

Happy Third Week of Easter!

We have several opportunities coming up locally for continuing development over the next few months. For those of you interested in finding new ideas for Vacation Bible School, please see the great program hosted by Jo David from Madeline Sophie. Details for registration are attached below this letter.

I would again recommend you encourage your middle school and high school students to consider summer CYO camp. There are several new programs being offered that will be both exciting and fun filled! The availability for camp scholarships makes this an outstanding opportunity for our youth! You can also check the web page for updated camping information (www.camping.seattleooyam.org).

The Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center at the Palisades is hosting a wide range of spiritual formation programs over the next few months. Please review these offerings by clicking on <http://www.seattlearchdiocese.org/Retreats/Palisades/calendar.aspx>. In particular, I would encourage you to review the ***Living for Others*** program in August. Mgr. Brian Bransfield is an expert in the area of human sexuality and his presentations will be very helpful for anyone ministering with teens and parents (http://www.seattlearchdiocese.org/Assets/Retreats/LivingforOthers2012Register_54.pdf).

During the next school year, we will be reviewing the Archdiocesan K-8 Religious Education Curriculum. If you are interested in participating in this review, please look at the attached flyer with contact information.

Our annual PAFF conference will be June 6, 2012 at the Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center at the Palisades. This year, we are very excited to have Vallimar Jensen and Tom Kendzia as our keynote presenters. Registration information will be coming in the near future.

On July 16-18, 2012, "The Vision and Practice of 21st Century Faith Formation" will be offered in Federal Way. Although this is not a program sponsored by the Archdiocese, it is an inservice that many in catechetical leadership might find very helpful. The following link contains information both about the program and also the Vibrant Ministries organization supporting this program (<http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/>).

I hope you are all enjoying our beautiful spring weather. May God's grace bring you great joy and blessings during this wonderful season of Easter!

Anne



St. Madeleine Sophie Catholic Parish

VBS FunShop



Dear 2012 Vacation Bible School Team:

Come soar with us! Group's VBS FunShop—Training With a Twist—is coming to our town! Join us for a *Sky-tacular* time on April 28th from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at St. Madeleine Sophie Catholic Parish in Bellevue, Washington.

This is your team's chance to learn about Group's new Easy VBS, **Sky**, and get connected with other VBSers from local churches. At our VBS FunShop, we'll help your VBS take flight! You'll learn **time-saving** and **budget-stretching** tips from Group's VBS veterans.

This **hands-on training** gives practical pointers on everything, from great new features to fundraising and recruiting and from decorating to cleanup. You'll learn to plan, coordinate, do effective follow-up, and pull off your church's best VBS ever! And you'll experience a full day's worth of station rotations and receive exclusive decorating tips and ideas! Plus, these networking sessions help you coordinate **sharing high-cost items and decorating resources** with other churches in our area.

Advance online registration: \$18 per person until April 21st.
Group.com/vbsfunshop

Registration by phone or at the door: \$25 per person 425-747-6770 ext. 125.

BONUS:

- Exclusive giveaway for participants
- Raffles for FREE Group products

If you are using Sky this year, you won't want to miss this opportunity to make some new friends in ministry. Watch creativity soar, and get a *sky-rific* start on your 2012 VBS! See you there!

Sincerely,

*Jo David
Angela Ensminger
Maggie Rader*

St. Madeleine Sophie VBC Team

K-8 RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The Office of Catholic Faith Formation, in partnership with the Catholic Schools Department, will be reviewing the Archdiocesan K-8 Religious Education Curriculum during the 2012-2013 school year.

