

Dear Catechetical Colleagues,

You are in my prayers for a blessed Lenten season. As we enter this time of fasting, almsgiving and praying, this newsletter contains several resources that I hope you will find helpful for your classroom and ministries.

I also would like to remind you about some upcoming Archdiocesan events:

- *Confirming Young Disciples* – March 25th
- *Iron Sharpens Iron Men's* Conference – March 29th
- *How to Welcome, Include and Catechize Children with Autism and Other Special Needs* – April 4th
- Mass with Archbishop Sartain for the Special Needs Community – April 5th
- Several events at the Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center at the Palisades – see below

You are also encouraged to review the upcoming webinars, resources on special needs, and video links (check out [Carly Fleischmann](#) and consider how Deacon Sutton's presentation can help us bring out the inner voice of those we are called to serve).

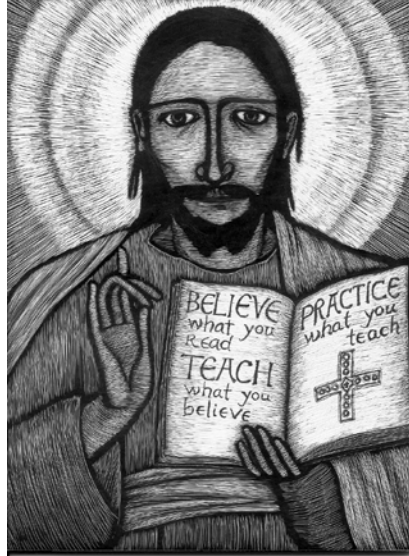
Peace in Christ,

Anne

Anne Frederick, Ed.D.

Director of Religious Education/Parish and School Faith Formation

FOUNDATIONS OF OUR CATHOLIC FAITH CATECHIST CERTIFICATION PROGRAM



ADULT FAITH

- ✚ Advent
- ✚ Lent
- ✚ Retreats

FORMATION

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

Liturgy Office Workshops:

<http://www.seattlearchdiocese.org/Liturgy/workshops.aspx>



Register now for March 25, 2014
Isaac Orr Conference Center, Chancery (910 Marion Building)

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:

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

**Seattle Catholic
2nd Annual Men's Conference
Saturday, March 29, 2014**



IRON SHARPENS IRON

Cost: \$50

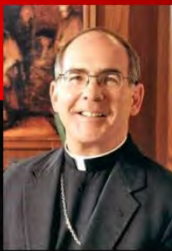
**Includes Dynamic speakers,
breakfast, lunch &
confession opportunities**

**Registration Opens:
7:00 a.m.**

**Conference Time:
8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m.**

Saturday, March 29, 2014

**RSVP online at
www.seattlemensconference.org**



Archbishop Sartain



Danny Abramowicz



Fr. Mark Mary



Fr. Bryan Dolejsi



Mauricio Perez



Art Pieretti



Fr. Ed White



Sheldon Sweeney



Chris Gootherts



Fr. Pat Freitag

**ST. MONICA CATHOLIC CHURCH, MERCER ISLAND, WA
WWW.SEATTELEMENSCONFERENCE.ORG**

HOW TO
**Welcome, Include, AND
Catechize**

Children with Autism and other Special Needs

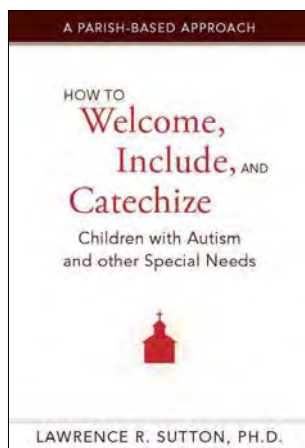
Presenter: Deacon Lawrence R. Sutton, Ph.D.

Date: Friday, April 4, 2014

Time: 9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Location: Isaac Orr Conference Center (910 Marion Bldg)

Cost: Provided by *Loyola Press*; lunch is included



In his book, Deacon Larry, a nationally recognized expert in the field of autism, provides the insights needed to build an effective faith formation program for all children. By sharing stories of success and inspiration that affect everyone – pastor, parent, student, teenager, and catechist – he delivers the unexpected: that catechizing children with special needs actually nurtures the faith of the entire parish. By the end of this workshop, participants will have an effective guide to offer religious education programs across cognitive, physical and developmental levels.

RSVP by March 28th to ocff@seattlearch.org or 206-382-4096
If you are unable to attend in person, consider joining via **LIVE WEBINAR**. Call for details.

Archdiocese
of Seattle

Please join us



Mass for the Special Needs Community

*"All persons with disabilities
have the capacity to proclaim
the Gospel and to be living
witnesses to its truth within
the community of faith and
offer valuable gifts. Their
involvement enriches every
aspect of Church life."*

*United States Conference of
Catholic Bishops, 2005*

Archbishop J. Peter Sartain invites us all to celebrate a
Mass for our special needs community, including
families, friends and our faith communities.

