

We Are Called To Witness



A program of the National Council of Catholic Women
designed to help members and affiliations discover
and actively participate in sharing the Good News, the Joy of Jesus
---the New Evangelization!

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national council of
catholic women
To support, empower, and educate all Catholic women

WE ARE CALLED TO WITNESS!

INTRODUCTION

These nine topics were designed especially for Councils of Catholic Women to provide an explanation and overview of the New Evangelization, with specific suggestions to implement the program in CCW Affiliations.

1. FINDING THE JOY OF JESUS IN YOURSELF

This component encourages members to deepen their own spirituality, stressing daily prayer and highlights Pope Francis' "The Joy of the Gospel."

2. SHARING YOUR FAITH WITH OTHER CATHOLICS

The second component contains what you are most expecting to find in a New Evangelization program---how to reach out to Catholics who no longer practice their faith. Each article has similar information, but each one has a different style and emphasizes action in a different way.

3. HOSPITALITY AND WELCOME

Component three focuses on the importance of the first evangelizers in your parish: the ministers of hospitality. Hospitality and welcome need to be inclusive, welcoming everyone with love.

4. HEARTS TO LOVE AND HANDS TO SERVE

This component suggests ways to include evangelization in the service projects and community outreach programs which are already such a big part of Council work.

5. HOLY DAYS

Suggestions and ideas to pass on our Catholic faith to younger children by celebrating holidays with a "HOLY" twist are in this component. It is sure to be a favorite of young moms and grandmothers!

6. REACHING OUT TO YOUNG WOMEN IN COLLEGE AND BEYOND

Component six includes ideas and suggestions to keep your college aged kids and young adults connected to the Church and includes an extensive list of website resources.

7. FAITH SHARING IN EVERYDAY LIFE

This component addresses the everyday ways we show our faith to those around us---in our homes, neighborhoods, and communities---evangelizing everyone we meet.

8. SOCIAL JUSTICE SHOWS GOD'S LOVE

An overview of the Social Teachings of the Catholic Church and how living out our call to minister to and advocate for the poor and needy is sharing the core of our faith.

9. LEARNING NEVERS ENDS

Resources to continue personal study of the New Evangelization including websites, books, DVD programs, CDs, a few blogs and suggestions for speakers for A/DCCW Conventions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

 TABLE OF CONTENTS 3

 THE NEW EVANGELIZATION AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN: A GOOD MATCH 5

 POPE FRANCIS REAWAKENING THE LIFE OF FAITH 7

 WHAT IS THE NEW EVANGELIZATION? 8

 WHAT ABOUT THOSE “FALLEN AWAY” CATHOLICS? 9

 2013-2016 - USCCB STRATEGIC PLAN 10

 HOW TO USE THE NCCW PROGRAM IN YOUR CCW AFFILIATION 11

SECTION 1: FINDING THE JOY OF JESUS IN YOURSELF 13

 IT ALL BEGINS WITH YOU! 14

 LET US PRAY 16

 ARE YOU A 3G CATHOLIC? 17

 GRACE REARRANGED: THE NEW EVANGELIZATION 22

 SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU FIND THE JOY OF JESUS 24

 GRATITUDE AND ATTITUDE JOURNAL 25

 PERSONAL ENRICHMENT RESOURCE 26

SECTION 2 - SHARING THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL WITH OTHER CATHOLICS 29

 SHARING THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL WITH OTHER CATHOLICS 30