At this time, we are seeking Catholic educators who would be interested in working on this project. Particular areas of concern include:

- Updating formatting to resemble more closely the language of Common Core standards
- Curriculum mapping
- Developing summative and formative assessments
- Reviewing articulation of learner benchmarks between grade levels

If you and/or your faculty are interested in participating in this project, please submit your name and contact information to ocff@seattlearch.org by **May 15, 2012**. If you would like more information about the project, please contact Dr. Anne Frederick at anne.frederick@seattlearch.org

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE
OFFICE OF CATHOLIC FAITH FORMATION
710 NINTH AVENUE • SEATTLE, WA 98104



Faith Formation for the 21st Century Training Programs

The Vision & Practice of
**21st Century
Faith Formation**



Sponsored by Vibrant Faith Ministries
in partnership with Lifelong Faith Associates

Imagine the potential for churches that develop 21st century models of faith formation to respond to the spiritual and religious needs of all ages and generations. Imagine churches that provide faith formation for everyone, anytime, anywhere, 24x7x365.

The Vision and Practice of 21st Century Faith Formation is a three-day interactive educational program for pastors, faith formation leaders, and staff in all Christian congregations.

- Understand the new context of faith formation and the diverse religious and spiritual needs of all generations
- Understand the emerging vision of 21st century faith formation
- Envision faith formation in the "Age of Networks" and learn how to create a Lifelong Faith Formation Network for the 21st century
- Discover a variety of 21st century approaches and resources for faith formation in the congregation, at home, and online
- Learn how to use the new digital media and web technologies in faith formation
- Develop the skills for curating religious content and experiences for all ages and generations

Feb 28 – Mar 1
Tampa, FL

April 17-19
Houston, TX

May 15-17
Chicago/Joliet, IL

May 30-June 1
Milwaukee, WI

August 14-16
Grantsburg, WI

May 21-23, 2012
Charlotte, NC

July 10-12, 2012
Portland, OR

July 16-18, 2012
Federal Way, WA

July 24-26, 2012
Hartford, CT

July 30-Aug. 1, 2012
Saginaw, MI

Aug. 6-8, 2012
Des Moines, IA

Nov. 13-15, 2012
Washington, DC

Registration information

\$295 for the first person
\$195 for another person from the same congregation

Individual Tuition: \$295

Team Tuition (from the same church or organization):
\$295 for the first person;
\$195 for each additional person

Meals and Refreshments:
\$50 per person

Who is leading *The Vision and Practice of 21st Century Faith Formation Training Program*?

Program Leader: John Roberto

John Roberto works on the staff of Vibrant Faith Ministries as the project coordinator for the *Faith Formation for the 21st Century* and the *Faith Formation Learning Exchange* website. He also directs LifelongFaith Associates and is editor of the journal *Lifelong Faith* and coordinator for the *Faith Formation 2020 Initiative*. John has over 40 years of experience in Christian faith formation and has authored books and program manuals in youth ministry, family ministry, intergenerational learning, and lifelong faith formation. John created the theory and practice of *Generations of Faith*—an intergenerational, lifelong approach to faith formation; and administered the five-year Lilly Endowment funded project to develop lifelong faith formation in Catholic parishes across the U.S. His latest publications include *Faith Formation 2020: Designing the Future of Faith*, *The Spirit and Culture of Youth Ministry* (co-authored), *Living Well: Christian Practices for Everyday Life*, and *Becoming a Church of Lifelong Learners*.

What's included in *The Vision and Practice of 21st Century Faith Formation Training Program*?

1. Online resources to prepare for the training program
2. A three-day interactive, hands-on training program
3. A resource kit of articles, models, and design materials to accompany the three-day training program
4. Two follow-up webinars to deepen and apply the content of the training program
5. Three C.E.U.s for your participation

Guest Presenters via Teleconference or Webinar

Dr. David W. Anderson is a presenter, coach and author at Vibrant Faith Ministries. He has been instrumental in developing an approach to Christian discipleship and evangelism, the Vibrant Faith Frame, and resources to accompany it. David is an ecumenically and internationally latest publications include *Vibrant Faith in the Congregation*, *From the Great Omission to Vibrant Faith*, *Coming of Age: Exploring the Identity and Spirituality of Younger Men* (co-authored), and *Frogs without Legs Can't Hear: Nurturing Disciples in Home and Congregation* (co-authored).