Saturday - April 5, 2014
11:00am
St. James Cathedral – Seattle

Reception to follow in the Isaac Orr Conference Center

For more information, please contact:
Erica Cohen Moore – (206) 382-4852 – ericac@seattlearch.org



Upcoming Retreats

Mar 14-16

Men's Silent Lenten
Retreat
Fr. Sean Raftis

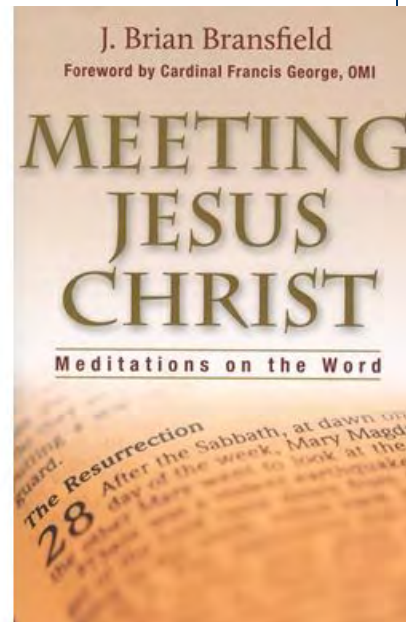
Mar 21-23

Meeting Jesus:
Meditations
on the Word, Silent
Retreat
Msgr. Brian Bransfield

Mar 28-30

Inspired Common Sense:
Women's Silent Retreat
Fr. Lewis Fiorelli

Meeting Jesus: Meditations on the Word



March 21-23, 2014

Led by: Monsignor Brian Bransfield



*Great Article in NW Catholic by
Monsignor Bransfield:*

Mar 28-30

A Spiritual Look at
Shakespeare: Antony and
Cleopatra
Fr. Stephen Rowan

April 11-13

Into the Passion:

Palm Sunday Men's
Retreat

Fr. Jim Lee

April 23-25

What if Your Vocation is
Love? St. Thérèse of
Lisieux Retreat

Fr. Jack Welch

May 9-11

Women's Silent Retreat
Fr. Jim Northrop

May 16, 17, 18

Sacred Story Whole-Life
Confession Retreat

Fr. Bill Watson

Click here to read,
"Making the Ordinary Extraordinary"

Looking Ahead...

April 23-25:

What if Your Vocation is
Love? St. Thérèse of Lisieux
Retreat

Fr. Jack Welch



June 13-15:

With Burning Hearts: The
Mind and Heart of Pope
Francis

Fr. Thomas Rosica



A Place of Welcome

May 30-Jun 1
The Church of Today

Dr. Massimo Faggioli

June 13-15

With Burning Hearts:
The Mind and Heart of
Pope Francis

Fr. Thomas Rosica

**Click here to view our
current 2014
Retreat Calendar**



The staff of the Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center want you to know that when you come to visit us, you will find good food, a comfortable room, extraordinary views and people who are ready and eager to help you grow in your love of our Lord.

*"Let all guests who arrive be received like Christ
for He is going to say,
'I came as a guest and you received Me (Matt. 25:35).'
~ From the Rule of St. Benedict.*

Do you see a retreat you think would benefit a friend?
Forward this email along to them!

 [Forward to a Friend](#)

With thanks,



Deacon Eric Paige

Director of Retreat and Faith Formation Centers

*The Archbishop Brunett Retreat Center
at the Palisades*

4700 SW Dash Point Road, Federal Way, WA 98023

(206) 748-7991 palisades@seattlearch.org

seattlearchdiocese.org/palisades

A Cyberpilgrim's Blog

Digital Discipleship: Transforming Ministry Through Technology

<http://acyberpilgrim.org/2014/03/03/lent-challenges/>

CATECHIST Magazine (Online)

Faith Formation for All: Welcoming, Supporting, and Catechizing Children with Special Needs

http://www.catechist.com/articles_view.php?article_id=4580

Journey to the Foot of the Cross - 10 Things to Remember For Lent



Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wisconsin, chairman of the Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), offers “10 Things to Remember for Lent”. If you care to read the expanded version, please go to [10 Things to Remember](#).

1. **Remember the formula.**
2. **It's a time of prayer**
3. **It's a time to fast.**
4. **It's a time to work on discipline.**
5. **It's about dying to yourself.**
6. **Don't do too much.**
7. **Lent reminds us of our weakness.**
8. **Be patient with yourself.**
9. **Reach out in charity**
10. **Learn to love like Christ**

Resources for Lent



The Diocese of Dallas has compiled Lenten resources in English and in Spanish. They also have permission from Loyola Press to share Joe Paprocki's Powerpoint on Lent. It has speaking notes, which can be of help to catechists. A few excerpts are attached, but you can download the complete materials by clicking on the following links.

- [Lenten Resources English \(Word Document\)](#)
- [Lenten Resources English \(PDF File\)](#)
- [Recursos para la Cuaresma 2 24 2014 \(Word Document\)](#)
- [Recursos para la Cuaresma 2 24 2014 \(PDF File\)](#)

- **Joe Paprocki Lent PowerPoint**

Lenten Resources

General Resources

General information and tips for living the season spiritually

[Message of Pope Francis for Lent 2014](#) and [video](#) from Rome Reports about the Pope's message.