 LET US PRAY 31

 SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS – EVANGELIZE! 32

 WHAT ARE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION? 33

 KEYS FOR WELCOMING CATHOLICS BACK TO THE LORD’S TABLE 34

 APPLYING WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED 38

SECTION 3: HOSPITALITY AND WELCOME 41

 THE MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY 42

 LET US PRAY 44

 JAM AND JELLY MINISTRY 45

 2013 STAR IDEAS 46

SECTION 4: HEARTS TO LOVE AND HANDS TO SERVE 47

 LIVING THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY 48

 LET US PRAY 50

 EVANGELIZATION IN SERVICE 51

 “THE GIFT OF LOVE” 52

SECTION 5: HOLY HOLIDAYS	53
SHARING FAITH WITH YOUNG CHILDREN	54
LET US PRAY	58
CELEBRATE MARRIAGE ON VALENTINE’S DAY.....	59
RESOURCES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES	60
SECTION 6: REACHING OUT TO YOUNG WOMEN IN COLLEGE AND BEYOND.....	61
INVITATION, HOSPITALITY AND EVANGELIZATION	62
LET US PRAY	63
KEEPING COLLEGE KIDS CONNECTED	64
WYD - WORLD YOUTH DAY.....	66
WEB RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY	67
SECTION 7: FAITH SHARING IN EVERYDAY LIFE	69
THE APOSTLE PHILIP: A 3 STEP MODEL FOR EVANGELIZATION.....	70
SHARING YOUR FAITH IN EVERYDAY LIFE.....	71
LET US PRAY	73
EVANGELIZE IN YOUR HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD.....	74
“THE SALESMAN”.....	75
SECTION 8: SOCIAL JUSTICE SHOWS GOD’S LOVE.....	77
CHARITY AND JUSTICE.....	78
LET US PRAY	79
EVANGELIZING THROUGH ADVOCACY	80
SUGGESTIONS FOR OUTREACH.....	81
WEB RESOURCES ON SOCIAL JUSTICE	83
SECTION 9: LEARNING NEVER ENDS.....	85
RESOURCES.....	86
IN CONCLUSION.....	89
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	90

THE NEW EVANGELIZATION AND THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN: A GOOD MATCH

by

Father James G. Stembler,

Chair of the NCCW Spiritual Advisors

[On the day of Pentecost] Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit and “standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice” and “confidently” (Acts 2:14, 29) proclaimed the good news of Jesus, who gave his life for our salvation and whom God raised from the dead. This is another effect of the Holy Spirit’s action: the courage to proclaim the newness of the gospel of Jesus to all, confidently in a loud voice, in every time and in every place. Today, too, this happens for the Church and for each one of us: the fire of Pentecost, from the action of the Holy Spirit, releases an ever new energy for mission, new ways in which to proclaim the message of salvation, new courage for evangelizing. Let us never close ourselves to this action! Let us live the gospel humbly and courageously!

Let us witness to the newness, hope, and joy that the Lord brings to life. Let us feel within us “the delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing” (Evangelii Nuntiandi, 80). Because evangelizing, proclaiming Jesus, gives us joy. Instead, egoism makes us bitter, sad, and oppresses us. Evangelizing uplifts us.

Pope Francis (taken from Pope Francis Speaks to our Hearts, Compiled by The Word Among us Press, Frederick, Maryland, 2013)

New Evangelization! We have heard that phrase since late in the last millennium. At first, many people thought the term was meant for those who were not believers. Of course, non-believers need to be evangelized. This is true. However, it was made clear that in order for them to be evangelized, we need to be evangelized. Many people became confused about this because, at least as I heard people say, “I have all my sacraments,” or “I’ve been confirmed so I know everything I need to know.” In other words, the general thinking seemed to be that since a person was fully initiated into the Church, there was no need to be evangelized: it had already taken place.

Evangelization is not solely something that took place in the past. Granted, we may have the certificates to prove that we have been baptized, confirmed and have received Holy Communion, and we may have received the Sacrament of Penance/Reconciliation; however, evangelization is an on-going event in our lives. It is not just past tense; evangelization is happening right now in the present. We are constantly growing in our knowledge of the faith. This growth becomes apparent when our heads and hearts are working together, not to keep this knowledge just for ourselves, but to share this knowledge with others through our words and actions.

