

Dear Catechetical Leaders,

As we enter into Holy Week, I hope you and those you serve are richly experiencing the blessings of God's grace during this wonderful liturgical season. Spring also brings to mind summer offerings such as Vacation Bible School and CYO Camps.

Enclosed with this newsletter are sample letters you can send to parents and to promote the multiple gifts of CYO camps. This year, the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry is hoping that each parish will send three new campers to one of their summer sessions. The Archdiocese is blessed to have these camps available for our young people. I know that my children found Catholic camps to be both a great deal of fun and a time to deepen their faith. There are scholarships available to help students attend camp and I encourage you to connect with Megan Raymond at www.camping.seattleoym.org to get more information.

Also, for those of you looking to come up with creative and economic ways for Vacation Bible School, Jo David has just the program for you! For those of you who have had the pleasure of working with Jo, you know that she is filled with great ideas that captivate young people with the blessings of being Catholic.

Are you interested in a free webinar? Check out the Joe Paprocki's new book and workshop, *Seven Keys to Spiritual Wellness* and the two new webinars from the Paulist Evangelization Ministries. All three opportunities look excellent!

The *Hunger Games* set records last week at the box office. How does a popular movie resonate with our Catholic heritage? Please check out the wonderful video clip from Fr. Robert Barron that contains his commentary on the movie. I am sure you will find it enlightening and a good item to use with your older students and young adults and parents!

This week's newsletter also has information about a recently approved blessing for "The Blessing of a Child in the Womb" and Pope Benedict XVI's comments on evangelization during his visit to Cuba. In addition there are several video clips recommended by the National Conference of Catechetical Leadership that you and your students might enjoy. Please take a few moments to check them out!

In Christ,

Anne

Sample letter to parents:

Dear (fill in the blank),

Before you know it summer 2012 will be upon us. As a parent you are inundated with a flood of summer program opportunities for your child. From swim lessons to club sports to family trips our children's summer schedules often become busier than the school year. You may also be searching for affordable child care opportunities for when you are away at work. This is why I want to take this opportunity to let you know of a summer option for your child that will break through the noise of their busy schedule.

You work hard as a parent trying to shape the personal development of your child. You want to equip them with the ability to make good decisions, be a problem solver, serve the community and much more. Your child's faith development is essential for them to develop as adults of strong character. This summer invest in your child's personal relationship with Jesus Christ and their connection to the Catholic faith. At summer camp, kids are excited about their faith because it is delivered in a fun, positive manner. The values you teach at home are reinforced through daily prayer, bible study and community living. Positive caring role models enable kids to see how their faith can be incorporated in to their own daily life. CYO camping also works hard to teach the campers that this feeling of the Holy Spirit alive in them does not have to end at the end of camp, but can be received through involvement in their parish.

Now you might be saying I really can't afford the cost of a week of residential camp or day camp. Camp is tax deductible as child care, making it equivalent to sending your child to a secular program plus CYO Camping is blessed with a large anonymous scholarship fund that can help you send your child to camp regardless of your personal financial situation. Our parish is encouraging families to attend ____session with other youth from our deanery (please note you can sign up for other weeks if this one does not work for your family). [Include bus information here if applicable] So take a few moments to visit the camp website www.camping.seattleooyam.org and please feel free to ask me any questions or to contact CYO camps directly. I hope you have a great day and I look forward to the impact we can make on your child's life.

Sincerely,

(Whoever in the parish makes the most sense to send this from)

Sample pulpit announcement:

Today I would like to personally invite you to consider sending your child to the Catholic Youth Organization summer camps this summer. Young people today need powerful experiences of Catholic faith to ignite their hearts with the love of Jesus and the Catholic Church. Summer camp provides this opportunity as well as fun camp things like eating s'mores, swimming in the pool, and exploring the woods. Lessons in problem solving, team work and the Catholic faith are taught through fun hands on games and high adventure activities. Please read your bulletin for more information.