Leif Kehrwald is the VibrantFaith@Home project coordinator for Vibrant Faith Ministries. He has worked in family ministry and faith formation on the local, regional, and national levels for more than thirty years. Leif has written books and articles on family life, family ministry, marriage, and youth ministry. His latest publications include *The Catholic Faith and Family Bible* (HarperBibles), for which he served as general editor, and *Families and Faith: A Vision and Practice for Parish Leaders*. Leif has taught courses on family ministry, parish partnership and family spirituality and travels frequently throughout the country offering presentations and workshops on family faith development.

Anna Rendell is the social media project coordinator at Vibrant Faith Ministries. She brings her passion for faith development, writing and connecting with others is what brought her to the world of social media. Anna graduated from Augsburg College's Youth and Family Ministry program, and went on to work as Director of Youth Ministries at Grace Lutheran Church in Apple Valley, MN. She has also worked at several Bible camps as a counselor, high school leadership director, and year round program director. Anna is the author of *Girl with Blog* (her personal blog), has created an active community on Facebook and Twitter, and has also contributed articles to other websites and blogs.



The Vision & Practice of 21st Century Faith Formation

Program Leader: John Roberto

Guest Presenters

David Anderson, Leif Kehrwald, and
Anna Rendell

Sponsored by Vibrant Faith Ministries
in partnership with LifelongFaith Associates

Imagine the potential for churches that develop 21st century models of faith formation to respond to the spiritual and religious needs of all ages and generations.
Imagine churches that provide faith formation for everyone, anytime, anywhere, 24x7x365.

The Vision and Practice of 21st Century Faith Formation is a three-day interactive educational program for pastors, faith formation leaders, and staff in all Christian congregations that immerses you in the world of 21st century faith formation.

Coming to Portland on July 10-12, 2012 – Hilton Garden Inn Portland Airport
Coming to Seattle on July 16-18, 2012 – Marriott Courtyard Federal Way

What will you learn?

- Understand the new context of faith formation and the diverse religious and spiritual needs of all generations
- Understand the emerging vision of 21st century faith formation
- Envision faith formation in the "Age of Networks" and learn how to create a Lifelong Faith Formation Network for the 21st century
- Discover a variety of 21st century approaches and resources for faith formation in the congregation, at home, and online
- Learn how to use the new digital media and web technologies in faith formation
- Develop the skills for curating religious content and experiences for all ages and generations

What is included the program?

- Online resources to prepare for the training program
- A three-day interactive, hands-on training program
- A resource kit of articles, models, and design materials to accompany the three-day training program
- Two follow-up webinars to deepen and apply the content of the training program
- Three C.E.U.s for your participation

Special Offers

When you register a team of 3 people from your church or organization,
the 4th person is FREE (a \$195 value)!

What is the cost of the program?

- **Individual:** \$295
- **Team** (from the same church or organization): \$295 for the 1st person; \$195 for each additional person
- **Lunch & Refreshments:** \$50 per person for all 3 days (Housing and additional meals are on your own.)

How do you register?

- Register online at Vibrant Faith Ministries: www.vibrantfaith.org/faith-formation-training.html

Who is leading the program?

- **Program Leader: John Roberto**
John Roberto works on the Vibrant Faith Ministries team as the project coordinator for the *Faith Formation for the 21st Century* training program and the *Faith Formation Learning Exchange* website. He also directs LifelongFaith Associates and is editor of the *Lifelong Faith* journal and coordinator for the *Faith Formation 2020 Initiative*. John has over 40 years of experience in Christian faith formation. He works as a consultant to churches and national organizations, teaches courses and conducts workshops, and has authored books and program manuals in youth ministry, family ministry, intergenerational learning, and lifelong faith formation. His latest book is *Faith Formation 2020*.
- **Guest Presenters via Teleconference**
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Leif Kehrwald is the Vibrant Faith @Home project coordinator for Vibrant Faith Ministries. He has worked in family ministry and faith formation on the local, regional, and national levels for more than thirty years. His latest publications include *The Catholic Faith and Family Bible* (HarperBibles), for which he served as general editor, and *Families and Faith: A Vision and Practice for Parish Leaders*.
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Where is the program located?

