

Dear Catechetical Colleagues,

As we move more deeply into our Advent season, we are blessed with Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel). If you haven't had a chance to read this wonderful document, I encourage you to do so ([link](#)).

The Pope's writing is easy to read, but also very rich in content and wise counsel. His comment, "On the lips of the catechist the first proclamation must ring out over and over: 'Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.'" (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 164) is just one example of how he is encouraging all of us to share the great gifts of our Catholic faith.

As you are aware, Nelson Mandela died last week. His life was remarkable for the ending of apartheid and the gift of reconciliation he offered in his role as President of South Africa. Archbishop Kurtz's insightful reflection on the life of Nelson Mandela on behalf of USCCB is found below.

Did you know that Pope Francis will launch a global wave of prayer at **noon on December 10th**? You and your community are invited to join the global church and pray this [prayer](#) at noon wherever you are on December 10th. [Catholic Relief Services](#) has new [webpage resources and ideas](#) to help you to participate in this global campaign on December 10th and beyond.

As we draw toward the end of 2013, I also would like to alert you to some upcoming events for 2014. On **February 13th**, Dr. Carole Eipers will be offering us a wonderful presentation on the new evangelization for our annual Faith Formation luncheon. I am hoping that you will invite your pastor to attend this event, which will be both informative and entertaining.

The Liturgy Office will be sponsoring a Master of Ceremonies training on **March 22nd** at St. Madeleine Sophie Parish. If you are coordinating a Confirmation Liturgy or would like more information about how to assist during a liturgical celebration, please check out this special training.

On **March 25th**, the Office of Catholic Faith Formation and the Office of Youth Ministry will be sponsoring a Confirmation program with the Center for Ministry Development. Flyers for both of these events can be found in this newsletter.

Once again, I am thankful for the multiple resources provided by the National Conference of Catechetical Leadership (NCCL). I invite you to look into the materials they are recommending as possible additions to your libraries.

May God's blessings surround you and all those you love as we come closer to the great joy of Christmas. You are in my ongoing prayers!

In Christ,

Anne

Anne Frederick, Ed.D.
Director of Parish and School Faith Formation

ANNUAL FAITH FORMATION LUNCHEON

Date: Thursday, February 13, 2014
Place: Archbishop Brunett Retreat and Faith Formation
Center at the Palisades, Federal Way
Time: 9:30 am - 1:00 pm
Cost: \$25/person (presentation and lunch)
Audience: Priests, Deacons, Catechetical Leaders, Principals,
Religion Teachers, and all those involved in parish
and school ministry

PRESENTER AND TOPIC

Opening the Doors of Evangelization

Presenter: Carole Eipers, D.Min

Sponsored by William H. Sadlier, Inc.



Dr. Carole Eipers is the Director of Catechetics at William H. Sadlier, Inc.. She was a key member of the development team for Sadlier We Believe, a catechetical program for K-8. Carole also assists with the content of Sadlier's web presence and marketing efforts, and continues as a presenter in evangelization, catechesis and related topics both nationally and internationally.

Carole has published many articles on catechesis and related topics and has been presented at major conferences throughout the country and internationally.

RSVP to ocff@seattlearch.org or 206-382-4096

by **Thursday, February 6th**

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE • Office of Catholic Faith Formation
710 Ninth Avenue • Seattle, WA 98104

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE
710 9TH AVENUE; SEATTLE, WASHINGTON; 98104



**MASTER OF CEREMONIES
FOR EPISCOPAL LITURGIES**

A WORKSHOP ON PREPARATIONS BY THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES WHEN THE
(ARCH)BISHOP COMES TO CELEBRATE LITURGY AT YOUR PARISH.
e.g.: Confirmation, Dedication, Anniversary, Blessings

Date: Saturday, March 22nd, 2014
Time: 9:00 am – 12:00 Noon
Registration: 8:30am with coffee, juice and pastries provided
Location: St. Madeleine Sophie
4400 130th Place SE, Bellevue, 98006
Presenter: Reverend Steve Sallis
Pastor of Sacred Heart, Bellevue
Cost: \$10.00 per participant
Please make checks payable to CCAS and bring it with you to the workshop.

