

Dear Catechists,

As we greet our students for this school year, we have several items for you to use in your faith formation classes. There are prayers, videos, messages from Pope Benedict and webinars on the New Evangelization. It is also a good time to look into local events to renew ourselves with inspirational speakers and upcoming retreats.

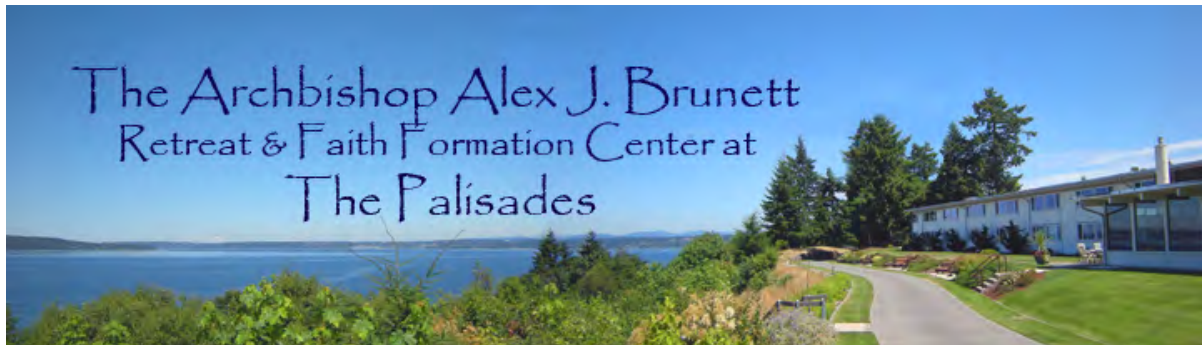
You are in my prayers,

Anne

Anne Frederick, Ed.D.

Director of Parish and School Faith Formation

Archdiocese of Seattle Year of Faith page: www.seattlearchdiocese.org/yof



The Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center at the Palisades offers a wide variety of retreat opportunities. Please click on the link below to see all of the upcoming retreat experiences.

www.seattlearchdiocese.org/Retreats/Palisades/calendar.aspx

St. Michael in Olympia is hosting a special event for all those involved in catechesis and music ministry. Please check it out!

Catechists, Cantors, Choir Members, Pastoral Musicians, Bible Study Leaders, Small Faith Sharing Group Facilitators, Youth leaders, RCIA Team, Adult Ed Leaders, Sacramental Prep team...

This day of prayer, music and reflection is for YOU!

St. Michael Parish and the South Sound Deanery present:

Fr. Ricky Manalo

**September 8, Multi Purpose room, St. Michael Parish, Olympia,
8:30 A.M., Mass and Lunch**

**Special afternoon workshop for pastoral musicians, 1:30 – 4:00
P.M.**

Fr. Ricky is priest in the Paulist order. An accomplished lecturer, composer, musician and author, Fr. Ricky will combine his gift of music with a presentation on the spirituality of catechists and pastoral musicians. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity for prayer, music and reflection. Register online by visiting our parish website or RSVP Leanne Bergford at 360.292.7112. <http://www.ocp.org/artists/2665> **Come and be refreshed!**



Cost: A suggested \$5 donation for those outside the parish includes lunch and all materials



Back to School
Prayer Services

...for students, teachers, and catechists - including
leaders' guides and student handouts.
Free, online, from Pflaum!



HANDS
Primary Grades



**A Blessing
for the
New School Year**
Intermediate Grades



**Sharing
Your Light**
Catechists and Teachers

[Send this e-mail to a friend](#)

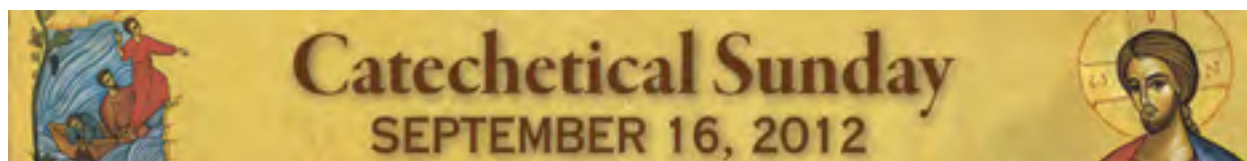
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NCCL News