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' website: ***The New Evangelization calls each of us to deepen our faith, believe in the Gospel message and go forth to proclaim the Gospel. The focus of the New Evangelization calls all Catholics to be evangelized and then go forth to evangelize. In a special way, the New Evangelization is focused on 're-proposing' the Gospel to those who have experienced a crisis of faith. Pope Benedict XVI called for the re-proposing of the Gospel "to those regions awaiting the first evangelization and to those regions where the roots of Christianity are deep but who have experienced a serious crisis of faith due to secularization."***

The New Evangelization is not only something that we speak about. We are also called to live out our faith. Through our renewed relationship with Jesus Christ and the Church, we are living witnesses to our faith. Remember the stories about the saints. They struggled in their lives, they had challenges to face; however, they met these struggles and challenges with a renewed understanding of faith through their encounters with Christ and hence became witnesses to the truth of the teachings of Christ.

Our work in the National Council of Catholic Women is an opportunity for women throughout the country to come together in a spirituality of communion – one mind, one heart – to evangelize the truth of the message of the Gospel through the fulfilling of our mission. The United States Bishops were very edified by the hard work of many women's organizations and moved these various organizations to form a communion as the National Council of Catholic Women so that the good work of all the women could be unified and focused toward evangelizing the Gospel message. Our mission statement says it all: **the National Council of Catholic Women acts through its members to support, empower and educate all Catholic women in spirituality, leadership and service. NCCW programs respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.**

We respond with Gospel values because, first, we recognize that we are children of God called to live out the Gospel each day. By doing this as united women, the Gospel message becomes crystal clear. What did Jesus say in his high priestly prayer: "...so that they may all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me" (John 17:21). Our communion in the National Council of Catholic Women is a clear sign that we are living the Gospel message and because we are doing that, we can effectively evangelize about the goodness of the Gospel as we respond to the needs of the Church and society today. As the Holy Father says in the quote that begins this article, that should genuinely uplift us!

Through the work of Council, we are engaged in the new Evangelization. In order to do the work of Council, you and I are reminded to continue to deepen our faith. The fact that we are accomplishing good things in Council should be a great encouragement to us to continue to delve deeper into the wonders of our faith. By doing this, we can continue to do good work through our mission of spreading Gospel values. We, therefore, become more courageous in fulfilling our mission.

Let us continue to be about the work of the New Evangelization. There is so much to be done, and the National Council of Catholic Women is up to the task! Our Lady of Good Counsel, pray for us!

*First appeared in the NCCW publication "Catholic Woman"
2014 Spring Edition, Volume 40, Number 2*

POPE FRANCIS REAWAKENING THE LIFE OF FAITH

by Karen M. Hurley, DSS

Past President General of the World Union of Catholic Women's Organizations

Pope Francis told the participants in the October 14, 2013 Plenary of the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, *"What we especially need in these times are credible witnesses who make the Gospel visible by their lives as well as by their words, and who reawaken the attraction for Jesus Christ, for the beauty of God."* His Holiness described the New Evangelization as *"a renewed movement, an encounter, a going out to meet others who have lost the faith and a sense of the deep meaning of life."* It requires a shared commitment to catechesis and *"a pastoral plan which brings us back to the essential and which is solidly focused on the essential; that is, on Jesus Christ."*

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/october/documents/papa-francesco_20131014_plenaria-consiglio-nuova-evangelizzazione.html

Evangelii Gaudium, Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation of November 24, 2013, encourages the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by the joy of the gospel, while pointing out new paths for the Church's journey in years to come. Our Holy Father presents some guidelines which can encourage and guide the whole Church in a new phase of evangelization, one marked by enthusiasm and vitality. His Holiness deals extensively with the following topics:

- a) the reform of the Church in her missionary outreach;
- b) the temptations faced by pastoral workers;
- c) the Church, understood as the entire People of God which evangelizes;
- d) the homily and its preparation;
- e) the inclusion of the poor in society;
- f) peace and dialogue within society;
- g) the spiritual motivations for mission.