Register online at the [Liturgy Office website](http://seattlearchdiocese.org/liturgy)
seattlearchdiocese.org/liturgy

DEADLINE: Friday, March 14th

QUESTIONS?

Please call the Liturgy Office: (206) 382-4878 or toll-free (800) 473-5657.
Email: Jennifer.Gramaje@seattlearch.org



Presenting the 2014 National Workshop Series from the



Register now for March 25, 2014 The Chancery, Archdiocese of Seattle

Confirmation for adolescents is the strengthening of young disciples who are joined more closely with the Church as they witness to the love of Christ in their hearts. Preparing youth for confirmation is an opportunity for families, parishes and communities to be renewed by the Holy Spirit as young people are transformed for faithful lives of mission.

Parish communities are finding new ways to help youth **encounter Christ, be formed as disciples and respond in faith and mission** to their Confirmation.

This workshop will help leaders

- Explore a vision for confirmation preparation that is rooted in Catholic doctrine, best practices for comprehensive youth ministry and dynamic adolescent catechesis
- Engage families of youth and involve the parish community in the preparation process
- Identify areas for growth and improvement to enhance confirmation preparation
- Build a confirmation preparation team and select effective resources
- Develop dynamic follow-through opportunities for confirmed youth

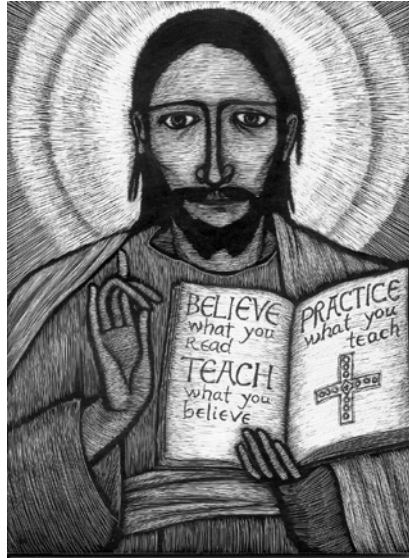
Join us for this workshop designed especially for parish ministry leaders and catechists who support the preparation of youth for Confirmation.

Workshop fee is \$54.00, which includes lunch and the handout packet. For more information or to register, click on the link below and follow the instructions:

To register:

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07e8mcoaml1b179011&llr=t7vhojcab>

FOUNDATIONS OF OUR CATHOLIC FAITH CATECHIST CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



ADULT FAITH FORMATION

- ✚ Advent
- ✚ Lent
- ✚ Retreats

CATECHIST CERTIFICATION

- ✚ Faith Formation for Parish Staff
- ✚ For Competent, Confident, and **Capable** Catechists
 - Certify at least one per grade level
 - Identify & Prepare Next Year's Catechist
- ✚ RCIA team
 - Identify & Prepare Next Year's Team

SCHEDULE AND REGISTRATION at www.seattlearchdiocese.org/ccp

USCCB President Mourns Death of Nelson Mandela, Notes Passing of Icon, Era



Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz, said the death of Nelson Mandela marked the passing of an era and an icon, Dec. 6, the day after the South African and world leader died in his homeland. His statement follows.

Christians, people of faith and all people of good will mourn the news of Nelson Mandela's death, the passing of an icon and an era.

In his struggle against apartheid rule, Nelson Mandela was a light for peace and equality in his country and for the whole world. His years of imprisonment exemplified the suffering experienced by so many who seek justice. As president of South Africa, Mandela sought to undo the structures that marginalized and impoverished people – work Pope Francis is now challenging the entire world to imitate.

The prayers of the bishops of the United States are with the Mandela family and with the people, the Church and the bishops of South Africa. We thank God for his brave witness and for all men and women who work against injustice and seek, in the words of Pope John XXIII, “to make the human sojourn on earth less sad.”

Names of the Candles on the Advent Wreath

"The celebration of Advent is marked by lighting a candle on each of the four Sundays. On the first Sunday of Advent, the purple Prophecy candle is lit, reminding us that Christ's Coming was revealed to us by God through the prophets.

The purple Bethlehem candle is lit on the second Sunday, in addition to the first purple, offering light and guidance through the bright Star of Bethlehem.

