

felt there was one thing He  
just had to mention.





"Go

into the world and tell them  
it's true  
That

I love them all - Just like I  
love U."



So

many great people are  
spelled with a U,

Don't they have a right to  
know JesUs too?



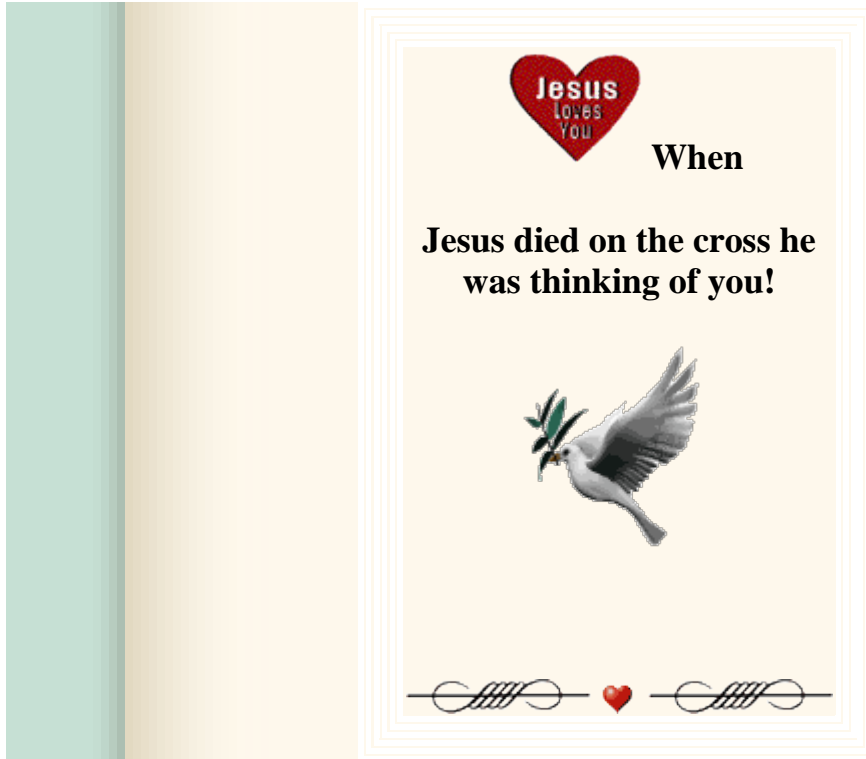
It

all depends now on what U  
will do,  
He'd like

them to know,  
But it all starts with U.

Will

U pass it on.



### **Looking For A Good Book?**

Stop by the [NCCL Bookstore](http://www.nccl.org). Purchasing books, CDs, DVDs, and other products on *Amazon* through the [NCCL Bookstore](http://astore.amazon.com/natioconfefor-20) (<http://astore.amazon.com/natioconfefor-20>) helps support this valuable online ministry.

**If you are an on-line shopper and you frequent Amazon.com, please enter through the NCCL Amazon Bookstore as the organization benefits from every purchase you make. It's an ideal way to support our ministry. Just go to our Home page ([www.NCCL.org](http://www.nccl.org)) and click on the *Store* tab or click on <http://astore.amazon.com/natioconfefor-20> and it will take you directly to our bookstore. It doesn't matter what you buy, as long as you enter through the NCCL Amazon Bookstore, we get a percentage of your purchases.**

We are just building our bookstore and adding titles every day, so if you have any suggestions for books you believe should be available through our bookstore, please drop NCCL a note. All books mentioned in *CL Weekly* are available at the NCCL Bookstore.