A Webinar by Joe Paprocki, DMin
Brought to you by Loyola Press

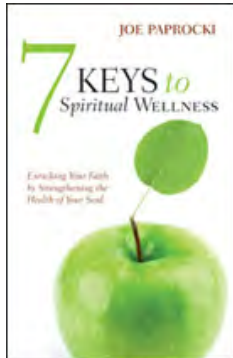
Tuesday, April 24, 2012
7 to 8:00 p.m. (CDT)

Loyola Press is offering a free webinar, hosted by Joe Paprocki, DMin. The “*7 Keys to Spiritual Wellness*” webinar, featuring principles from Paprocki’s new book, will explore 7 ways in which we can be renewed by the grace of the risen Christ. Paprocki’s keys to spiritual renewal include the following:

- Seeing Yourself as You Really Are
- Actively Seeking the Good of Others
- Thinking Before Acting
- Holding on Loosely
- Recognizing and Setting Limits
- Channeling, Not Repressing, Your Desires
- Unleashing Your Imagination

As we anticipate the celebration of Pentecost, this webinar will be an opportunity to truly renew our baptism and open ourselves up to the Holy Spirit who guides us in all we do. If you are a catechist, catechetical leader, pastoral minister, or someone simply looking for spiritual renewal, don’t miss this great opportunity to become more spiritually alive in the risen Christ.

[Click here to sign up for this free webinar](#)



SAVE UP TO 40%

7 Keys to Spiritual Wellness

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Special offer expires 5/15/12. Shipping and handling are extra.

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Word on Fire Video Commentary

For those of you working with older students or adults, I highly recommend you watch Fr. Robert Barron's 10 minute commentary on the *Hunger Games* movie. His interpretation of the movie provides some very thoughtful insights for discussion.

[http://www.wordonfire.org/trackback/bb01d2ab-0d7b-49bd-91f2-c8ee579d8b60/Fr--Barron-comments-on--The-Hunger-Games--\(SPOILERS\).aspx](http://www.wordonfire.org/trackback/bb01d2ab-0d7b-49bd-91f2-c8ee579d8b60/Fr--Barron-comments-on--The-Hunger-Games--(SPOILERS).aspx)

Vatican Approves English and Spanish Texts for 'Blessing of a Child in the Womb'

Vatican has approved the publication of the "Rite for the Blessing of a Child in the Womb," which will be printed in English and Spanish in a combined booklet and should be available for parishes by Mothers' Day. The U.S. bishops who collaborated on the development of the blessing welcomed the announcement of the *recognitio*, or approval, by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in Rome.

"I'm impressed with the beauty of this blessing for human life in the womb," said Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, chairman of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). "I can think of no better day to announce this news than on the feast of the Annunciation, when we remember Mary's 'yes' to God and the incarnation of that child in her the womb that saved the world."



"We wanted to make this announcement as soon as possible so that parishes might begin to look at how this blessing might be woven into the fabric of parish life," said Archbishop Gregory Aymond of New Orleans, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship. "Eventually the new blessing will be included in the *Book of Blessings* when that text is revised." The blessing was prepared to support parents awaiting the birth of their child, to encourage parish prayers for and recognition of the precious gift of the child in the womb, and to foster respect

for human life within society. It can be offered within the context of the Mass as well as outside of Mass.

The blessing originated when then-Bishop Joseph Kurtz of Knoxville, Tennessee (now archbishop of Louisville, Kentucky) asked the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities to see if a blessing existed for a child in the womb. When none was found, the committee prepared a text and submitted it to the USCCB's Divine Worship committee in March of 2008. It was approved by the full body of bishops in November 2008, and then sent to Rome for editing and final approval.

Latinos by Geography



Here is the latest report from the Pew Hispanic Center. You may wish to consider its findings and the impact it may have across the nation when it comes to catechesis. Thanks to Adrián Herrera who brought this to my attention. Here is the link: <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2012/03/16/latinos-by-geography/>.