[Articles, videos, activities and more \(Loyola Press\)](#)

[Praying Lent](#). Daily prayers, online and audio retreats, articles, recipes (Creighton University)

[Mobile App](#): CRS Rice Bowl App. Daily reflections, a tool to track Lenten goals and progress, stories and videos of people who benefit from prayers and almsgiving to CRS Rice Bowl, and recipes.

The Lenten Workshop: personal program, prayers, activities ([Catholic Culture](#))

[Articles by Our Sunday Visitor](#) and [Our Sunday Visitor Parish](#)

[Your Handy-Dandy List to Lenten Sacrifices](#) (Catholic Sisters)

[101 Creative Suggestions for Lent](#) (free)

Family Ideas

Family [activities](#) for Lent (Christian Family Movement)

[Family Nights](#). Themes for families to use at home, including prayer, something to think about, conversation starters, activity ideas for Young Families, Middle Years Families and Adult Families, entertainment, and even snack suggestions (Christian Family Movement)

Suggestions for the family to implement into the Lenten season, family activities and

crafts, explanation of Lent and the liturgy, a

Recursos para la Cuaresma

Recursos Generales

[Mensaje del Santo Padre Francisco para la Cuaresma 2014](#)

Información general, textos para reflexionar, calendario litúrgico ([ACI Prensa](#))

Artículos, actividades y otros recursos ([Loyola Press](#))

Reflexiones en Cuaresma (para uso individual o con la familia, o para las parroquias) (costo, [Renew International](#))

Varios libros o libretitos en Español para todas las edades con reflexiones diarias, calendarios, oraciones, y más. Ver el sitio [web](#) o [Pinterest](#) de Liguori Publications

Videos: [miércoles de ceniza](#) | [cuaresma](#)

Para Adultos

[Los Jesuitas: Maneras de vivir la cuaresma para adultos](#)

[El Vía Crucis para Adultos](#)

[El Vía Crucis o Camino de la Cruz Español](#)

[Artículos con videos](#) (Misioneros Oblatos)

Para la Familia

[Familia Católica- Ideas para celebrar la fe en familia alrededor del Calendario Litúrgico](#)

Material Impreso:

[El Año Litúrgico en Familia](#) de [Xhonané Olivas](#) y [Miguel R. Olivas-Luján](#) (Familia Católica: 2014).

[Bienvenido Jesús resucitado: Reflexiones de Cuaresma y Pascua para la familia](#) de Sarah A. Reinhard (Liguori Publications: 2012).

Para Niños

Recursos para la catequesis ([ACI Prensa](#))

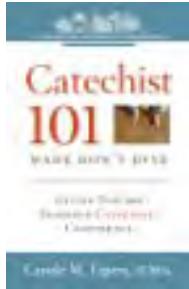
[Recursos](#) variados

[Documentos descargables](#): Actividad para niños de primaria grados 1-3 y grados 4-6; celebración de ceniza para las diversas

edades y celebración de reconciliación
(Equipo de Mision SAFA)

Blog con recursos de cuaresma ([Blog Educación Religiosa](#))

Catechist 101: Wade, Don't Dive



This is the latest book in *The Essential Catechist Bookshelf*. Anyone who has heard Carole speak knows her creativity and enthusiasm for passing on the faith and this book shares her experiences with the same delight you experience when participating in any type of learning experience with her. Carole helps you love the Baptismal water so much that you will not drown from this second "Yes". You will be taken from just putting your toes into the water to diving in with just ten easy steps. You can order [**Catechist 101: Wade, Don't Dive**](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

Archbishop Paglia: Family More Present Than Ever in Heart of the Church



Presenting Pope Francis' [Letter to Families](#) today, Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia, president of the Pontifical Council for the Family, said that during these months "the family has been, more than ever before, in the mind and the heart of the Church. "Pope Francis, with this letter to the 'dear families' of the world, wishes to involve them in the Synod path", explained the Archbishop, adding that prayer "is the first form of participation in this joint path."

"Families – and this is the Pope's intention – are not simply the object of attention, but are also the subjects of this pilgrimage, given that they form a majority within the Church, and are marked by the Sacrament of Marriage," he said. He added that it is important not to forget that that spread of early Christianity occurred through a network of families. "It is an important lesson for our times, in which we invoke a new missionary season for evangelical preaching," the archbishop said.

"The Pope asks Christian families to be aware of the responsibility of their mission in times of confusion and restlessness. He asks for their help. In addition, if there is a theme of Christian life, for which the support of the family is indispensable both to the Pope and to the Church, then this is it. If there were no families, then Jesus' Word – the word of the Church, the word of the Pope – on the married love which is able to open us up to God's unconditional love for all, would appear abstract, unrealistic and ineffectual," he added.

"But families, thanks to God, exist and have a living presence", concluded the prelate. "Therefore, it is important for Pastors and families to live 'in harmony in prayer' in this time, as if in a spiritual Cenacle that gathers the whole world together, waiting for the Spirit to evoke a renewed Pentecost".