Portland (July 10-12)

- **Hilton Garden Inn-Portland Airport**, 12048 N.E. Airport Way, Portland, OR (503)255-8600.
- **Hotel Room Rate: \$119** - Use group name VIB (Vibrant Faith Ministries) to get the rate. Call: 503-255-8600 to reserve your room. (Deadline for room reservations is June 10, 2012.)

Seattle (July 16-18)

- **Marriott Courtyard-Seattle/Federal Way**, 31910 Gateway Center Blvd. South, Federal Way, WA (800-321-2211)
- **Hotel Room Rate: \$109** - Use group name Faith Formation Training Program to get the rate. Book online at <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/seafw?groupCode=fffta&app=resvlink&fromDate=7/15/12&toDate=7/18/12> or call: 800-321-2211 (Deadline for room reservations is June 14, 2012.).

How do you get more information?

- Go online to: <http://www.vibrantfaith.org/faith-formation-training.html>
- Contact John Roberto, program coordinator, at jroberto@lifelongfaith.com.

DISCIPLES CALLED TO WITNESS: THE NEW EVANGELIZATION



The U.S. bishops want to provide an opportunity for all Catholics to deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ, according to a new document from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). *Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization* focuses on reaching out to Catholics, practicing or not, who have lost a sense of the faith in an effort to re-energize them.

“Every Catholic has a role in the Church, and every Catholic is called to spread the Gospel,” said Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wisconsin, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis. “But in order to evangelize, a person must first be evangelized. This is really the heart of the New Evangelization.”

The document examines what the New Evangelization is, its focus, its importance for the Church and how dioceses and parishes can promote it. “The New Evangelization is a call to each person to deepen his or her own faith, have confidence in the Gospel, and possess a willingness to share the Gospel,” the document states. “It is a personal encounter with the person of Jesus, which brings peace and joy. The New Evangelization provides the lens through which people experience the Church and the world around them.”

The document highlights the call of Pope Benedict XVI to pursue the New Evangelization with renewed vigor and joy. It also provides dioceses and parishes with resources to assist Catholics in renewing their faith and sharing it with others. The full text of the document is available online: www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/disciples-called-to-witness/.

Bishops Appeal Federal Decision: Anti-Trafficking Service Contract

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) filed a notice of appeal April 17, asking a federal appeals court to vacate a decision by a Massachusetts federal judge declaring that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) violated the First Amendment in its contract with USCCB to provide case management services to victims of human trafficking, because the contract did not require USCCB to facilitate abortion and contraception. USCCB has also requested a stay of the lower court’s decision until the appeals court can rule.

The decision came in a lawsuit filed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) against HHS in 2009. USCCB joined the lawsuit in mid-2010 on the side of HHS as a defendant-intervenor.

For five years ending last fall, MRS had successfully implemented a national government contract that helped men, women and children recover from the effects of human trafficking as victims of forced labor and the sex trade. Neither the statute authorizing the government funds, nor the request for contract proposals from potential providers like USCCB, required the



provider to facilitate abortion or contraception funding; and no trafficking victim complained for lack of government funding of these things under the contract. You can read the full statement at <http://www.usccb.org/news/2012/12-064.cfm>.

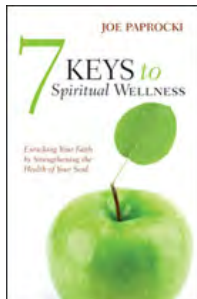
A Webinar by Joe Paprocki, DMin brought to You by Loyola Press

LOYOLA PRESS.
A JESUIT MINISTRY

Tuesday, April 24, 2012 from 7:00 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 who is 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 \(http://tiny.cc/zkr0cw\)](http://tiny.cc/zkr0cw). You can also order **[7 Keys to Spiritual Wellness: Enriching Your Faith by Strengthening the Health of Your Soul.](#)**

U.S. Bishops Join Call To Ban Landmines

Bishop Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, chairman of the Committee of International Justice and Peace of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), has joined a call from 76 nongovernmental organizations to President Obama, urging the United States to relinquish antipersonnel landmines and join the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty without further delay.