On the third Sunday, the pink (Rose) Shepherd's candle is also lit, bearing the joy and glad tidings of the coming birth.

The final purple candle is added to the lighting ceremony on the fourth Sunday. This is the Angel's candle signifying Christ's presence is near.

Finally on Christmas Day, we light a large white Christ Candle to celebrate His arrival, the Light of the World."

(This description was found on a box of candles from Root Candles, Medina, Ohio 44256 and was found on [Names of the Advent Candles](#).



The Seed of the Resurrection Calls Us to Respect Those Who Suffer



exists,” the Pope said.

The central theme of Pope Francis’ catechesis on the Creed was that the seed of eternity planted within us calls us to respect the lives of all people, particularly those who suffer. Reflecting on the “Resurrection of the Body”, the Holy Father began by presenting several aspects of this affirmation, saying that our own resurrection is linked to the resurrection of Jesus. “The fact that He is risen is the proof the resurrection of the dead

“Jesus has come among us, he made Himself man like us in everything, except sin, in this way He has taken us with Him on the path of returning to the Father,” the Pope said. “He, the Word Incarnate, who died for us a rose again, gives the Holy Spirit to His disciples as a deposit of the full communion in his glorious Kingdom, that we await for vigilantly.” Awaiting this, he went on to say, is the reason for our hope in the resurrection of the body. The more we have this reality of hope in front of us, the less we are burdened by the daily worries we face.

Focusing on the second aspect, on the meaning of the resurrection, the Pope told the faithful that in the last days, God will reunite the body with the soul, by virtue of the resurrection of Jesus. “This transformation of our body comes prepared in this life from the relationship with Jesus in the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist,” he said. “We, who in this life are nourished by his Body and His Blood will resurrect like Him, with Him and through Him. As Jesus rose again with his own body, but did not return to an earthly life, so do we rise again with our bodies that will be transfigured in glorious bodies.”

Concluding his catechesis, Pope Francis said that through the Sacrament of Baptism, we share in the Resurrection of Christ. Calling Baptism the “seed of resurrection”, the 76 year old Pontiff explained that this seed sown in us brings us to anticipate the resurrection. “For this reason even the body of each one of us is an echo of eternity, and must always be respected; and above all, the lives of those who suffer must be respected and loved so that they may feel the closeness of the Kingdom of God, of that condition of eternal life towards which we are walking,” he said.

Pope Calls on Faithful to Prepare Their Hearts for Christmas



In preparing for the Christmas season, Pope Francis has called on the faithful to open their hearts and let the Lord encounter them. Christmas, the Pope said, is not a temporary occurrence or a reminder of something beautiful that happened in the past, but rather, an encounter with the Lord.

Christmas, he stressed, is an encounter, a meeting with the Lord in faith. “It is not easy to live with faith,” the Pope said. “The Lord, in the word that we have heard, marveled at this centurion; He marveled at the faith that he had. He had made a path to meet the Lord, but he did it with faith. For this he not only encountered the Lord, but he felt the

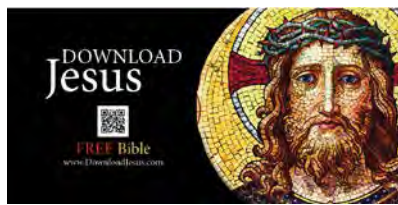
joy of being found by the Lord. And this is exactly the encounter we want: the encounter of faith!”

However, the Holy Father said that it is more important to also let oneself be found by the Lord. The coming of Christ means allowing Him to making everything new again. “We are on a path of faith, with the faith of this centurion, to encounter the Lord and above all to let ourselves be met by Him!” the Pope exclaimed.

For this encounter to happen, the Holy Father told the faithful that one must have an open heart that allows one to be found by the Lord. “He is the Lord and He will tell me what he has for me, because the Lord does not look at us all together, as one mass. No, no! He looks at each one of our faces, in the eyes, because love is not a love like that, abstract: it is a concrete love,” he said.

“To let yourselves be found by the Lord is precisely this: to let yourselves be loved by the Lord!” Concluding his homily, Pope Francis urged perseverance in prayer, charity and praise during this path towards Christmas so that Christ may find us with an open heart.