Leadership Institute Webinars – Key Themes of the Second Vatican Council



In *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Pope John Paul II asserted that over the years the teachings of the Second Vatican Council have lost nothing of their brilliance, and provide a "sure compass" for the Church in this new millennium. For this "compass" to guide us, it is essential that pastors and all informed Catholics are aware of and understand accurately the key teachings of this Council of the 20th century. This is the latest offering from the Institute and you are encouraged to take the

time to listen to Dr. Alan Schreck [Part 1](#) | [Part 2](#) | [Part 3](#) | 2014. Go to the [New Evangelization](#).

Dr. Alan Schreck has been on the faculty of Franciscan University of Steubenville since 1978, and has been a full professor since 1987. Since 1980 he has taught a graduate course on the teachings of Vatican II and has written [Vatican II: The Crisis and the Promise](#). Among his 13 other books are [The Compact History of the Catholic Church: Revised Edition](#), his classic apologetic work [Catholic and Christian: An Explanation of Commonly Misunderstood Catholic Beliefs](#), and [The Legacy of Pope John Paul II: The Central Teaching of His 14 Encyclical Letters](#).



Dr. Schreck and his wife Nancy have five grown children and three grandchildren, and belong to Triumph of the Cross parish in Steubenville, OH.



National Catholic Educational Association
Leadership. Direction. Service.

Catechetical & Educational Planning: Setting Goals and Action Steps

Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Webinar

Presented by Lori Dahlhoff and Regina Haney of the NCEA Religious Education and Boards and Councils Departments



Lori Dahlhoff, EdD
Executive Director
NCEA Religious Education Department



Regina Haney, EdD
Executive Director
NCEA Boards and Councils Department

with Guest Presenters



Maggie Dates
Principal
St. Pius X School, Baltimore, MD



Caroline J. Pacione
President and Pastoral Life Director
St. Pius X School, Baltimore, MD

How will you know your catechetical and educational plan is aimed toward your vision for a program or school? This webinar will describe the basics of setting goals and outlining action steps within a strategic planning process. We will highlight some of the unique considerations for a Catholic educational setting including evangelization and connecting to other institutions like a parish, school, or diocese. A special feature of the presentation will be a practitioner sharing planning insights from the field.

To help you get the most out of this webinar we strongly suggest you:

1. Submit questions to presenters through the registration form (please click on the "register now" button below).
2. Review the earlier webinars in this series to familiarize yourself with the steps of the strategic planning process and who is involved: "[The Role of Advisory Groups in Effective Catechetical Planning](#)" and "[Catechetical & Educational Planning: Crafting a Vision and Identifying Critical Issues](#)."
3. "Bring a friend" or schedule the planning team to participate with you.

Webinar participants will be able to:

- Name the key elements of an attainable, measureable goal.
- Outline basic steps for drafting action steps aimed toward the plan's vision and goals.
- Identify practical considerations for strategic planning related to Catholic education and catechesis.

This webinar is offered free of charge as an NCEA member benefit.

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

2 p.m. ET

**2 p.m. ET
Register now**

Contact Information

[Email NCEA](#)

FREE Professional Development Webinar—Tuesday, March 11, 3:00 pm EDT



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

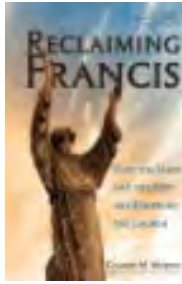
Reclaiming Francis: 10 Lessons Parish Workers Can Learn from the Saint and Pope is offered on Tuesday, March 11 at 3:00 pm EDT. **You can**

register at [PDW - 03-11-2014](#)

(<http://tiny.cc/93elbx>). For a complete listing of professional development webinars in this series, please visit www.avemariapress.com/webinars.



Reclaiming Francis: 10 Lessons Parish Workers Can Learn from the Saint and Pope



Presented by: Msgr. Charles Murphy,
author of Reclaiming Francis: How the Saint and the Pope
are Renewing the Church, Eucharistic Adoration: Holy Hour
Meditations on the Seven Last Words of Christ, and The
Spirituality of Fasting: Rediscovering a Christian Practice

Date: March 11, 2014

Time: 3 p.m. EST



Msgr. Charles Murphy, who has served as pastor of four parishes, distills from the examples of the saint who was commissioned to "Rebuild my Church" and of the pope who took his name ten practical ways we can rebuild the Church in our day.

These lessons include a conception of ministry that focuses on one-on-one, personal witness. The lessons also re-emphasize the freshness and beauty of the Gospel, its central teachings, and a preaching that is more sharply focused upon a call to conversion of heart.



SIGN UP!

Pope Francis: Bishops Need Not Be Crusaders, But Pastors



Pope Francis re-emphasized his vision of who should be chosen as Catholic bishops around the world, telling the Vatican office responsible for their selection he wants prelates who are "genuine pastors" and who will "argue with God on behalf of [their] people." In a nearly 3,000-word text to the Vatican's Congregation for Bishops, Francis tells the office they should not look for bishops based on any "preferences, likes, or trends" and likewise should not seek prelates who are mainly concerned with

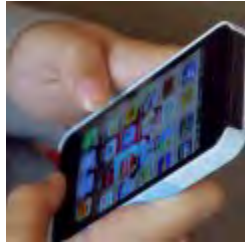
doctrinal matters.