“This is a crucial humanitarian decision that should not be put off any longer, or postponed during a busy election year,” the organizations’ representatives said in an April 4 letter. “We urge you to submit the treaty to the Senate this year for its advice and consent next year.”

The letter comes as the Obama administration concludes the comprehensive interagency review of its landmine policy, initiated in December 2009, and enters the decision-making stage. Since starting the review, the letter notes, the administration has received letters of support for the Mine Ban Treaty from 68 Senators, 16 Nobel Peace Prize Laureates, key NATO allies, retired senior military personnel, dozens of NGO leaders, victims of U.S. landmines, and countless concerned Americans.

It notes that 161 countries are signatories to the Mine Ban Treaty, including every member of NATO except the United States, as well as every member of the European Union, and other key U.S. allies such as Afghanistan and Iraq. The United States is one of only 37 countries in the world that have not joined the Mine Ban Treaty and the only country in the Western Hemisphere aside from Cuba that has not joined.



Signers of the letter included representatives of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Methodist Church, Church of the Brethren, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, Evangelicals for Social Action, Presbyterian Church (USA), Human Rights Watch, the Islamic Society of North America, Jesuit Refugee Services/USA and Pax Christi USA.

Full text of the letter is available online: www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/war-and-peace/landmines/upload/Joint-Letter-to-Obama-on-Mine-Ban-Treaty-2012-04-04.pdf.

FREE Professional Development Webinar – Tuesday, April 24



Ave Maria Press, in partnership with the **National Conference for Catechetical Leadership** and the National Association for Lay Ministry presents a series of free, online workshops on professional development for

parish ministers. For a complete listing of professional development webinars in this series please visit www.avemariapress.com/webinars



Federal Budget Choices Must Protect Poor, Vulnerable People



As Congress began working on the FY 2013 budget and spending bills this week, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) wrote several letters that repeated and reinforced the bishops' ongoing call to create a "circle of protection" around poor and vulnerable people and programs that meet their basic needs and protect their lives and dignity. The bishops' message calls on Congress and the Administration to protect essential help for poor families and vulnerable children and to put the poor first in budget priorities. The bishops' letters oppose measures that reduce resources for essential safety net programs.

In the letters, Bishops Stephen E. Blaire of Stockton, California, and Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, chairmen of the Committees on Domestic Justice and Human Development and International Justice and Peace, respectively, urged Congress to resist proposed cuts in hunger and nutrition programs at home and abroad saying that “a just spending bill cannot rely on disproportionate cuts in essential services to poor and vulnerable persons.”

On April 4, Bishop Blaire cautioned that “at a time when the need for assistance from [affordable housing] programs is growing, cutting funds for them could cause thousands of individuals and families to lose their housing and worsen the hardship of thousands more in need of affordable housing.” He also reminded Congress that the Catholic community is one of the largest private, nonprofit providers of affordable housing in the country and is deeply involved in meeting the health housing and nutrition needs of families across the nation.

Bishops Blaire and Pates reaffirmed the “moral criteria to guide these difficult budget decisions” outlined in their March 6 budget letter:

1. Every budget decision should be assessed by whether it protects or threatens human life and dignity.
2. A central moral measure of any budget proposal is how it affects “the least of these” (Matthew 25). The needs of those who are hungry and homeless, without work or in poverty should come first.
3. Government and other institutions have a shared responsibility to promote the common good of all, especially ordinary workers and families who struggle to live in dignity in difficult economic times...