New Evangelization and the Year of Faith



Pope Benedict XVI gave a press conference on the flight from Rome to Mexico. The last question concerned the new evangelization and the year of faith. Here is the question and the answer provided by the Pontiff.

Question 5: ...in a few months the Synod on the New Evangelization will take place and the Year of Faith will begin. In Latin America there is also the challenge of secularization, of sects. In Cuba there are the consequences of a long propaganda of atheism; Afro-Cuban religiosity is very widespread. Do you think that this trip is an encouragement for the "New Evangelization" and what are the points that are closest to your heart in this perspective?

Holy Father: The period of the New Evangelization began with the Council. This was essentially the intention of Pope John XXIII. It was greatly stressed by Pope John Paul II and its necessity, in a world that is in great change, becomes ever more evident. Necessity in the sense that the Gospel must be expressed in new ways; necessity also in the other sense, that the world is in need of a word in the confusion, in the difficulty of orienting oneself today. It is a common situation of the world, there is secularization, the absence of God, the difficulty in finding access to him, of seeing him as a reality that concerns my life. And on the other hand, there are specific contexts; you have referred to those of Cuba with Afro-Cuban syncretism, with so many other difficulties, but every country has its specific cultural situation. And, on one hand, we must begin from the common problem: as today, in this context of our modern rationality, we can rediscover God again as the fundamental orientation of our life, the fundamental hope of our life, the foundation of values that really build a society, and to proclaim a God who responds to our reason, because we see the rationality of the cosmos, we see that that there is something behind, but we do not see how close this God is, how he concerns me and this synthesis of the great and majestic God of the small God who is close to me, orients me, shows me the values of my life which is the nucleus of the evangelization. Hence an essential Christianity, where the fundamental nucleus is really found to live today with all the problems of our time. And on the other hand, to take into account the concrete reality. In Latin America, in general, it is very important that Christianity is never so much

something of reason but of the heart. Our Lady of Guadalupe is known and loved by all, because they understand that she is a Mother for all and has been present from the beginning in this new Latin America, after the arrival of the Europeans. And also in Cuba we have Our Lady of Cobre, who touches hearts and all know intuitively that it is true, that this Our Lady helps us, that she exists, that she loves and helps us. But this intuition of the heart must be linked with the rationality of the faith and with the profundity of the faith that goes beyond reason. We must try not to lose the heart, but to link heart and reason, so that they cooperate, because only thus will man be complete and really be able to help and to work for a better future.

Catholic Home Missions Appeal: *Strengthening the Church at Home*



The Catholic Home Missions Appeal, which will be taken up in many U.S. parishes the weekend of April 28-April 29, supports home mission dioceses, which are dioceses in the United States and its dependencies that need outside help to offer basic pastoral services. The Appeal, sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), strengthens the church at home by bridging the gap between need and available resources in those dioceses.

"There is a serious need for priestly formation in mission dioceses throughout the United States in order to build vibrant parish communities," said Bishop Michael W. Warfel of Great Falls-Billings, Montana, and chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions. "Often home mission priests require special training to attend to the unique needs of their faith communities. The support of Catholics throughout the United States is necessary for the success of these and other projects."

A unique need in the Biloxi community, where Catholics make up one-quarter of the hearing impaired individuals in the region, is training sign language practitioners. Without the appeal, the desperate need for sign language practitioners cannot be met. "The grants we receive from the Catholic Home Missions Appeal help us ensure that the future of these parishes are in the hands of adequately prepared priests who can meet the needs of the residents here. While we have faced many challenges in recent years, this Appeal restores our hope that the future will be brighter and our parishioners will continue to be served," said Bishop Roger P. Morin of Biloxi.

The Subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions oversees the Catholic Home Missions Appeal as part of the USCCB Committee on National Collections. This year the Subcommittee is providing \$8.3 million in funding to 84 home mission diocese in the United States. The Catholic Home Missions Appeal funds essential pastoral projects such as **catechesis**, cultural ministry and lay leadership training and helps keep mission parishes open. Visit www.usccb.org and search "home missions" for more information.