Please Pray For The Victims Hurricane Isaac and Their Family and Friends



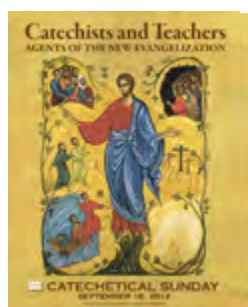
We extend our prayers (*Protect me, O God, for in you I take refuge.* Psalm 16:1) to all the victims of Hurricane Isaac, not only to those in our country of the United States, but to those in Haiti, Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XR0TX-nv1w8>).



The theme for 2012 Catechetical Sunday is "**Catechists and Teachers as Agents of the New Evangelization.**" The Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis has prepared a variety of materials to assist catechists and Catholic school teachers to better understand and embrace Pope Benedict XVI's invitation to be evangelists. The resources will assist parishes in celebrating Catechetical Sunday, not only in September, but also throughout the 2012-2013 year. **These materials are provided free of charge in both English and Spanish.** These resources can be found at [Catechetical Sunday 2012 Resources](http://tiny.cc/m10nfw) (<http://tiny.cc/m10nfw>). **There are less than two weeks until Catechetical Sunday. Be sure to order your materials from NCCL if you want delivery in time for Catechetical Sunday.**



Spanish Translations **NOW** Available

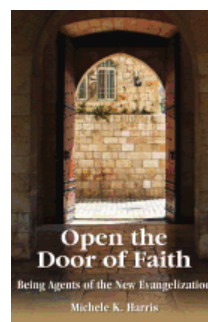


We are featuring **Rosa Monique Peña, OP, National Catechetical Consultant for William H. Sadler, Inc. on the catechist in-service *Catechists and Teachers as Agents of the New Evangelization*.** You can download the PDF at <http://tiny.cc/80jbjw> or by simply clicking on the title above. If neither works, please copy and paste this URL in your web browser <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/new-evangelization/upload/Catechists-and-Teachers-as-Agents-of-the-New-Evangelization-8-10-12.pdf>

As in past years, NCCL will sell printed copies of prayer cards, family commitment cards, posters, and certificates in English and Spanish. Check the NCCL website www.NCCL.org for more information on ordering your Catechetical Sunday materials. This year's reflection journal was written by Michele Harris and is entitled ***Open the Door of Faith***. **Sample pages are available on the NCCL Homepage (www.NCCL.org).** The 2012 NCCL pin addresses the Trinitarian nature of our faith in its triangular design along with the pages of the Word of God open to the world where the cross of the Word



made flesh rises from the Living Word. The Spirit of God in each of us is the agent of the new evangelization and is ready to go forth as catechist and teacher. Set on an ivory background (not the light blue pictured in the image), the gold cross and white enameled Scripture pages and dove are striking. Help your organization and order your materials from NCCL. There are **ONLY TWO WEEKS LEFT** to order.



In the meantime, check out the [Catechetical Sunday 2012 FREE Resources in English and Spanish](http://tiny.cc/m10nfw) (<http://tiny.cc/m10nfw>) which include

- Theological Reflection
- Catechist-in-service
- Teaching Aids
- Parish Resources (excellent parish bulletin inserts)

If neither works, please copy and paste this URL in your web browser

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechetical-ministry/catechetical-sunday/new-evangelization/index.cfm>. This week we would also like to highlight three (3) additional resources.