Just solutions, however, must require shared sacrifice by all, including raising adequate revenues, eliminating unnecessary military and other spending, and fairly addressing the long-term costs of health insurance and retirement programs. You can read more at <http://www.usccb.org/news/2012/12-063.cfm>

FREE Professional Development Webinar – Thursday, April 26



Ave Maria Press, in partnership with the **National Conference for Catechetical Leadership** and the National Association for Lay Ministry presents a series of free, online workshops on professional development for parish ministers. For a

complete listing of professional development webinars in this series please visit www.avemariapress.com/webinars



Navigating Course II: Who is Jesus Christ?



In the highly Christological USCCB Framework sequence, Course II: Who Is Jesus Christ, provides the core opportunity for teens to know and understand how God fully reveals himself in his Son, the Second Person of the Trinity. Certainly, as with the other Framework courses, no apology is made for expecting the students to master some basic information including a deeper understanding about Revelation, the Trinity, the Incarnation, Marian dogmas, and discipleship. However, this course asks students to reflect on the meaning of what they are learning and to judge the relevance of Jesus to their personal lives.

The course asks teens to provide an answer to the question, “Who do people say that I am?” Moreover, it returns to the corollary: “Who do you say that I am?” The webinar will offer a basic survey of Course II along with some enrichment exercises that can be offered in a variety of places throughout the course. This webinar, presented by Michael Amodei on Thursday, April 26 at 3:30 p.m. EDT, is geared to high school religion teachers and catechists. You can register at <https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/228072504>.

Mid-Atlantic Catholic-Muslim Dialogue Creating Interreligious Education Guides

Representatives of the Mid-Atlantic Catholic and Muslim Dialogue have brought to near completion their multi-year project of two guides entitled *Understanding Islam: A Guide for Catholic Educators* and *Understanding Catholicism: A Guide for Muslim Educators*. While final edits will be performed by individual drafting committees, the dialogue participants anticipate that this project will be complete before the group reconvenes in 2013.

The draft version of *Understanding Islam: A Guide for Catholic Educators* was presented at the plenary session by main contributor Sandra Keating, Ph.D., of Providence College. The document, which is intended to serve as an introduction to Islam for Catholic educators, provides an interpretation of Islam that is faithful to how individual Muslim educators understand and teach their religion. Overall, the document provides a brief historical survey of Islam, as well as

a description of the holy Qur'an, the rise of the Ummah and Shar'ia law, including its five pillars, and a brief consideration of contemporary issues.

The draft version of *Understanding Catholicism: A Guide for Muslim Educators* was presented via teleconference at the plenary session by Shaykh Aboor Rahman Khan, the main contributor to the document. This document describes some of the central tenets of the Catholic faith, as well as the basic differences between Catholics and other Christians. It also provides an historical retrieval of the origins of the faith, the beginnings and growth of the church, and the basic beliefs, ethics, and worship life of Catholics.

If interested, you can read some of the suggestions for each of these documents at <http://www.usccb.org/news/2012/12-068.cfm>. Bishop Knestout summed up the overall agenda for this work saying: "It is my hope that the guides on inter-religious education will be of practical help to educators and the lay faithful of each community in speaking to their own students about the teachings and practices of the other faith community. These materials should ensure a respectful and accurate presentation of the beliefs and practices of both Catholicism and Islam."

Who Else Could I Be?

soulbiographies

through the soul of another, find your own

the experience, Tim said, "... they wanted us to hate everybody. they wanted us to shout. they wanted us to scream." But Tim Campbell had been told by his mother that the loudest vessels are usually the emptiest ones. Tim is not who you might expect as a voluntary participant in such a drama. This film, from the Monday 9am Series, is about the new possibilities of working together in business. It is a refreshing look at interdependence rather than individualism. Check out this <http://soulbiographies.com/who-else-could-i-be/>

Tim Campbell won the BBC's first season of the business reality show 'The Apprentice' back in 2005. In reflecting on