The church, writes Francis, needs "guardians of doctrine not so as to measure how far the world is from doctrinal truth but to appeal to the world to charm it with the beauty of love [and] to seduce it with the freedom bestowed by the Gospel. The church does not need apologists of its causes nor crusaders of its battles, but sowers humble and confident of the truth, who ... trust of its power," the pontiff continues.

Francis invites the congregation to review the teachings of the early church to "look for some criteria" in choosing bishops. The pope asks them particularly to consider how the apostles chose a replacement for Judas, following his betrayal of Christ. "The bishop is first and foremost a martyr of the risen one," the pope states. "His life and his ministry must make credible the resurrection."

The central prayer of a bishop, the pope tells the congregation, should be for the salvation of his people. Recounting the Old Testament story of Sodom, when Abraham negotiated with God not to destroy the city if there could be ten righteous people found within its boundaries, Francis says bishops must be "courageous in intercessory prayer as Abraham. A man who lacks the courage to argue with God on behalf of his people cannot be bishop - I say this from the heart, I am convinced," he states.

Frontline: Generation Like



Mike Theisen from NFCYM and Lee Nagel from NCCL, have recommended those working with youth to spend 55 minutes watching the PBS documentary *Generation Like* which was broadcast on Frontline at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/generation-like/>. There are some companion articles you may also find interesting.

Generation Like highlights how social media is forming the identity of youth/young adults and the role the marketing companies are playing in it.

Thanks to social media, teens are able to directly interact with their culture -- celebrities, movies, brands -- in ways never before possible. But is that real empowerment? Or do marketers hold the upper hand? In "Generation Like," Douglas Rushkoff explores how the teen quest for identity has migrated to the web -- and exposes the game of cat-and-mouse that corporations are playing with them. It's done by the same group who brought us "[*Merchants of Cool*](#)" back in 2001.

Pope's Interviewer Tells Vatican Congress To Reevaluate Spiritual Quest



Changes in technology have fundamentally altered the human quest for spirituality and require Catholics to reevaluate how they approach society. Saying the Internet has brought on a "radical change in perception of the religious question itself," Jesuit Fr. Antonio Spadaro, editor-in-chief of the Italian Jesuit magazine *La Civiltà Cattolica*, said the traditional Catholic vision of spirituality "does not stand up today."

Where humans would once ask, "God, where are you?", we now think of the spiritual almost in terms of a cellular network — waiting for answers to arrive on our multitudes of devices, said Spadaro. In such a system, it is no longer important for the spiritual teacher to give answers because *answers are everywhere*. "It is not the answers, but the questions which are important" today, he said. "We must learn to distinguish the true questions from the replies that are continually given."

Sending a message to SIGNIS, known formally as the World Catholic Association for Communication, Francis said Catholic communicators today are "challenged to present the wisdom, truth and beauty of the Gospel in a language capable of touching the minds and hearts of



countless people who thirst for meaning and direction in their lives as individuals and as members of society."

Spadaro spoke to the SIGNIS group during a keynote session on "The Emerging Digital Culture: Ethical and Spiritual Perspectives." Among those responding to the Jesuit was Msgr. Paul Tighe, secretary of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Social Communications.

Tighe, an Irishman who has served at the Vatican since 2007 and is partly responsible for the pope's wildly popular Twitter accounts, told participants that their "first service" is to listen to what people are saying on the Internet. "I think a first service we need to do is to allow the deeper questions to emerge in the digital arena," he said, telling the communicators to take the questions seriously but "don't rush to answer."

"If we want to be there where people are looking for something let's not rush in with a ready-made answers," he said. "God will find people," said Tighe. "It's not up to us. People in their nature are searching for something. Our job is not to get in the way, not to block the passage."



Spadaro ended his talk by comparing the Internet to the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, one of the founders of the Jesuit order. Traditionally given as a 30-day spiritual retreat, the exercises focus on having the retreat maker imagine themselves inside a Gospel story — hearing, feeling, and touching all that is present in the story.

The exercises, Spadaro said, have a *sense of virtual reality*. "It is the same dynamic of a video game," he said. "See yourself inside the scene contemplating Jesus, Mary, Joseph and yourself acting. This is very interesting."

SIGNIS, known formally as the World Catholic Association for Communication, is an international association that traces its roots to groups founded in 1928 for Catholic media professionals to "help transform our cultures in the light of the Gospel."

Priest Defies Machete-Wielding Christians



This priest is a powerful witness to God's love, God's mercy and God's forgiveness. I remember a line from *Fiddler on the Roof* when Tevye says that if one followed the motto of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, we would all be running around blind and toothless. Read this story and pray that hearts will be changed. When's the last time you really saw someone turn to the church for sanctuary? This priest makes us proud to be Catholic. You can read the complete article at [Church is Sanctuary for Muslim Refugees](#).

The Christian militiamen know hundreds of Muslims are hiding here on the grounds of the Catholic Church and now they're giving them a final ultimatum: Leave Central African Republic within a week or face death at the hands of machete-wielding youths.