Two Upcoming FREE Webinars with Paulist Evangelization Ministries



PEM April Webinars



With An *Evangelizing Agenda for Parishes Today* on **Thursday, April 12, 2012, at 3:00 pm ET**, Fr. Frank DeSiano, CSP, reviews the directions that parishes can take today to respond more effectively to their mission imperative. After presenting some general observations about the issues that affect modern society, he unfolds concrete directions that parishes can employ to better fulfill their mission. Realistic, practical, directly applicable, this FREE webinar will help anyone involved in parish work. Register today.



Register Now

(<http://tinyurl.com/7uy7p7t>)

Fr. DeSiano, ordained in 1972, has spent half his priestly ministry in parish work, provided leadership in evangelization, written many books and articles, and is a nationally known speaker. Fr. Frank will be the opening keynote at the 76th annual NCCL conference and exposition in San Diego, May 6-10, 2012.

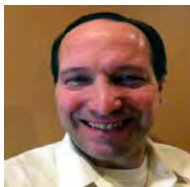
Catholic Speakers Online Thursday, April 19, 3:00 pm ET

Welcoming Returning & Disconnected Catholics, Thursday, April 19, 2012, at 3:00 pm ET. Deacon John Rex will provide practical tips for parish ministers to welcome returning and disconnected Catholics and to help them deepen their commitment and participation in the life of the Church. He answers these questions:

- When we invite Catholics to return or re-connect, how do we receive them?
- What do our parishes have in place to create a hospitable environment?"

Register Now

(<http://tinyurl.com/7rtnqj7>)



Deacon John Rex was ordained in 2005 and serves in the Archdiocese of Chicago at St. Damian Parish. He was raised in the Methodist faith and became Catholic in 1998. He serves as the world wide clergy representative for Catholics Returning Home and, since his ordination, his focus has been reaching out to inactive Catholics. He runs his own successful printing company and uses his sales and marketing skills for the faith.

Pope's April Intentions: Young People & African Men and Women

The Apostleship of Prayer announced that Pope Benedict XVI will be praying this month that the youth and young adults will open their hearts to the call of our Savior to serve their church in a religious vocation. His general intention is "that many young people may hear the call of Christ and follow him in the priesthood and religious life.." And the Pontiff's mission intention is "that the risen Christ may be a sign of certain hope for the men and women of the African continent.."



Holy Week and Mental Health

Fathers for Good features an article by family psychologist Dr. Peter Kleponis. He explains how remembering the death and resurrection of Jesus meets basic human psychological and spiritual needs. Check it out at



http://www.fathersforgood.org/ffg/en/big_four/holy_week_2012.html.

Holy and Unholy Fear

In his column last week, Fr. Ron Rolheiser addressed several questions that are often overlooked or simply explained by the words "awe and wonder". Here are those questions and a few excerpts from his column. If you are interested, you can read his entire column for March 25, 2012 on his website at www.ronrolheiser.com.



What is "holy fear"? What kind of fear is healthy? What kind of fear triggers wisdom?

Holy fear is love's fear, namely, the kind of fear that is inspired by love. It's a fear based upon reverence and respect for a person or a thing we love. When we genuinely love another person we will live inside of a healthy anxiety, a worry that our actions should never grossly disappoint, disrespect, or violate the other person. We live in holy fear when we are anxious not to betray a trust or disrespect someone. But this is very different from being afraid of somebody or being afraid of being punished.

...God entered our world as a helpless infant and God's power still takes that same modality. Babies don't intimidate, even as they inspire holy fear. We watch our words and our actions around babies not because they threaten us, but rather because their very helplessness and innocence inspire an anxiety in us that makes us want to be at our best around them.

...Virtually every theophany in scripture (an instance where God appears) begins with the words: "Do not be afraid!" What frightens us does not come from God.

