



CATHOLIC CONNECTION

A PARISH EVANGELIZATION RESOURCE



Vol. I, No. 4

Summer 2006

parish corner

Holy Trinity's first **Christ Renews His Parish** was held in the fall of 2005. They are now preparing for their third woman's retreat. The first man's retreat is planned for the fall of 2006.

CRHP is a parish renewal process that calls together all members of a parish, clergy and laity, to experience personal conversion and Christian community in the environment of their own parish space. The cornerstone of the process and the weekend is simplicity. Some benefits are:

- reconciles the individual with the Lord through personal repentance and conversion.
- motivates parish involvement and stimulates on-going study, prayer and service groups.
- heals the wounds between various factions and spiritualities.
- involves the group in various prayer forms.
- exposes the parish to the effectiveness of shared ministry.
- invites Jesus to be the center of a Spirit-filled community.

The weekend follow-up begins a process that allows the "receivers" of a weekend to become the "givers" of another weekend, planning and coordinating the entire process.

Below, givers and receivers alike share what the experience has meant to them.

"As adult Catholics, we don't always have the same opportunities to renew and affirm our faith as we did when celebrating the sacraments of initiation as children and youth. I am convinced, after journeying through the CRHP process, that this retreat is an opportunity for adults to say 'yes' to God's call in our lives. It was the single most moving faith experience I have been through as a mature Catholic." Mary Feger

"I consider CRHP to be a life changing experience. It has brought peace and tranquility to my life. The women I have come to know and love are truly 'my sisters in Spirit'. God always leads us upon a path that is right for us, and I thank God daily for the CRHP experience. My prayer is that this program will continue to reach out and touch all women of our parish." Sally Chitwood

"I had never previously attended any type of a retreat and was a little nervous that I was not 'holy' enough to be there. I soon realized that my fears were unnecessary. The program allows all participants to be witnesses to God's presence. CRHP has deepened my relationship with God and created a circle of friendship, support and faith among the women of my parish for which we are all grateful." Joan Kelly

"CRHP gives people a real boost. It helps you feel more a part of the community and strengthens your faith and your bonds with your parish. I am thrilled I made the time to come on my CRHP weekend and I reap the benefits of my experience every day!" Kathy Schneider

CRHP is for adults age 18 and older. Men and women attend separate weekends. For information on the program, contact Dinah Tichy at Holy Trinity, 502-897-5207.

the written word

The Evangelizing Catholic: A Practical Handbook for Reaching Out Frank P. DeSiano, C.S.P.

Written in 1998, this ageless text offers practical suggestions and thought-provoking insights and advice for making evangelization, rooted in hospitality, a reality.

DeSiano grounds evangelization in discipleship and then looks at certain personal and parish dimensions. The last two chapters explicitly address the strategies and goals of goal II in *Go And Make Disciples*, rooting us in the larger context of evangelization, the realization of the Kingdom. This parish resource is available from Paulist Press, \$11.95.



Catholic Connection is published by the Archdiocesan Communication Center, Evangelization Ministry
1200 So. Shelby St., Louisville, KY 40203
502-636-0296

Coordinator – Sue Brodfehrer
sbrodfehrer@archlou.org.

Notify Sue at above email address if you wish to comment or have information you would like to share.

outreach - quick and easy

Turning then to the woman, he said to Simon: "You see this woman? I came to your home and you provided me with no water for my feet. She has washed my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair..." Luke 7: 44

About 14 years ago, my husband and I attended a wedding at a Christian Church in Illinois. As visitors, we signed the book in the gathering space. About a week later, we received a letter thanking us for celebrating with their community and inviting us back if we were ever in the area. That welcoming gesture will always be remembered.

Our parishes have become much better at welcoming others. That said, there is always room for improvement. How does your parish welcome the guest into your home? Below are some simple suggestions. What are you already doing? What are you willing to implement?

- Do we have a visitors' sign-in book with a place for addresses and remarks?
- Do we recognize and/or introduce visitors? (This will depend on size and culture of parish.)
- Have we developed an attractive parish brochure designed specifically for visitors and guests? This is different from the general parish brochures that usually contain too much information for guests.
- Do we have visitor cards in the pew that simply welcome others to our parish and invite them to return? These attractive cards could request basic information or just be a gesture of welcome.
- Do we have a standard follow-up letter to thank visitors who come and to ask if there is anything our parish can do for them?
- Have we educated our parishioners about what to do when they bring someone (friend or relative) as a guest to our church?

Suggestions adapted from The Evangelizing Catholic

across the desk

These two offerings from Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association (PNCEA) are well worth your time.

- **Evangelization Exchange** (E-Exchange), is a free resource published 10 times yearly. It includes evangelization stories and efforts from across the nation, workshop and conference announcements, resources links, and a question of the month. It is a great resource for the parish staff as well as for parishioners interested in evangelization. If your curiosity is peaked, go to www.pncea.org and subscribe. And remember – it's free! You also can view all past issues.
- Another resource is their web conference, **Catholic Speakers Online**. Although there are still some kinks to work out, this interactive process allows you to sit in the comfort of your own space with others from your parish and hear from leaders in the area of evangelization as well as interact with other learners from across the nation.

Registration is \$60. (Scholarships are available.) For this price as many as you wish can participate in the one-hour conference. You will also have unlimited access to an audio recording of the meeting.

For those new to online meetings, PNCEA has created several brief training sessions.

You will need a broadband connection to the internet or a minimum 56K bps dial-up to see the presentation slides and interact on the computer and a separate phone line.

The next web conference, *How to Reach Out to Inactive Catholics*, is Sept. 21, 2:00–3:00 p.m. Frank DeSiano, C.S.P., pastor, author, and lecturer is the presenter.

Registration information will appear in E-Exchange and be sent out by this office.

"...evangelization, before it is a method or strategy, is a human encounter."

The Evangelizing Catholic: A Practical Handbook for Reaching Out

Frank DeSiano, CSP

Ponderings...

What is your reaction to this statement? Surprise? Encouragement? Challenge? Concern?

Are your parish evangelization efforts rooted in one-time programs/events or do they challenge persons to take the gospel message of presence and welcome out of the church building and integrate it into their ordinary, everyday encounters?