On Monday, some of the 30 Cameroonian peacekeepers fired into the air to disperse angry militia fighters congregated outside the concrete walls of the church compound. The gunfire sent traumatized children running for cover and set off a chorus of wails throughout the courtyard.

The peacekeepers are all that stand between nearly 800 Muslims and the armed gangs who want them dead. Already the fighters known as the anti-Balaka have brought 40 litres of gasoline and threatened to burn the church to the ground.

Even the Rev. Justin Nary, who takes in more Muslims by the day, knows he too is a marked man in the eyes of anti-Balaka. “Walking through town I’ve had guns pointed in my face four times,” he says. “They call my phone and say they’ll kill me once the peacekeepers are gone.”

...The priests here in Carnot have given away all their money to try and keep the anti-Balaka at bay. There are no aid groups here apart from a clinic operated by Medecins Sans Frontieres, or Doctors Without Borders. The Catholic Church, though, is pledging to continue its work here no matter what the personal risk.

“For us they are not Muslims or Christians. They are people — people in danger,” says the Rev. Dieu-Seni Bikowo. “The anti-Balaka are not Christians. They are thieves who are profiting from the anger against Muslims.”

8 Wonderful Psychological Effects of Being Compassionate



The power of compassion is stronger than empathy because it is about imagining the suffering of others at a deeper level; consequently it is more likely to motivate action. And compassion isn’t just beneficial for the person being helped—nurturing compassion has some remarkable psychological effects on the self. Here are eight psychology studies which show the effects of exercising your humanity. If you care to read more about the studies behind these effects, please go to [Wonderful Effects of Being Compassionate](#).

1. Compassion can be learned

Compassion is not something you either have or you don’t—it can (and should) be learned and nurtured.

2. Compassion motivates action

It’s all very well feeling more compassionate, but it’s not much use if you don’t do anything about it. Compassion, though, can be a powerful motivating force.

3. Happier and healthier

Along with being beneficial to others, experiencing more compassion benefits your own psychological and physical health.

4. Boost immune response

The power of compassion also reaches into the body’s immune and stress response systems.

5. Empathic neural response

Neuroscientists have found that increased loving compassion can be measured in the living brain.

6. Increased empathy

Since compassionate thought boosts activity in the empathic centers of the brain, it also boosts empathic accuracy.

7. More helpful

8. Less afraid of suffering

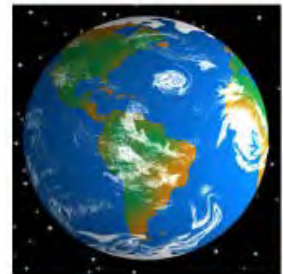
The pain of others is distressing and it's a natural reaction to avoid people in pain. But being more compassionate can change this, causing negative avoiding emotions to be replaced with positive compassionate emotions.

Under The Influence: Breathing Life And Spirit In/To A Mediated World



This presentation was given at Loyola University, Baltimore, Feb. 28, 2014, faculty retreat, Education Department by [Rose Pacatte](#), Director at Pauline Center for Media. She posted it on SlideShare and you can see it at [Under the Influence](#). Here is her brief description of the slide show.

The constant barrage of bad news in a 24 hour news cycle, coupled with opportunities for multi-platform entertainment 24/7 with its relentless gospel of consumerism, can be depressing and overwhelming. The demands this electronically mediated environment places on the human person, body and spirit, depending on age and circumstance, requires a response that is personal, social, and cultural. Sister Rose will lead us on a silence-prayer-conversation reflection on this reality using sight and sound samples from popular media to discover ways to breathe and grow joyfully while "under the influence."



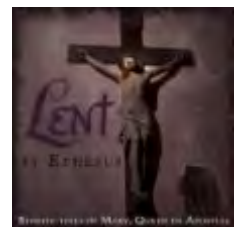
Mother Cecilia of Benedictines of Mary Reflects on "My Mercy"



Those who follow the classical music scene are already familiar with the group of cloistered nuns in Missouri who have won honors for what's been referred to as their "very pure yet sophisticated style." The Benedictines of Mary, Queen of Apostles, is a religious order founded just less than 20 years ago, in 1995. The sisters sing together

eight times a day as they chant the Divine Office in Latin.

Their prioress, [Mother Cecilia Snell](#), found her vocation to religious life after working as a professional musician. Mother Cecilia and the sisters have now released three chart-topping albums, the latest being "Lent at Ephesus." Mother Cecilia was asked to share a reflection on this latest album, and she chose to speak briefly about the last of the 23 tracks, an original piece titled "My Mercy." The lyrics follow:



Jesus I trust in You,
I love You, have mercy.
Deep from Your wounded heart, Pour out Your grace and mercy.
Meek and all-humble,
Patient and mild,
Your heart draws poor sinners Each as Your child.
Let no one fear
To approach Your dear Heart
Sweet compassion compels You, Forgiveness to impart.
O Jesus my refuge,
My hope and my life,
Always present in the darkness, Turning shadows to light.
O rain down Your mercy! Immersed in Your Blood
Our weakness is our strength, Overcome by Your Love.
Mercy, Mercy,
Forever will I sing
The mercies of the Lord!