1. Bulletin Inserts:

We are featuring Fr. Larry Swink, Pastor, Jesus the Divine Word, Huntingtown, Maryland in a piece entitled [***Are You a 3G Catholic?***](#) You can download the PDF at <http://tiny.cc/mzwtjw> or by simply clicking on the title above. If neither works, please copy and paste this URL in your web browser <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/new-evangelization/upload/are-you-a-3g-catholic-swink.pdf>

2. Faith in Action:

These are articles by young adults engaged in the Church's work of evangelization. This week we feature Kenny Latta, a Lasallian Volunteer in a first person piece entitled [**Committed to Christ, the Poor, and the New Evangelization**](#). You can download the PDF at <http://tiny.cc/bixtjw> or by simply clicking on the title above. If neither works, please copy and paste this URL in your web browser <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/catechetical-sunday/new-evangelization/upload/Committed-to-Christ-Latta.pdf>.

3. Leadership Institute website:

[Track III - New Evangelization](#) features ten webinars. You can check out all of them at <http://tiny.cc/aaiigw> or by clicking on Track III above. If neither works, please copy and paste this URL in your web browser <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/catechesis/leadership-institute/programs-track-3.cfm>. This week we are featuring a webinar entitled [**Humbly Walking With God's People**](#) by Eduardo C. Fernandez, SJ., STD, Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California. You can listen to this webinar at <http://tiny.cc/ssxtjw>. If neither works, please copy and paste this URL in your web browser

https://usccb.adobeconnect.com/_a833422997/p44k4rh49tu/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal

Humbly Walking With God's People

Expanding about the evangelizing leader's need to be self-aware, ingenious, loving, and heroic, so as to help spark the cultivation of these virtues in others, this presentation reflects on each of these attributes as they relate to the spiritual life of the minister, especially within intercultural settings. Various pastoral examples provide a way of sharing how concretely these virtues are lived in service to others, afford an opportunity to examine oneself in light of them, and model some pedagogical tools such as the use of images, Sacred Scripture, background texts, self-reflective points to consider, and even a quiz!



Leadership Institute-2012 September Q&A Live – REGISTER NOW

The first 2012 Leadership Institute Live Question & Answer Session is scheduled for:
September 11, 2012 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. [EDT]

Please click on the link to register:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/Sept11_LI_QandA



Featured panelists and webinars:

- Very Rev. James A. Wehner, STD "Overview of the Theological Foundations of the New Evangelization"
- Rev. Matthew Williams, M.Div. & Stephen Colella "Go and Make Disciples: The Next Steps"
- Dr. Susan Timoney, STD "An Evangelizing Laity"
- Rev. Eduardo C. Fernández, SJ, STL, STD "Humbly Walking With God's People"
- Facilitator: Michael E. Steier, DMin (USCCB Secretariat of Evangelization and Catechesis)

All the webinars can be found at the USCCB website under the **[Leadership Institute – Track III: The New Evangelization](#)**

QUESTIONS: Contact Michael Steier via email at: **leadershipinstitute@usccb.org**

The Leadership Institute is jointly sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership, and the National Catholic Educational Association.

Pope's Intentions for September



General Papal Intention for September

That politicians may always act with honesty, integrity, and love for the truth

Mission Papal Intention for September

That Christian communities may have a growing willingness to send missionaries, priests, and lay people, along with concrete resources, to the poorest Churches.



Pope Benedict XVI: Christians Must Not Compromise Christ's Truth



Marking the feast of the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist, Pope Benedict XVI said Christians must not bow to the pressure of the powerful who demand a denial of Christ or of the truth he taught. "The truth is the truth and there is no compromise," the pope said. He also said St. John the Baptist, "out of love for the truth, would not compromise with the powerful" who wanted him to deny Christ.

Celebrating the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist is a reminder that "we cannot accept compromises about the love of Christ, his word, his truth," he said. Pope Benedict said St. John's strength to preach conversion, to lead people to Jesus and to face martyrdom flowed from prayer and a total reliance on God. The periods St. John spent in the desert were part of his preparation. The desert is a place "where man experiences his own poverty because, deprived of support and material security, he understands that the only solid point of reference remaining is God," the pope said.

The Baptist's example of prayer, he said, teaches believers that "prayer isn't time wasted, it does not steal time away from work -- even apostolic work." Rather, he said, St. John the Baptist's life is a reminder that "only if we have a faithful, constant, trusting prayer life, God himself will give us the ability and strength to live happily and serenely, to overcome difficulty and witness to him courageously."