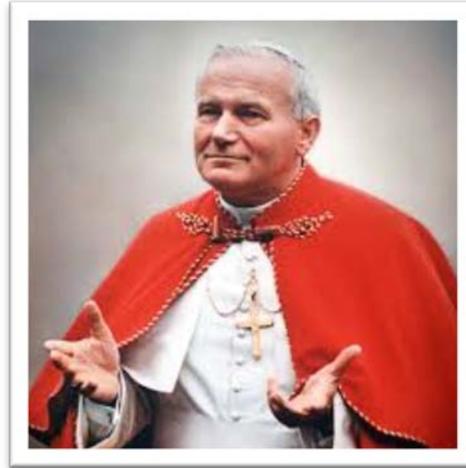
All of them help give shape to a definite style of evangelization which Pope Francis asks we adopt *in every activity undertaken.*

"The primary reason for evangelizing is the love of Jesus which we have received, the experience of salvation which urges us to ever greater love of him.... The best incentive for sharing the Gospel comes from contemplating it with love, lingering over its pages and reading it with the heart. If we approach it in this way, its beauty will amaze and constantly excite us. But if this is to come about, we need to recover a contemplative spirit which can help us to realize ever anew that we have been entrusted with a treasure which makes us more human and helps us to lead a new life. There is nothing more precious which we can give to others."

http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html

To understand more fully the historical progression of the New Evangelization, be sure to read Part II of "Disciples Called to Witness," a publication of the Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis of the USCCB. It is a wonderful synopsis of the "Historical Context of the New Evangelization" and begins with the call of Pope Paul VI and follows with the work of St. John Paul II and Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

WHAT IS THE NEW EVANGELIZATION?



"I sense that the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization and to the mission. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples." John Paul II, **Redemptoris Missio**

It is believed that Blessed John Paul II first used the term in 1983 in an address to Latin American Bishops. He would later bring this term to the attention of the entire Church. Perhaps, the clearest definition of the New Evangelization is in his encyclical, **Redemptoris Missio**. In section 33 of this encyclical, Blessed John Paul II describes three different situations for evangelization: mission ad gentes, Christian communities, and the new evangelization.

Mission ad gentes: Latin for *"to the nations."* This is a situation where *"Christ and his Gospel are not known."*

Christian communities: *"In these communities the Church carries out her activity and pastoral care."* This is the ongoing evangelization of those *"fervent in the faith."*

New Evangelization: So, what is the new evangelization? Blessed John Paul II describes a situation between the first two options *"where entire groups of the baptized have lost a living sense of the faith, or even no longer consider themselves members of the Church, and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel. In this case what is needed is a 'new evangelization' or a 're-evangelization.'"*

Posted by Kevin Cotter (Friday, August 19, 2011)
FOCUS Digital Campus www.focusequip.org/blog

WHAT ABOUT THOSE “FALLEN AWAY” CATHOLICS?

We all know so many people who “used to be” Catholic! Or maybe they are still saying they are Catholic, but not practicing. Maybe we see them in church on Easter, Christmas or Ash Wednesday---or when their parents come to visit. Whatever the level of participation, it is clear that being an active Catholic is simply not a priority in their lives.

It might be that an issue or event drove them away. It might be that they missed a couple Sundays and all of a sudden realized it had been months (or years!) since they attended mass regularly. Perhaps it was a serious misunderstanding or interaction with a parish leader, or even a family member. The reasons vary but the results are the same: *we all know so many people who “used to be” Catholic---and we want them back!*

Contrary to what the secular media proclaims, we do not want to increase the numbers in the pews, people who can volunteer, or parish revenue. The reason we want to reclaim those who have left the Church is the same reason Jesus rescued the one lost sheep: every member of the Body of Christ is valued, loved, and needed---and precious to God. All who were baptized into the Church belong to us--and it is our responsibility to work tirelessly to bring them “home.”