To cite just one salient example: The Book of Kings recounts an incident where David is, one day, returning from battle with his soldiers. His troops are hungry. The only available food is the bread in the temple. David asks for that and is told that it is only to be consumed by the priests in sacred ritual. ... In the Gospels, Jesus praises this action by David and asks us to imitate it, telling us that we are not made for the Sabbath, but that the Sabbath is made for us.

David understood what's meant by that. He had discerned that God is not so much a law to be obeyed as a gracious presence under which we are asked to creatively live. He feared God, but as one fears someone in love, with a "holy fear", not a blind, legalistic one.

A young mother once shared this story with me: Her six year-old had just started school. She had taught him to kneel by his bed each night before going to sleep and recite a number of night prayers. One night, shortly after starting school, he hopped into bed without first kneeling in prayer.

Surprised by this, she challenged him with the words: "Don't you pray anymore?" His reply: "No, I don't. My teacher at school told us that we are not supposed to pray. She said that we're supposed to talk to God ... and tonight I'm tired and have nothing to say!"

Like King David, he too had discerned what it really means to be God's child and how God is not so much a law to be obeyed as a gracious presence who desires a mutually loving relationship, one of holy fear.

In My Seat: What's Your Life Objective?



This is a fifteen (15) minute video but if you don't have enough time just start watching at 11:00 minutes. It's a great reflection for Good Friday. *In My Seat* is about a pilot who was supposed to be on American Airlines Flight 11 the morning of 9/11. Flight 11 was the first Boeing 767 to fly into one of the buildings at the World Trade Center on 9/11. Someone else took his place and as he says "died for him." But there was another who died for him over 2000 years ago. It is also an ebook which you can order [*In My Seat: A Pilot's Story From Sept. 10th-11th*](#). Listen to his testimony at

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=cLj4akmnscA&feature=channel_video_title.



'Undefeated' Wins Oscar



I saw this film several weeks ago and I really liked it. It's a documentary and so it is missing the glitz of Remember the Titans, but it is so authentic. Movie critic David DiCerto explores the inspiring documentary about an inner-city football team whose coach teaches life lessons. You can both read his review or listen to his 60 second video review at

http://www.fathersforgood.org/ffg/en/movie_reviews/3_28_2012.html#reel-2-reviews. You can also click on the movie trailer if you are so inclined.

Leap of Faith



Need a little inspiration? Most athletes have the benefit of seeing what's ahead of them -- an opponent, the bars, a vault. But for 13-year-old Lola Walters, she usually has no idea what's coming until she's literally five feet away from it. Walters, a Washington resident, is legally blind, and suffers from a disease called nystagmus which causes her eyes to shift constantly, leaving her with double vision and no depth perception. She may fall more often than her peers but gets back on the bars with a grace and grit that has won her the admiration of her friends and teachers alike. This article and the accompanying video afford a glimpse of her fearless spirit. Check it out at <http://www.dailygood.org/view.php?sid=208>.

The Language of Love



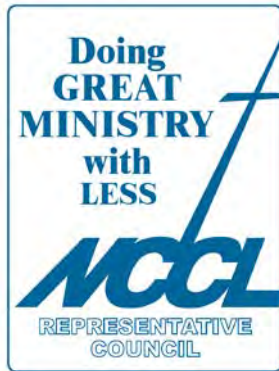
I found this film to be quite engaging and I must admit the ending was not what I expected. I wish I could have shared this in March because it would have been more appropriate but since I did find it in March; I will blame the delivery system on not getting it to you until April. I think you will like it.

You can watch this five (5) minute video at

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QyB_U9vn6Wk.

Love is a funny thing. As the saying goes, we often find love when we least expect, but it might be equally true that when we do find love it's different than we expected. This beautiful short film was created to raise awareness and money for a good cause, which it did. But it has gone so much further in showing us what love looks like, and how we can connect with each other when we have the courage to break down our own walls and become vulnerable.