LIFE FEST FILM FESTIVAL TO HONOR MARTIN SHEEN



The organizers of the Life Fest Film Festival, the premiere showcase for films that honor the value of human life and the unique importance of each life, announced that actor/producer Martin Sheen will receive the 2012 Spirit of Life Award. Now in its second year, the Life Fest Film Festival is dedicated to showcasing films that reinforce the intrinsic worth of innocent human life and the profound significance of each life. Last year's participants included Lamplight Entertainment director Jonathan Flora and his wife, actress Deborah Flora,

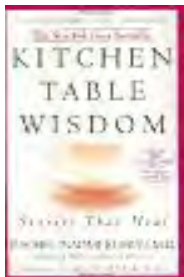
actor/producer Clint Howard, actor Charlie Holliday, and actress Mell Flynn. The Life Fest Film Festival will take place May 5-6, 2012 at the Los Angeles Convention Center.

“Martin Sheen has been outspoken in his opposition to legalizing assisted suicide, a form of voluntary euthanasia, and in his opposition to abortion,” said Brian Johnston, director of the Life Fest Film Festival. “Life Fest seeks to affirm those stories and story tellers that reflect the unique value of the human experience and of each human life. Life Fest provides a forum to films that highlight a simple yet profound message: every life matters. Martin Sheen’s willingness to ‘go against the zeitgeist’ and speak out for the value of each innocent life, is both brave and honorable.”

In addition to the Spirit of Life Award, Sheen’s most recent film, *The Way*, in which he co- starred with his son and the film’s director, Emilio Estevez, has been nominated for Best Film. According to the film’s website: “THE WAY is a powerful and inspirational story about family, friends and the challenges we face while navigating this ever-changing and complicated world. Martin Sheen plays Tom, an irascible American doctor who comes to France to deal with the tragic loss of his son (played by Emilio Estevez). Rather than return home, Tom decides to embark on the historical pilgrimage “The Way of St. James” to honor his son’s desire to finish the journey. You can purchase [The Way](#).



Helping, Fixing or Serving?



Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen author of the best-selling [Kitchen Table Wisdom: Stories that Heal - 10th Anniversary](#) is a beloved storyteller and a profound voice in the field of health and healing. In the following article she teases out crucial differences between the various modes in which we humans tend to reach out to the world: by fixing, helping or serving. The stories in this book as well as in [My Grandfather's Blessings: Stories of Strength, Refuge, and Belonging](#) are some of my favorites. Here is an excerpt from this article.

Helping, fixing and serving represent three different ways of seeing life. When you help, you see life as weak. When you fix, you see life as broken. When you serve, you see life as whole. Fixing and helping may be the work of the ego, and service the work of the soul.

Service rests on the premise that the nature of life is sacred, that life is a holy mystery which has an unknown purpose. When we serve, we know that we belong to life and to that purpose. From the perspective of service, we are all connected: All suffering is like my suffering and all joy is like my joy. The impulse to serve emerges naturally and inevitably from this way of seeing.



Serving is different from helping. Helping is not a relationship between equals. A helper may see others as weaker than they are, needier than they are, and people often feel this inequality. The danger in helping is that we may inadvertently take away from people more than we could ever give them; we may diminish their self-esteem, their sense of worth, integrity or even wholeness.

When we help, we become aware of our own strength. But when we serve, we don't serve with our strength; we serve with ourselves, and we draw from all of our experiences. Our limitations serve; our wounds serve; even our darkness can serve. My pain is the source of my compassion; my woundedness is the key to my empathy.

Serving makes us aware of our wholeness and its power. The wholeness in us serves the wholeness in others and the wholeness in life. The wholeness in you is the same as the wholeness in me. Service is a relationship between equals: our service strengthens us as well as others. Fixing and helping are draining, and over time we may burn out, but service is renewing. When we serve, our work itself will renew us. In helping we may find a sense of satisfaction; in serving we find a sense of gratitude.

Interwoven in the full story are two unforgettable stories of service; the first about an emergency room physician and a newborn child, and the second, a searing personal story of Remen's own experience with suffering, and the gift she received from a young woman who will probably never know just how much her compassionate actions meant. You can find the whole story at http://www.shambhalasun.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2328.