The text of the pope's audience remarks in **English** are posted online at www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/audiences/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20120829_en.html. The text of the pope's audience remarks in **Spanish** will be posted online at www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/audiences/2012/documents/hf_ben-xvi_aud_20120829_sp.html.

Catholic Vacation Bible School is Family Mission



As the 2012 vacation Bible school season comes to a close, an Indiana family of faith-filled and creative women can look back with pride at offering a Catholic alternative to the traditionally Protestant-based programs. After a discussion with a neighbor in 2001 about the lack of available Catholic programs, Melissa Kaiser, a parishioner at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Fort

Wayne and mother of seven children, gathered her own mother, Margaret Windle, and sisters Maryalice Beach and Susan Lawson to brainstorm ideas for a fully Catholic vacation Bible school. With the decision to begin with teachings on the Trinity, the idea for "St. Patrick and the Holy Trinity Catholic VBS" program was born. The women were soon developing lesson plans that incorporated the sacraments, Catholic values and virtues, Scripture and stories of saints for kindergarten through sixth grade.

By 2004, Our Lady of the Hills Parish in South Carolina, where Lawson resides, was piloting the first program with great success. And the program grew in popularity across the country. Since then, this family of catechists has developed five programs, all of which have the bishop's imprimatur, an official approval that the content is in line with Catholic teachings. Each of the five easy-to-use, pull-and-go programs is organized in a five-day thematic format. Each program incorporates a book written on a specific saint to study, and concludes with evangelization and a call to discipleship and service on the final day. For more information, go to <http://www.growingwiththesaints.com/index1.cfm>.



POPE BENEDICT XVI ON HUMANITY & THE INFINITE



On August 10, Pope Benedict XVI sent a message to the *Meeting for Friendship Among Peoples*, sponsored by the *Catholic Communion and Liberation Movement* in Rimini, Italy. The theme of this year's meeting is *The nature of man is a relationship with the infinite*, and the Holy Father offered

insights into this relationship.

Pope Benedict XVI pointed out that to speak of man and of his yearning for the infinite means, first and foremost, to recognize his constitutive relationship with the Creator. He affirmed that humanity is called into life in order to enter into relationship with Life itself, with God, and that every person is created so that he may enter into dialogue with the Infinite. The pontiff recognized that humans often run the risk of being absolutized and thus become idols that replace the Creator, and that to live up to his being, man must turn and recognize that he is a creature, who is dependent on God.

Pope Benedict XVI also reflected on the mystery of the Incarnation, noting that through this mystery God reaffirmed the sanctity of all creation: Nothing, then, is banal or insignificant along the path of life and of the world. Man is made for an infinite God who became flesh, who assumed our humanity in order to draw us to the heights of his divine being.

Catholics and the Environment



In *Australian Catholics Magazine*, Fr. Andrew Hamilton, SJ, wrote an article titled *Catholics and the Environment* in which he addresses a key question: How does Christian faith lead us to see the environment?

Fr. Hamilton points out that Scripture highlights three features of creation – its beauty, its complexity and our responsibility for it – [which] colour the way in which we should see the world. He discusses the Catholic principle of solidarity in light of both the human and non-human creation. He also calls attention to how Jesus' life and ministry serves as a model for how we are called to care for creation. Finally, Fr. Hamilton notes that environmental degradation is often due to sin and selfishness, and invites us to reflect on how authentic Christian living can lead us to more fully care for God's good gift of creation.



The story also includes a set of questions that can be used for further reflection and study. For more resources on a Catholic understanding of creation care, Australian Catholics Magazine encourages a visit to **[Faith Doing Justice](http://www.faithdoingjustice.com.au/issues/environment/catholic-social-teaching.html)** (<http://www.faithdoingjustice.com.au/issues/environment/catholic-social-teaching.html>) from the Australian Jesuits. You can read the full article along with the questions at <http://www.australiancatholics.com.au/content/view/290/>.