Truth and Life – It’s FREE



The Truth and Life app is a free download that has taken the award winning Truth & Life Dramatized New Testament audio and synchronized it at verse level to the RSV-CE Bible text. This amazing audio bring the word of God to life in this 22-hour audio production, complete with movie-quality sound effects and an original music score.

This award-winning audio New Testament is endorsed with an Imprimatur from the Vatican and including a foreword by Pope Benedict XVI. Voiced by internationally-renowned actors including: Neal McDonough, Stacy Keach, Kristen Bell, Sean Astin, Michael York, Blair Underwood, Malcolm McDowell, Brian Cox, Julia Ormond, John Rhys-Davies and many more. Visit www.downloadjesus.com to download the App for FREE today!

Friday Prayer and Fast



In December 2012, the US bishops announced a call to prayer and penance whose “overall focus is to invite Catholics to pray for rebuilding a culture favorable to life and marriage and for increased protections of religious liberty. Campaign components include monthly Eucharistic holy hours in cathedrals and parishes, daily family rosary, special Prayers of the Faithful at all Masses, fasting and abstinence on Fridays, and the second observance of a Fortnight for Freedom.”

This campaign was originally scheduled to end with the conclusion of the Year of Faith, but at their November 2013 meeting, the bishops voted to extend it indefinitely. The Friday prayer and fasting intentions change weekly. For more information, please go to www.usccb.org/fast. You are encouraged visit www.usccb.org/fast to subscribe to receive the weekly reminder, intention, and reflection, typically on the afternoon of the previous day, by email. Or text "FAST" to 99000 to receive text messages.

A Church Without Joy Is Unimaginable, Pope Francis Says



“You can’t imagine a Church without joy, and the joy of the Church lies precisely in this: to proclaim the name of Jesus.” Pope Francis began by reflecting on the day’s first reading taken from the prophet Isaiah, which describes how in the coming of the messiah, “the lion and the sheep shall abide together.” This passage, observed the Pope, speaks to us of the peace that we all long for and which only the Messiah can bring, while in the Gospel, when Jesus praises his Father for what he has revealed, “we are able to see a little into the soul of Jesus, the heart of Jesus,” which is “a joyful heart.”

“We always think of Jesus when He preaches, when He heals, when He travels, walks along the street, even during the Last Supper,” the Pope reflected, “but we aren’t used to thinking about Jesus smiling, joyful. Jesus was full of joy, full of joy,” explained the pontiff, quoting Jesus’ words from Luke’s Gospel when, from the intimacy with his Father, the Lord proclaims “I rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and I praised the Father.”

“Christian peace is a joyful peace, because our Lord is joyful,” the Pope continued, and because of this Christ wills that his spouse, the Church, share in this joy, which we only find when proclaiming *the name of Jesus*. Quoting his predecessor Pope Paul VI, the pontiff stated that “the joy of the Church is precisely to evangelize, to go forth and to speak about her Spouse. And also to transmit that joy to the children that she bears, that she raises.”

Pope Calls on Students to Fight for Human Dignity



Pope Francis has urged university students to cultivate broad-ranging plans and to go beyond the ordinary rather than be imprisoned by weak and uniform thought. “The social-cultural context of which you are a part is at times weighed down by mediocrity and boredom,” he said. “You must not resign yourselves to the monotony of everyday life, but rather cultivate broad-ranging plans, go beyond the ordinary.”

“Do not allow yourselves to be robbed of your youthful enthusiasm!,” the Pope exhorted. “It would also be a mistake to allow yourselves to be imprisoned by the weak and uniform thought, that which conforms, or indeed by a globalization understood as uniformity”. To overcome this risk, the Pope advocated following a true globalization “which is a good thing” and not something in which “every irregularity is smoothed over and all differences disappear – but rather that of the polyhedron, which includes multiple elements and respects unity in variety.”

“In defending unity, we also defend diversity,” the Pope said. “The contrary to that unity would not be human. ... If you do not allow yourselves to be conditioned by dominant opinions, but remain faithful to Christian ethical and religious principles, you will find the courage to swim against the tide.”