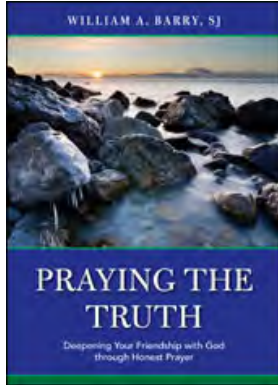
Doing GREAT MINISTRY With Less -Available for Sale – Fifth Chapter FREE



In November of 2010, 34 members of the NCCL Representative Council gathered for their annual fall meeting. Amidst all the other business, this group dedicated three different time segments to the development and creation of a book to be of service to diocesan and parish catechetical leaders.

Thursday, November 3, 2011, many of these same Rep Council members were handed the first copies of this book. Now you can share in the wisdom and thoughts of your catechetical partners. One chapter of this book will be available on the NCCL website under Resources each month for free until the entire book can be downloaded. If you want your own copy, they retail for \$12.95 but for this week, they are available to members for only **\$10.00 plus shipping and handling**. Autographed copies are available upon request Log on to the NCCL website (www.NCCL.org) to view the *Table of Contents*, *Preface*, and *Background* along with an order form. Be sure to look under **Resources** where this month the fifth chapter: *Collaboration: Positive Relations With Co-Workers* is free for download.

Praying the Truth: Deepening Your Friendship with God through Honest Prayer



I must confess that I like William Barry's writings. His blend of psychology and spirituality is a gift to us and to the Church. In this book he confronts the secrecy that can hinder the growth of a relationship and even questions whether one can really occur. It doesn't matter if these secrets occur in the family or in our relationship with God. It is never healthy. Some may be quick to suggest this book to others but I am reminded that we cannot take the sliver out of our neighbor's eye until we take the log out of our own. Lent isn't over, in fact Holy Week might be just the place to address the secrets that need to be brought out into the light. You can order [*Praying the Truth: Deepening Your Friendship with God through Honest Prayer*](#)

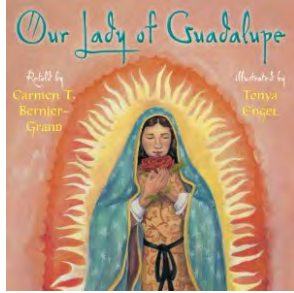
Most Loved in All the World



I believe this is a story that one could use to explain how a parent can give up her/his child. This story is a poem about a slave who is the mother of a young girl. It is the strong love of the mother, who not only creates a quilt that will guide her daughter on the Underground Railroad, but sacrifices a life of freedom with her daughter to help save others. This mama's love extends beyond her family to others. Is this not the story of love that we teach

when we speak of no greater love than to lay down one's life? Does this also not help us understand how God could give his son for the life of the world? Why not order [*Most Loved in All the World*](#).

[Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)



This is the latest book on the story of Juan Diego. It was just released on Sunday but I must say that the illustrations by Tonya Engel capture 16th-century Mexican country and city landscapes with stunning clarity. In addition to a story well told, the author, Carmen T. Bernier-Grand who grew up in Puerto Rico, includes a note about the origins of the legend and miracle.

You can order this new book [*Our Lady of Guadalupe*](#)

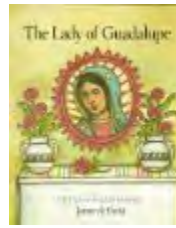
If interested, other options of this story include. Simply click on the book to order.



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Tomie dePaola



[Our Lady of Guadalupe for Children/N...](#)
Lupita Vital, Flo

[Quote of the Week from Give Us This Day for Easter Sunday](#)



from our public prayer by the burden of guilt. Sinner one may indeed be, but no one must despair of pardon on this day which is so highly privileged; for if a thief could receive the grace of paradise, how could a Christian be reused forgiveness?

And so, my friends, each of us ought surely to rejoice on this holy day. Let no one, conscious of his sinfulness, withdraw from our common celebration, nor let anyOne be kept away

-St. Maximus of Turin, Sermon 53