To Be An Altar Server is “an Enormous Privilege”

Pope Benedict told the young people they were blessed to be "particularly close to Christ Jesus in the Eucharist. You have the enormous privilege of being close to the altar, close to the Lord."

The pope prayed that being an altar server would help the young people deepen their friendship with Christ and enthusiastically share God's love with their friends and families. "And, if one day you feel called to follow the path to the priesthood or



religious life, respond generously," he told the youngsters.

FREE Professional Development Webinar – Tuesday, September 25



Ave Maria Press, in partnership with the **National Conference for Catechetical Leadership**, the National Association for Lay Ministry, and National Federation of Priests' Councils presents a series of free, online workshops on professional development for parish ministers. This webinar, *Catholic Teaching on Homosexuality: New Paths to Understanding* is offered on Tuesday, September 25 at 3:00 pm EDT. You can register at

Professional Development
WEBINAR
SERIES



https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/586157945?utm_source=Catholic+Teaching+on+Homosexuality+-+PMR+%5BMary%5D&utm_campaign=Catholic+Teaching+on+Homosexuality+-+PMR&utm_medium=email. For a complete listing of professional development webinars in this series please visit www.avemariapress.com/webinars

Catholic Teaching on Homosexuality: New Paths to Understanding



Rev. Louis J. Cameli, nationally renowned pastoral leader and priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago, will explore the cultural, ecclesial, and pastoral context within which he wrote his recently published book, "Catholic Teaching on Homosexuality." The webinar will introduce

participants to the topics of the book as well as extend the conversation for those participants who already have some familiarity with it. The webinar's question and comment component will provide participants with opportunities to raise questions, seek clarifications, or offer alternate perspectives. You can order [*Catholic Teaching on Homosexuality: New Paths to Understanding*](#).



SUN COME UP SCREENING – October 1-4, 2012



Two weeks ago, the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change announced the [nation-wide screening](#) (<http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resources/sun-come-up-screening/>) of *Sun Come Up* to Catholic dioceses and parishes, schools and youth groups.

Many of you responded quickly and enthusiastically! As of today, over 200 Catholic parishes, schools, youth groups, colleges and universities have committed to the educational



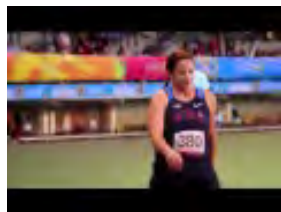
Catholic Climate Covenant
Care for Creation. Care for the Poor.

program.

You are encouraged to join them if you have not already done so. Please consider generating as large of an audience as possible so more Catholics will come to appreciate the consequences of climate change and how we might respond in faith and answer Pope Benedict's admonition not to remain indifferent, before the problems associated with such realities as climate change...[and]...the growing phenomenon of 'environmental refugees'. (2010 World Day of Peace Message)

Learn more about this initiative and [download this promotional flyer](http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/CCCC_ad_2012_SunComeUp-Flyer.pdf) (http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/CCCC_ad_2012_SunComeUp-Flyer.pdf). Sign up for the screening and [register your event here](http://org2.democracynaction.org/o/5256/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup_page_KE Y=6898). (http://org2.democracynaction.org/o/5256/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup_page_KE Y=6898).

“My Goal – Gold For My Country!” – Paralympic Games Athletes



MEDAL QUEST kicks off with an introduction to “the best athletes in the world” – the elite athletes of the Paralympic Games. Competing in sports as different as wheelchair basketball, archery, judo, cycling, and more, these American athletes personify the grit, the strategy, and the skill it takes to

go for the gold. Watch this seven (7) minute video to increase your understanding of people with disabilities, broaden awareness of Paralympic sports, highlight the adaptive technologies used by Paralympic athletes, and showcase the engineering design process used to create these technologies. Check it out at

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/medal-quest/video/detail/my-goal-gold-my-country/>.

Feedback and Reflections on the Synod on the New Evangelization

The Opening Keynote, at our annual conference and exposition in San Diego this past May, featured Fr. Frank DeSiano. Fr. Frank will be at the upcoming Synod on the New Evangelization and he will be providing regular reflections on the happenings. This is your opportunity to not only read his reflections from a United States perspective on the upcoming Synod but also to subscribe to the blog feeds for up-to-date feedback about what's happening.