“In our globalized world, you are able to contribute to safeguarding peculiarities and specific characteristics, seeking however not to lower ethical levels,” the Pope continued. “Indeed, the plurality of thought and individuality reflect the multiform knowledge of God when it approaches truth with honesty and intellectual rigour, when it draws close to goodness and to beauty, so that each person can be a gift to the benefit of all”.

The Pope explained in his homily how the fullness of Christian life “is always besieged by the temptation to surrender to the worldly spirit. For this reason God gives us his help, by which we are able to persevere and preserve the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given us, the new life,” he said. “But why, after offering us his spiritual treasures, does God have to intervene again to maintain their integrity? Because we are weak, our human nature is frail and God's gifts are conserved in us, as if in 'earthen vessels”.

God's intervention in favor of our efforts “until the definitive encounter with Jesus, is an expression of his fidelity,” the Pope said. He brings to completion the work that he has initiated in each one of us, by his call to us. “This gives us security and great trust.”

And he warned that those who do not face these challenges, who do not rise up to them, “do not live.”

“Your will and your capacities, united with the power of the Holy Spirit which lives in each one of you from the day of your Baptism, allows you to be more than mere spectators – to be active agents in contemporary events,” the Pope said. “Please, do not look upon life from the balcony, as an observer! Get involved, where there are challenges, where your help is needed to work for life, development, the fight for the dignity of persons, the struggle against poverty, the battle for values, and the many other battles we encounter every day”.

The Pope concluded by encouraging the students in their “commitment to walk the path of faith and to behave in a manner consistent with the Gospel”, in order that it might accompany them in this time of Advent, and so they might “live in an authentic way the commemoration of the Nativity of the Lord”.

What Catholics With developmental Disabilities Bring To The Table



Under the title, *Real Presence*, the feature articles in the December issue of *U. S. Catholic* relate to persons with disabilities. Here are a few excerpts from the article. If you care to read the complete article, please go to [Real Presence](#).

There is also a Feature Essay entitled *Ramp it up* by Laura Fletcher. If intrigued by this teaser “When it comes to making churches accessible, if you don't build it, they won't come. Catholics with physical disabilities are calling on their church to create a space where all are truly welcome,” you will have to buy the issue as it is currently not available on the web or borrow it from a colleague.

According to the CDC, the number of children born with developmental disabilities has increased 17.1 percent since 1997. Included in those numbers is a rapid increase in the number of children diagnosed with autism, which has jumped 289.5 percent. As more knowledge comes to light about these disabilities and their symptoms, parishes around the United States are learning how best to accommodate Catholics with disabilities.

For some parishes, this means specially adapted Masses or religious education classes. For others, it's working with parishioners to change attitudes to create a more welcoming atmosphere. For all, it's part of an ongoing journey toward a more universal church—one that is accepting of not only other ethnicities and cultures, but other abilities as well.

Father David Schiferl, pastor of St. Alexander Parish in Cornelius, Oregon, has offered an adapted liturgy for Hispanic families on the first Sunday of each month since 2004. He can remember one occasion when a new family came to Mass with an 8-year-old son who had autism. Anxious and uncomfortable in a new place, the son was moving around a lot until he finally found a place he felt comfortable sitting—directly under the altar.



"The mother was concerned and I said, 'Leave him there, he's comfortable, he's found a home,'" Schiferl says. "That I think is indicative of this Mass and the community. Everybody there recognized right away that if that's where he wants to be, that's a good place for him. We're here celebrating the presence of Jesus Christ in the community so we want everyone to be at home, to relax as we celebrate the love of God together."

"If a person can't get into the church physically, if they're denied the opportunity to be prepared for the sacraments, you're not only losing the child, but you're losing the parents," says the NCPD's Benton. "I don't want anybody to hear 'no.' When people come to this parish, I want them to hear 'yes,' no matter who they're talking to."

[Canadian Catholic Organization for Life and Family Revamps Site](#)



The Catholic Organization for Life and Family, sponsored by the Canadian episcopal conference, has launched a revised [Web site](#) to provide a variety of resources on life issues.