Every one of the components of the NCCW New Evangelization program “**We are Called to Witness**” addresses this challenge. The New Evangelization initiative is all about bringing those who have known the Good News and heard the message of Christ back to the Church by RE-evangelizing them. It is up to us to help each person to experience the love, healing and saving grace of Jesus Christ in a personal way. It is our role to help each person to find their way back to participation with the local and universal Catholic faith community.

Recognizing the teachable moments in life, we can use the ideas and resources in this program to listen, welcome, heal, and share. It could be a funeral mass where someone seems familiar with the Mass in a general way but shocked that the responses have changed---smile and hand them a card or missalette with the text. Announce that the van is leaving at 8:40 on Sunday morning at the next family reunion----for 9:00 AM Mass, of course. A parent at a sporting event might share a Catholic school memory. Taking a weekend bus trip to a nearby landmark, we can inquire about Sunday Mass availability---and watch for reactions. Standing in line at the post office a casual remark about the parish school evokes a response from another patron. All “teachable moments” to issue the invitation, personally welcome and share your own faith journey.

- **Finding the Joy of Jesus in Yourself:** writings and resources to help deepen personal prayer and faith
- **Sharing Your Faith with other Catholics:** purposely reaching out to those who have been catechized at some level but are no longer active
- **Hospitality and Welcome:** intentionally cultivating the skills of inclusive welcome and invitation
- **Hearts to Love and Hands to Serve:** understanding the way in which our service and outreach can be a means to evangelize (share the Good News of Christ Jesus)
- **Holy Holidays: Sharing Faith with Young Children:** passing on traditional ways to incorporate Catholic practices into everyday family celebrations
- **Reaching Out to Young Women in College and Beyond:** intentionally helping young women to get connected and remain linked to their faith and Catholic practices
- **Faith Sharing in Everyday Life:** how our lifestyle evangelizes friends and neighbors
- **Social Justice Spreads God’s Love:** evangelizing in the public arena and through the Social Teachings of the Church

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair

2013-2016 - USCCB STRATEGIC PLAN
THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

JOURNEY WITH CHRIST: FAITH – WORSHIP – WITNESS

- *2013-2014: Focus on Faith*
- *2014-2015: Focus on Worship and Parish Life*
- *2015-2016: Focus on Witness*

The Bishops of the United States have set forth a plan to enact specific focus areas of the New Evangelization over a four year period, from 2013 through 2016.

These goals are not meant to say that “strengthening the faith of practicing Catholics, inviting former Catholics to return home, reaching out to non-Catholics and defining and reinforcing the Catholic identity,” which began in 2013, will end in 2016! Nor does one focus end with a calendar year. In fact, each focus builds on the previous one, and each of the goals becomes a part of the fabric of our own faith formation and the basis for our witness!

We begin with ourselves, and focus on our understanding and knowledge of our Catholic faith. We are encouraged to pray, read and study doing all we can to deepen our relationship with Jesus. Pastors are encouraged to preach and teach in a way that will form parishioners in their faith as relates to Catholic teaching on the life and dignity of the human person, including issues of migration, pastoral care for refugees, respect for all life, concern for the poor and marginalized. We are also encouraged to deepen our understanding of forgiveness and reconciliation, leading to a greater participation in the sacrament of penance, as a necessary step in living out the New Evangelization.

With a renewed personal spirituality, we are ready to evangelize at the Parish level. In both worship and parish life, a spirit of welcome and hospitality is a priority. This openness, helpfulness, benevolence and compassion will create an atmosphere of trust and build the loving relationships, which will, in turn, foster the spirit of welcome and hospitality! Attention to sacramental catechesis will increase participation and the parish will thrive and grow.

Once we have a solid plan in place to continually develop our own personal spirituality and parish life is strengthened and growing, we are prepared to widen our influence and outreach. We will be confident and comfortable to ready to begin to share our faith, our love of Jesus, our core beliefs with others, including the “fallen away” Catholics and non-Catholics. We are ready to witness!

