



CATHOLIC CONNECTION

A PARISH EVANGELIZATION RESOURCE



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parish corner

Evangelization Goes to the Movies

Faced with the familiar phenomenon of a church filled at Easter with many people who come only once or twice a year, Father Doug Della Pietra of Good Shepherd Church, Henrietta, NY, determined that he would offer them not only a warm welcome but a challenging invitation.

Father Della Pietra, planned and publicized an opportunity for such folks to share their reasons for not coming to church. Immediately after his homilies at the Easter Sunday liturgies, he invited them to come out the next evening and meet with him at a rented local movie theater - on neutral ground.

Ground rules for the gathering included his promise to listen without judging and without responding, no arguing or debating between or among those in attendance, and no presence of media or other parish staff. Father Della Pietra made a personal donation toward the cost of the event, which was also supported by other parish donors.

Eighty-seven people attended. Father Della Pietra wrote, "Those who gathered that warm April Easter Monday are people of faith and spirituality. They are sincere, loving, kind, and hopeful persons looking and longing for passion and spirit in their churches. They are grateful and appreciative and gracious in offering thanks. And, as one person succinctly stated, '[Some] have not left the church but the church has left them' by not being there in their times of need and through missed opportunities."

"Indirectly, I invited and challenged those present (including myself) to note that positive change in our lives and in the church does not just randomly happen."

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outreach - quick and easy

Pray-As-You-Go.org

Here is a website that would allow busy teens, young adults, and not so young adults to create a "God space" in the midst of a full life style.

Developed by Jesuit Media Initiatives out of Great Britain, pray-as-you-go provides daily prayer that can be downloaded to an MP3 player, a disc or listened to at a computer site. You can download a day or a week and then choose to listen at any time, i.e., during lunch break, while working around the house or in the garden, on the commute to or from work. You can use it for personal prayer or morning reflection with others.

Think about ways that you can make this free site known to your parishioners, your college students, your sick and shut-ins, and the general population looking for substance in an often-chaotic life.

Check it out for yourself and spread the good news.

Evangelization must always be directly connected to the Lord Jesus Christ...and is not a one-time occurrence. We must be converted, and we must continue to be converted, allowing ourselves to be aroused by the Spirit again and again as we mature as disciples.

Go and Make Disciples, USCCB

Ponderings...

What are your reactions to the above thoughts? Encouragement? Challenge? Excitement? Concern?

What opportunities for on-going conversion are available in your parish/region? Is there variety?

Do you encourage participation in the various formation opportunities in the Archdiocese of Louisville, such as the Ministry Institute?

across the desk

Sacred Space for Lent 2007: 40 days of Inspiration

Published by the Irish Jesuits, this booklet uses the same simple six-step method as on the web page, sacredspace.org. It provides daily readings, prayer starters and weekly Lenten themes. Sacred Space for Lent can serve as a time for reflection and spiritual growth during the Lenten season for individuals, sick and shut-ins, parish and school staffs, and small groups.

To view sample pages and the Lenten Reader's Guide, visit www.avemariapress.com.

Evangelization Exchange

This is a free online newsletter for parish leaders from the Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association, (PNCEA).

If you have not yet subscribed, your parish is missing an excellent resource. Even if it doesn't fit your immediate need, it is full of stimulating information for your staff's imagination.

Ideas and opportunities addressed in this month's issue include:

To access this resource visit www.pncea.org.

- Unity for Mission
- God's Word Does Not Return Empty
- Door-to-Door Visits at St. Augustine's in Memphis
- Sample Brochures for Welcoming New Movers and Newcomers
- Who is God for YOU? A Handout by John Boucher
- The Evangelizing Community at Mass: January 25, 2007

Peter, Do You Love Me?

A Parish/Regional Evangelization Retreat Day

Here is a retreat for busy people (4 hours & lunch) that can be used as one way to ignite and/or reignite the fires of discipleship. The process of input, reflection, and small group sharing, addresses the 3 stages of evangelization: awakening, transformation, and discipleship. A parish or regional team (5-6 people) prepares and presents the retreat.

If you are interested in reviewing the material our office has a complete packet that we would be happy to email your parish. This retreat experience is used with success by the Glenmary Home Missionaries.

on the horizon

Paulist Evangelization Training Institute online!

Paulist is launching an online Institute recommended for any pastoral staff person, catechist, member of the parish council, RCIA team, and adult faith formation committee.

The first course, *From Maintenance to Mission: Evangelization and the Revitalization of the Parish*, a book by Fr. Robert Rivers, CSP will run from March 5 through May 26, 2007.

Fr. Anthony Krisak, STD, the instructor, is director of training and online services at the Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association.

The fee for the class is \$120.00 (does not include text).

Each week participants are asked to read a chapter from the book, view the instructor's input, post responses to online questions, read and respond to the input of the other participants. This is a weekly commitment of 60 – 90 minutes.

Connection to the internet is a necessity.

For an overview, the course schedule, and registration information, visit www.pncea.org. A short video that explains the program is available for viewing.



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If you wish to comment or have information
you would like to share, call the above number.