Notable at the site are resources to understand euthanasia, as Canada is debating furthering access to assisted suicide.

The Web site design has been completely changed and updated, and the content includes a number of resources: COLF publications on life and family, workshop guides, reflections on urgent topics, testimonies, and even gift ideas. There were even resources on [bullying](#). You can become a subscriber to gain access to regular email updates on the most recent COLF initiatives and publications.



Pope Tells Theologians 'Sense Of The Faithful' Is Not Majority Opinion



Pope Francis said the church must pay attention to the 'sense of the faithful' ('sensus fidelium') when exercising its teaching authority, but never confuse that sense with popular opinion on matters of faith. The pope made his comments Dec. 6, in an address to members of the International Theological Commission, a Vatican advisory body. "By the gift of the Holy Spirit, the members of the church possess the 'sense of the faith,'" he said. "It is a question of a kind of 'spiritual instinct,' which permits us to 'think

with the church' and discern what is consistent with the apostolic faith and the spirit of the Gospel."

The pope said the magisterium, the church's teaching authority, has the "duty to pay attention to what the Spirit tells the church through authentic manifestations of the 'sense of the faithful.'" But he told the theologians this sense "must not be confused with the sociological reality of majority opinion. That is something else. It is therefore important, and it is your task, to elaborate the criteria that permit discernment of authentic expressions of the 'sense of the faithful.'"

History of the Church - [Historia de la iglesia](#)



Thanks to Adrián Herrera, Associate Director at Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston posted the Historia de la iglesia on SlideShare. It's worth checking out, especially if you are looking for something in Spanish. Go to [Historia de la iglesia](#).

Vatican Announces Worldwide Telecasts Information



The Pontifical Council for Social Communications has released information for broadcasters regarding worldwide telecasts of the events presided over by Pope Francis on Christmas and New Year's Day. All times are UTC/GMT (Coordinated Universal Time/Greenwich Mean Time).

- Tuesday, December 24, Christmas Eve, 20:30-22:30 hours, Midnight Mass, presided over by Pope Francis in St. Peter's Basilica.
- Wednesday, December 25, Christmas Day, 11:00-11:30 hours, Christmas Message and the "Urbi et Orbi" blessing of

Pope Francis from St. Peter's Square.

- Wednesday, January 1, 2014, Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, 09:00-11:30 hours, Mass presided over by Pope Francis in St. Peter's Basilica on the occasion of the 47th World Day of Peace.

The Pontifical Masses and events will also be streamed live through The Pope App, which will make it accessible via smartphones and tablets. Satellite distribution in the Americas is: NSS806, 319.5o E or Intelsat805, 55.5 o W.

Television commentaries from the Vatican in English, Spanish and French will be offered on the satellite audio channels of Eurovision World Feed. Details concerning various satellites and frequencies will be posted on the Pontifical Council for Social Communications' website <http://www.pccs.it/tj/telecasts.htm>. . . . Texts and background information for television producers and commentators will also be posted there. Those unable to receive the broadcasts through the above service providers should contact telecast@pccs.va for alternative satellite reception possibilities.

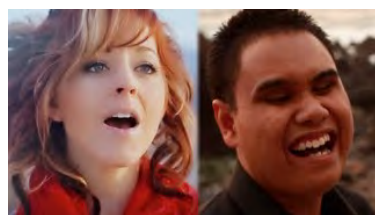
Little Drummer Boy



Listen to this acapella version of the Little Drummer Boy by [Pentatonix](#).

You can purchase [Little Drummer Boy](#) the through the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

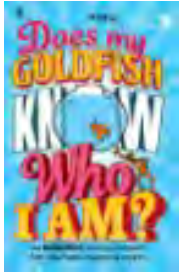
O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



Lindsey loved working with Kuha'o on this project. He is blind and self taught and yet he is a light to anyone who sees him play. "He loves to share music with everyone so please help him spread his gifts with the world by subscribing to his channel." Listen to [O Come, O Come, Emmanuel](#). Get a free download of this song by subscribing to Lindsey's mailing list at

<http://lindseystirling.fanbridge.com/>. Kuha'o's youtube:
<http://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1ezYb...>