New Evangelization **SYNOD 2012**
POWERED BY PAULIST EVANGELIZATION MINISTRIES

Keep Up on the News
at www.Synod2012.org

Keep up with Fr. Frank DeSiano's regular reflections while he is in Rome during the October Synod on the New Evangelization at our Synod 2012 Blog. Read his pre-synod reflections during the next few weeks before he boards for the flight to Rome.

[Subscribe to the blog feeds now](#)
and stay on top of what's happening.

Have you read *Perspectives on the Synod for the New Evangelization: A View from the United States*? [Download it now.](#)



Following the Ten Commandments – Regardless of Your Circumstances



A man who lives under a San Diego bridge always lives by the Ten Commandments, too. James Pitchl, who collects recyclables and trades them in for cash, has proven that he always does the right thing, no matter how tempting the alternative. A non-profit group, AWARE, established to trade cash to homeless folks for the plastic, glass and aluminum collected, is often receiving purses turned in by Pitchl. Watch the News Report video at <http://www.goodnewsnetwork.org/most-popular/homeless-man-turns-over-valuables-to-find-rightful-owner.html>.

It's More Important to Be Kind Than To Be Clever



I was working on a talk on the New Evangelization and the importance of using sacramental moments as doorways when I came across this article and I was reminded of the importance of the ministry of hospitality at these sacramental occasions. I also remembered a line used by Fr. John Cusick that as a priest when he helped a couple prepare for marriage that he tried not take any joy away from a wedding and in funeral preparation, he also tried not to add any more sorrow to a funeral. Here are some excerpts from Bill Taylor's column. You can read the entire column at http://blogs.hbr.org/taylor/2012/08/its_more_important_to_be_kind.html. If you liked Bill

Taylor's piece you might like a similar story about his own dad's experience in buying a new car. It's a reminder that success "is about passion, emotion, identity — sharing your values."

One of the more heart-warming stories to zoom around the Internet lately involves a young man, his dying grandmother, and a bowl of clam chowder from Panera Bread. It's [a little story that offers big lessons](#) about service, brands, and the human side of business — a story that underscores why efficiency should never come at the expense of humanity.



It was a small act of kindness that would not normally make headlines. Except that Brandon told the story on his Facebook page, and Brandon's mother, Gail Cook, retold the story on Panera's fan page. The rest, as they say, is social-media history. Gail's post generated 500,000 (and counting) "likes" and more than 22,000 comments on Panera's Facebook page. Panera, meanwhile, got something that no amount of traditional advertising can buy — a genuine sense of affiliation and appreciation from customers around the world.

...But I see the reaction to Sue Fortier's gesture as an example of something else — the hunger among customers, employees, and all of us to engage with companies on more than just dollars-and-cents terms. In a world that is being reshaped by the relentless advance of technology, what stands out are acts of compassion and connection that remind us what it means to be human.

Bezos's calculations may have been accurate — but the reaction was not what he expected. His grandmother burst into tears.... "My grandfather looked at me, and after a bit of silence, he gently and calmly said, 'Jeff, one day you'll understand that it's harder to be kind than clever.'"

...So by all means, encourage your people to embrace technology, get great at business analytics, and otherwise ramp up the efficiency of everything they do. But just make sure all their efficiency doesn't come at the expense of their *humanity*. Small gestures can send big signals about who we are, what we care about, and why people should want to affiliate with us. It's harder (and more important) to be kind than clever.

Gratitude Poetry



Gratitude is so much more than you might think! It can also be used as a tool to transform the most difficult times. This video shows us how you can use Gratitude as a Key to transform ordinary into transcendent moments. Watch this four minute video at <http://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=268>

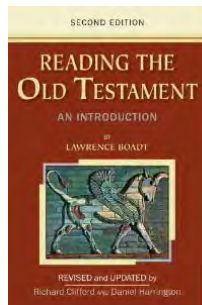
What a Wonderful World



This is a two minute video from the BBC and it is well worth your time to watch it at <http://www.youtube.com/embed/auSo1MyWf8g?rel=0> .