"My Mercy is an interior prayer that was brought forth in song in 2007, with the final chorus being added a year later," explains Mother Cecilia. "It encapsulates the whole of the interior life of prayer to which we have been called, that of imploring Christ to pour out the mercy from His pierced Heart upon all souls.

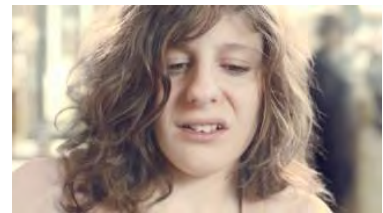
"Encourage souls to place great trust in My fathomless mercy. Let the weak, sinful soul have no fear to approach Me, for even if it had more sins than there are grains of sand in the world, all would be drowned in the unmeasurable depths of My mercy' (Diary of St. Faustina, 1059)." You can order the album [*Lent at Ephesus*](#) from the NCCL Bookstore or purchase the individual song, My Mercy at [*Lent At Ephesus \[+digital booklet\]*](#).

[Another Look At Autism](#)

This experience is viewed through the eyes of Carly Fleischmann, a 17 year old girl living with non-verbal Autism. Based on an excerpt from the book [*Carly's Voice: Breaking Through Autism*](#),



it explores how, for someone with autism, a simple act like going for a coffee can descend into chaos.



Carly's Café was developed as an interactive video that allows the user to experience Autism from the inside-out, visit <http://carlyscafe.com/> to enjoy the full experience. Check out the short video at [*Carly Fleischmann*](#).

[Hunger Through My Lens](#)



Here's a really intriguing look into the lives of some women who, for a time, struggled with providing food for their families and themselves. It's all documented by giving them cameras to illustrate what life is like when getting food is a problem. Check it out at [Hunger Through My Lens.](#)

So Amazing the Life



Please listen to [So amazing the life.](#)

all my dreams as a child
I could never ever imagine the freedom
the joy that surrounds you.
so blind in my ways I refused you
so many times I refused you
yet your mercy remains

so amazing the life
you called me out of and raised me into
so amazing the life
you created us for and raised us into
my God, my God, Saviour of my soul
you are, my God, my God, Jesus Christ my Lord
you are, my God, my God, king above all kings
you are, Holy, worthy, Holy, my God.

we proclaim your death oh Lord
and profess your resurrection
until you come again
until you come again

we proclaim your death oh Lord
and profess your resurrection
until you come again
until you come again

my God, my God, saviour of my soul
you are, my God, my God, Jesus Christ my Lord
you are, my God, my God, king above all kings
you are, Holy, worthy, Holy, my God.

and all my dreams as a child
I could never ever imagine the freedom
the joy that surrounds you

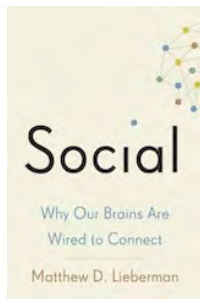
so blind in my I refused you
so many times I refused you
but your mercy remains
so amazing the life
you called me out of and raised me into
so amazing the life
you raised me out of and called me into
my God my God Jesus Christ you are my God
(c) evergreen 2014.

The Joy of the Gospel: *Evangelii Gaudium* TOPS THE CHARTS



In the last three months, *Evangelii Gaudium* has shot to the number one position in the Amazon categories Christian Leadership, Christian Faith, and Catholicism. It has also received over 50 five-star ratings, making it one of the most popular religious books available. If you haven't had the opportunity to read it, why not use Lent as an opportune time to meditate on the words of Pope Francis. You can order [*The Joy of the Gospel: Evangelii Gaudium*](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

Why Are We So Wired to Connect?



Why is loneliness so painful? Why do we care how others treat us? And, why do we spend so much time perseverating on past and future relationships? These are some of the questions addressed in Matthew Lieberman's new book, [*Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect.*](#)

According to Lieberman, there are three neural networks within the brain that promote our social connection: one that involves our ability feel social pain and pleasure; one that allows us to read others' emotions and predict their behavior; and one that helps us to absorb cultural beliefs and values, thereby linking us to our social groups.

All of the research Lieberman has studied, leads him to one conclusion: "To the extent that we can characterize evolution as designing our modern brains, this is what our brains were wired for: reaching out to and interacting with others," writes Lieberman. "These social adaptations are central to making us the most successful species on earth."

Here is where it gets interesting for religious educators. Creating community helps the brain learn. From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, we know that God designed us to work with one another to help build the Kingdom of God.



Lieberman thinks we should accept this about ourselves and use the information to change our social institutions for the better. ...Schools need to encourage better social climates where students feel like they belong, writes Lieberman, since a sense of belonging is closely tied to a higher GPA. Teacher should also plan lessons that engage students' mind-reading neural networks in order to help them learn material better.... Assigning students to learn material in order to help another—i.e., perhaps to tutor a younger—would improve academic learning too, he argues.

...“We all need people to love and respect, and we all need people who love and respect us,” writes Lieberman. “We do not always recognize these needs, and we may not see them influencing those around us, but they are still there nonetheless.”