Quick Lesson in Media Literacy



Taken from the book [*Does My Goldfish Know Who I Am?: Big Questions and Instant Answers*](#) – a compendium of primary school children's funny, poignant, innocent yet insightful questions about science and how life works. In answering 8-year-old Hannah's question about what newspapers do when there is no news, writer and journalist **Oliver Burkeman**, author of the excellent [*The Antidote: Happiness for People Who Can't Stand Positive Thinking*](#), offers a primer on media literacy – an important caveat on news that even we, as alleged grown-ups, frequently forget:

“Newspapers don’t really go out and find the news: they decide what gets to count as news. The same goes for television and radio. And you might disagree with their decisions! (For example, journalists are often accused of focusing on bad news and ignoring the good, making the world seem worse than it is.)

The important thing to remember, whenever you’re reading or watching the news, is that someone decided to tell you those things, while leaving out other things. They’re presenting one particular view of the world – not the only one. There’s always another side to the story.

Because Who Is Perfect? . . . Get Closer



Disabled mannequins will be eliciting astonished looks from passers-by on Zurich's Bahnhofstrasse today. Between the perfect mannequins, there will be figures with scoliosis or brittle bone disease modelling the latest fashions. One will have shortened limbs; the other a malformed spine. The campaign has been devised for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities by *Pro Infirmis*, an organization for the disabled. Entitled "Because who is perfect? Get closer.", it is designed to provoke reflection on the acceptance of people with disabilities. Director Alain Gsponer has captured the campaign as a short film.

When designers made these special mannequins, they had one question in mind: who is perfect? None of us are. We should learn NOT to judge, but to love ourselves and others. Check out [*Persons with Disabilities*](#).

[The Joy of the Gospel](#)

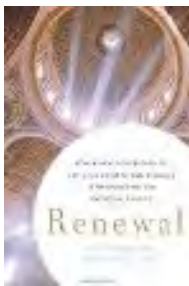
Pope Francis is calling upon the Church and the world with encouragement to begin a new chapter in evangelization. This dynamic document is written in the plain, everyday language for which the pope has become famous.

Available now for [pre-order](#) from USCCB. You can order the Kindle edition of [Evangelii gaudium. Exhortación apostólica: 57 \(Documentos MC\)](#) [\(Spanish Edition\)](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.



[Catholic Renewal: The Untold Stories](#)

In his newly released book, [Renewal: How a New Generation of Faithful Priests and Bishops Is Revitalizing the Catholic Church](#), co-author Anne Hendershott and Christopher White aim to chronicle this good news and the signs of renewal that are to be found in the Church throughout the United States. “When we started research for this project two years ago, we were surprised to find a noticeable uptick in vocation rates to the priesthood. As such, we set out discover why — in the face of such controversy and criticism — the Catholic priesthood had become so attractive to so many.”



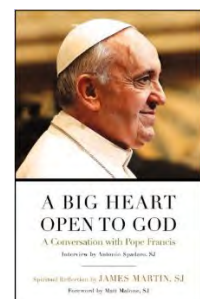
Priests and bishops are called to serve Christ by sharing in his ministry to his people, the Church. We who are laity — we who are called serve Christ through the unfolding of our baptismal graces, which is facilitated by the work of our priests and bishops — are the beneficiaries of that service. We need priests. Priests are Christ’s representatives on this earth, and only priests can offer us the sacraments that give us hope of life beyond this earth. We owe our priests and bishops our prayers, our gratitude, our own commitments to lives of holiness.

The task of renewal is incumbent upon us all. If we truly commit to that Gospel calling, there will be much more good news to be shared.