The reality is that all the pieces will not happen in order, all the goals will not be met year by year, and we are likely to have achieved many of them already. But the plan is a good one, and allows us to do an “inventory” to establish where we still need reinforcement and renewing, as individuals and as parishes and as an organization.

Think of the Bishops’ goals as a guide, and get started!

HOW TO USE THE NCCW PROGRAM IN YOUR CCW AFFILIATION



We Are Called to Witness

1. WHERE DO YOU BEGIN?

Scan the Table of Contents. Think about the women of YOUR Council and what is already planned on your calendar. Where might one or more of these topics best fit? Brainstorm ideas with your CCW Board members and be certain your Spirituality Commission Chair is on board!

2. START WITH PRAYER

Each component includes a prayer. Use them at your meetings and with your members. Choose one or change each month. Make a poster and put them on your website. Put them on the bottom of your agenda. Use them to create bookmarks or prayer cards for table favors.

3. DO YOU HAVE A PARISH CCW, A/DCCW NEWSLETTER, e-NEWSLETTER or WEBSITE?

The shortest articles were written with this in mind! Use your existing communication platforms and include pieces from the program to educate members about different ways to live out the New Evangelization. Some pieces also make excellent mini-presentations that could be done by a member.

4. SHARE INFORMATION FROM THE PROGRAM WITH OTHER MINISTRIES IN YOUR PARISH!

Specific components will speak directly to other groups in your parish. Share information from Component 3: Hospitality and Welcome with ushers and greeters as well as parish staff. Ask to speak to the elementary religion teachers and VBS leaders to share *Component 5: Holy Holidays*. Speak with your pastor and ask to have various quotes (papal, from USCCB, etc.) placed in the parish bulletin to raise awareness of our call to Evangelization throughout your parish. Inquire if a special New Evangelization prayer (from USCCB, your diocese, or your parish pastor) could be placed in the pews or Adoration Chapel for individual prayer time.

5. PLAN TO HAVE A SPEAKER

Check into local “experts!” You might find them through a Catholic University, a diocesan office, the Catholic HS, or Religious serving your area. This might be done at the A/DCCW Convention, a Day of Reflection, a Deanery Membership Meeting, or even at the parish level (and open to all parishioners.) Share with the speaker which components of NCCW: Called to Witness Program information you have shared/used and ask him/her to tie it all together for you.

REMEMBER: Our call to witness and evangelize is **LIFE-LONG** and there is no time limit to get it all done!

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair

SECTION 1: FINDING THE JOY OF JESUS IN YOURSELF



"The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew. In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelization marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church's journey in years to come... I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting Him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unfailingly each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since "no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord."

Pope Francis **"The Joy of the Gospel,"** quoting Pope Paul VI
Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete in Domino* (May 9, 1975)
no. 22: AAS 67 (1975), 297

"The Holy Spirit gives us joy. And He is joy. Joy is the gift in which all the other gifts are included. It is the expression of happiness, of being in harmony with ourselves, that which can only come from being with God and with his creation. It belongs to the nature of joy to be radiant; it must communicate itself. The missionary spirit of the Church is none other than the impulse to communicate the joy which has been given."

Pope Benedict XVI, **Christmas Address to the Roman Curia, 2008**

IT ALL BEGINS WITH YOU!

It all begins with YOU! Evangelization, spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ begins with your faith, your prayer life and your personal relationship with Jesus. Before you can share the joy of Jesus, you must find and nurture it in yourself. In the introduction to "**Disciples on the Way,**" a **Diocesan New Evangelization Program**, Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wisconsin writes:

Pope Francis is urging all of us to reach out; to be deeply rooted in prayer by developing an intimate friendship with Jesus Christ. He asks us to share the fruits of the spiritual intimacy we have with Jesus with everyone in our lives, so others see the joy of Christ shining forth in us. Joy comes from living a life fully rooted in Christ so that "it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me, the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20