To read the complete article, please go to [Greater Good](#). You can order [Social: Why Our Brains Are Wired to Connect](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

The Prayer of Saint Francis



The illustrator uses the wolf that St. Francis befriended as the teacher in this rendition of the beautiful prayer. While most of us know the prayer, the pictures add additional meaning for the young and the young at heart whose eyesight might be failing. You can purchase [The Prayer of St. Francis](#) from the NCCL Amazon Bookstore.

Seeing Lent: Discipleship (Vimeo)



Reflection by Mary Hess
<http://vimeo.com/87596468>

Lifelong Faith News - March 2014

1. New Blogs & Articles on the Faith Formation Learning Exchange
2. Register Today for the 21st Century Faith Formation Programs
3. e-Formation 2014 Conference at Virginia Theological Seminary
4. Faith Forward 2014 Conference

New Blogs & Articles

Faith Formation Learning Exchange



New Blog Posts

- A Lenten Tradition for Families - Jolene Roehlkepartain
- Lenten Thoughts - As We Lead Others - Janet Schaeffler, OP
- Do You Care? You Will If You Want Happiness - Jim Merhaut
- Introducing Other Spiritual Practices - Jolene Roehlkepartain
- A Family Faith Practice Treats the Entire Family - Debbie Streicher

New Articles

1. The Spiritual Practice of Mussar by Jolene Roehlkepartain
2. Spiritual Vitality by Debbie Streicher

Go to www.FaithFormationLearningExchange.net to read the new articles and blogs, and find great resources for faith formation with all ages and generations.

Register Today for One of 2014 Programs!



- *Learn how to develop Christian faith formation for all ages and generations in a digital, connected world.*
- *Join more than 1200 church leaders - pastors, faith formation leaders, and denominational leaders - who have participated in 2012 and 2013.*
- *Join us in creating the future of Christian faith formation where all ages and generations can embrace a life-transforming faith.*

March 24-26	Phoenix, AZ - Marriott Courtyard Tempe Downtown
March 27-29	San Francisco, CA - Hilton Garden Inn San Mateo
April 28-30	Raleigh, NC - Fairfield Inn RDU Airport/Brier Creek (10 spaces left)
May 5-7	Tampa, FL - Host: Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Largo
May 13-15	Minneapolis, MN - Park Plaza Hotel Bloomington
June 12-14	Bozeman, MT - Hilton Garden Inn Bozeman
June 18-20	Milwaukee, WI - Hilton Garden Inn Park Place
July 8-10	Dayton, OH - Marriott Courtyard University of Dayton
July 15-17	Kansas City, MO - Hampton Inn Country Club Plaza Kansas City
July 29-31	Princeton, NJ - NJ Health Assoc. Conference Center Princeton
August 5-7	Avon, CT (Hartford, CT) - Avon Old Farms Hotel

Program

Topic 1. Adaptive Challenges Facing Churches & Faith Formation

Topic 2. Vision & Practices of 21st Century Faith Formation & Learning

Topic 3. Developing Blended Learning Approaches in Faith Formation

Topic 4. Designing a Faith Formation Network and a Digital Platform

Topic 5. Incorporating Social Media in Faith Formation

Topic 6. Digital Tools for Faith Formation

Topic 7. Curating Digital Faith Formation Resources

Topic 8. Introducing Innovations & Facilitating Change

Schedule

Day 1: 9 am-5 pm Day 2: 9 am-5 pm Day 3: 9 am-3 pm

New Lower All Inclusive Registration Fee

\$295 per person for tuition plus continental breakfast and lunch each day.

For more information and to register go to:

[21st Century Faith Formation at Vibrant Faith Ministries.](#)



REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN

**2014 e-Formation Conference at Virginia Theological Seminary
June 2-4, 2014**

[Go to the e-Formation Conference website: www.eformationvts.org.](http://www.eformationvts.org)

Faith Forward 2014



Two years ago, 450 children's and youth ministry leaders gathered in Washington, DC, for the historic "Children, Youth, and a New Kind of Christianity" (CYNKC) conference. This was a truly international and ecumenically Christian gathering, with participants from seven countries and over two dozen denominational traditions. Out of this event, a movement began that is re-imagining and revolutionizing spiritual formation with young people.

CYNKC has been re-branded as Faith Forward and is convening a second gathering, May 19-22, 2014 in Nashville, with a focus on "Re-Imagining Children's and Youth Ministry through Theology, Story, and Rhythm." The 2014 Faith Forward gathering is aimed at bringing together children's and youth ministry leaders for collaboration, resourcing, and inspiration toward innovative theology and practice. With attendees, speakers, and sponsors coming together from across the theological landscape, Faith Forward is sure to be the premier gathering of people who want to push the boundaries and blaze new trails in ministry with youth and children. Speakers include Brian McLaren, Phyllis Tickle, Mark Yaconelli, Melvin Bray, Anne Streaty Wimberly, Ivy Beckwith, Sandy Sasso, Dave Csinos, Paul-Andre Durocher, Andrew Root, and Bonnie Miller-McLemore, among many others.

For more information and to register, visit www.faith-forward.net.