You can purchase your copy of [Renewal: How a New Generation of Faithful Priests and Bishops Is Revitalizing the Catholic Church](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

[A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis](#)

In addition to the full papal interview conducted by Antonio Spadaro, SJ, on behalf of the Jesuit journals, *A Big Heart Open to God* includes an introduction by the editor in chief of *America*, Matt Malone, SJ, describing the genesis of the interview, a series of responses by a diverse range of Catholic voices, and a

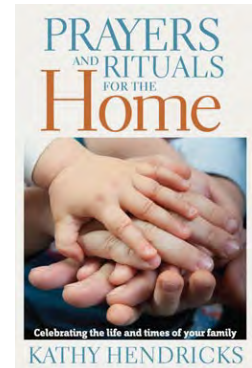


spiritual refection on the interview by James Martin, SJ, author of [*The Jesuit Guide to \(Almost\) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life*](#). In his refection, Father Martin helps readers use the pope's powerful comments as a foundation for personal prayer. You can purchase [*A Big Heart Open to God: A Conversation with Pope Francis*](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

[Prayers and Rituals for the Home: Celebrating the Life and Times of Your Family](#)

This practical, uplifting book can help all families whether they pray frequently or not at all develop genuine prayer rituals and practices that strengthen their faith, lift their hearts, and cherish the joy of being a family. Her chapter titles remind us of our elementary teachers guidance when it came to writing.

- What to Pray
- Ways to Pray
- When to pray
- Where to pray
- Why Pray



You can't go wrong and you can purchase [*Prayers and Rituals for the Home: Celebrating the Life and Times of Your Family*](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

[God's Bucket List: Heaven's Surefire Way to Happiness in This Life and Beyond](#)



It started with the movie and for Teresa Tomeo, the "bucket list" idea comes in as she examines what God wants for each of us. As one reviewer wrote, “And that gets the reader into the book itself, which is centered around Scripture and Catholic teaching in a way that's both catechetical and entertaining. God's bucket list is aligned with the fruits of the Spirit, which makes sense (and makes the catechist in me smile broadly).” You can purchase [*God's Bucket List: Heaven's Surefire Way to Happiness in This Life and Beyond*](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

How to Share Your Faith with Anyone: A Practical Manual of Catholic Evangelization



This is an easy to read book and one that can help any Catholic *evangelize*. Terry doesn't tell you what to say, he shows you how to go about it and that's what most Catholics need. It is very practical and helpful.

You can purchase [How to Share Your Faith with Anyone: A Practical Manual of Catholic Evangelization](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

It was the Very First Christmas



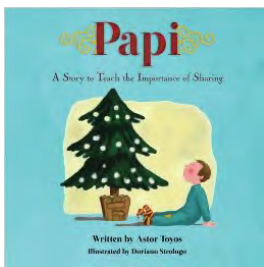
With dreamy water colors and portraits of characters in shadow, Crystal Grace Hansen has illustrated a Biblical and Historical story telling as never before. Her creativity in a children's familiar rhyme highlights the first Christmas...the Birth of Jesus. You can purchase [It was the Very First Christmas](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

The Christmas Angel



This is an intergenerational book that affirms the importance of passing on the story. "According to his special Thomas family tradition, the Christmas tree must always be outside, where it can look up to God. Owen carves her an angel to go on top of their tree, with lavender eyes like hers, a token more meaningful to her than any engagement ring." You can purchase [The Christmas Angel](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

Papi: A Story to Teach the Importance of Sharing



This true story, with delightful illustrations, captures the spirit of Christmas and highlights the importance of sharing. A five year old granddaughter tells the story of "Papi" and a childhood Christmas scarce in presents, but rich in hope and good cheer!

You can purchase [Papi: A Story to Teach the Importance of Sharing](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

Our Lady of Guadalupe



[Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
Carmen T. Bernier-...



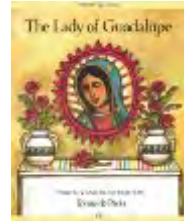
[Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
Francisco Serrano,...



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



[The Beautiful Lady](#)
Pat Mora, Steve Jo...



[The Lady of Guadalupe](#)
Tomie dePaola

Lucia, Saint of Light

My nieces no longer ask for American girl dolls but if you know girls who do; this book connects the Italian hymn about Santa Lucia, the Scandinavian festival and the American Girl Doll Kirsten! As a child who spent his summers on my godfather's farm, I remember celebrating Name's Days.

This story shows how modern-day Orthodox Christians celebrate their namedays. The book is completed with verses from Aposticha for the Feast of Saint Lucia, a recipe for Lussekatter (Lucia Cat Buns), and a list of other resources. You can order [**Lucia, Saint of Light.**](#)