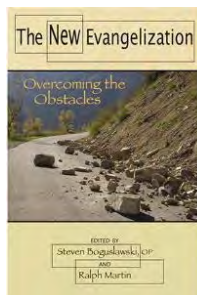


Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction; Second Edition



It's been two years since Larry Boadt was born to eternal life. It's been over 25 years since his *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction* was printed and has been a standard textbook for many adult students of the Bible. After Father Boadt's death, Richard Clifford and Daniel Harrington were asked to "bring the book up to date." As they began what they thought would be a "comprehensive revision", they discovered that the work of their colleague and friend, Father Boadt, had stood the test of time. The revision is more of an updating rather than a major revision. It is a testament to the "critical and religious scholarship" of the original author. With this new publication students will continue to benefit from Father Boadt's expertise and insights in an "extraordinarily learned and clear" manner. You can order [*Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction; Second Edition*](#)

The New Evangelization: Overcoming the Obstacles



Ralph Martin, the author of [*The New Evangelization: Overcoming the Obstacles*](#), is one of two laymen who is serving as a consultant to the new Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization. The "new" evangelization means sharing the same Good News the Church has always shared, said Ralph Martin. It's also new in audience. Whereas in the past, evangelization was directed outward, toward populations unacquainted with the Church, the new evangelization means sharing it with people who have already heard the message of Christ, even been baptized in many cases, but who have not understood or accepted it.

"It's directed at people who are no longer living as disciples of Christ and may not even understand what it means to be Catholic," Ralph Martin said. "The mission field is not in some unexplored area of Africa. It's right here in our cities and neighborhoods." You can purchase [*The New Evangelization: Overcoming the Obstacles*](#).

A Wisdom Story to Begin September



There once was a wise sage who wandered the countryside. One day, as he passed near a village, he was approached by a woman who told him of a sick child nearby. She beseeched him to help this child.

So the sage came to the village, and a crowd gathered around him, for such a man was a rare sight. One woman brought the sick child to him, and he said a prayer over her.

"Do you really think your prayer will help her, when medicine has failed?" yelled a man from the crowd.

"You know nothing of such things! You are a stupid fool!" said the sage to the man.

The man became very angry with these words and his face grew hot and red. He was about to say something, or perhaps strike out, when the sage walked over to him and said: "If one word has such power as to make you so angry and hot, may not another have the power to heal?"

And thus, the sage healed two people that day.

You can find this story and many others at <http://www.storiesofwisdom.com/the-wise-sage/>.

Life Promise Prayer

In the name of the One God, ever living and life giving,
faithful and true, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

I accept God's gift of life to me
in the circumstances
of my conception and birth,
of my parents, of my family,
of all whosoever care for me or did me
harm in all the years that began the journey
of my life.
God who calls by name works all together for my good.
I choose life.

I accept God's gift of life around me,
the sacred treasure of each human life
whether sister, brother, friend or stranger;
however whole or broken, small or great,
saint or sinner,
rich or poor, ill or well, ally or enemy, or
indifferent.

Each is crafted in God's image, to each is offered
Christ's redemption, in each moves the spirits blessing.
I choose life.

I accept God's gift of life in my times,
in infant's cry, in childhood's wonder
in trails of teen years and embrace of youth,
in maturity's accomplishments and failures,
in waning day's and night's negotiations.
Among the creatures with the breath of life within them,
God has placed the timeless in the human heart,
but not the reach to grasp or measure it.
I choose life.

I accept God's gift of life in my dying,
in God's hands the shaping of the manner
by God's clock the counting of the hour.

May God who lays me down uphold me.
May Christ along the way companion me.
May spirit lift, and light billow me into the Resurrection.

God is life, and this I choose.

In the name of the One God, ever living and life giving,
faithful and true, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

By Fr. Richard Meredith, Diocese of Owensboro

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