Hopefully those who know us will be able to identify us as Christians and as Catholics by the beautiful phrase from the Scriptures: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:34-35

Remember-----before you can evangelize, you must first find God's joy within yourself! The very basics of our Catholic faith give great joy:

- That Jesus loves you He died on the cross taking upon Himself your sins. In John 3:16, you find the profound statement of our faith: **"Yes, God so loved the world that he gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him may not die but may have eternal life."**
- That God's grace is there for the taking! God offers you the grace for every need. **"...ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."** Luke 11:9
- That God has given you the Holy Spirit and all the gifts and fruits to be with you each and every day, to support and comfort you in every trial and to help and guide you in all situations. Isaiah 11:1-2, CCC #1831

Your faith must be nurtured to grow and develop, and there are so many ways to do this. Begin each day by asking God **"What is it that you would like me to do for you today?"** Daily mass, personal daily prayer, devotions, Scripture study and learning to listen as well as pray in silence are all important. Provided in the resources of this section is a selection of quotes to use in your personal prayer/quiet time. Cultivating an attitude of gratitude, a generous spirit and a servant leader's heart will lead to a deeper personal spirituality. Practicing your faith and being the **"best self"** that you can be will allow Christ's love to grow in you and shine out for all to see----and that is evangelizing!

God has given you so much to rejoice about! You will find many Scripture passages where joy or rejoicing is referenced. One of the most familiar comes from Psalm 118:24: **"This is the day which the Lord has made; Let us rejoice and be glad in it."** Often set to music, you might first have learned it through a Vacation Bible School echo song, a psalm response during the Easter Season, in the more modern Christian Gospel music or perhaps it was suggested as a morning praise---it is a perfect way to begin your day.

Each day when you get up in the morning, you have a new opportunity to find the Joy of Jesus! Other people do not make you happy or sad, **it is your own response** to each circumstances, your reaction to events, your answer to adversity that determines your attitude. It is your choice to cultivate an attitude of gratitude that will allow you to find and share the joy that Jesus brings. Only by trusting in the Lord for strength and relying on God's abundant grace will you find true happiness and joy.

Allowing the problems of work and family or the complications of health and welfare to blind you to the love, grace and peace of Christ can cause you to develop a negative disposition. Instead, practice thinking and talking about all the blessings in your life---the simple joys such as a new baby in the family or a beautiful sunset or sunrise. God has given you so much for which to be thankful and joyful. It might help to make a list---really! There is a resource at the end of this section for just that purpose called "**A Gratitude and Attitude Journal.**"

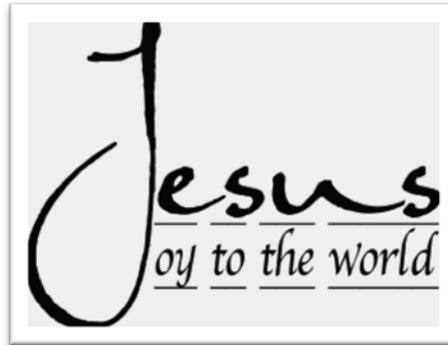
When others see the joy in you, they will want to know why! That opens the door to evangelization---to sharing the **GOOD NEWS of JESUS**. Make a conscious effort to be joyful and grateful each day and let this be what others see in you. Be a window for Jesus---when people look at you, let HIS love shine through. Challenge yourself to identify at least one joy every day.

***Our dear Heavenly Father,
Help us to see JOY each day for you have given us your grace
And promise of everlasting life.
May that joy be etched in our heart for all to see.
May our joy be a light to those in darkness and
Hope for those in despair.
Help us to spread the Joy of the Gospel to all people.***

***In Thy name.
Amen***

Eileen O'Connor, NCCW Leadership Commission

LET US PRAY



The New Evangelization

Gracious and merciful God, we pray that through the Holy Spirit all Catholics may hear the call of the New Evangelization and seek a deeper relationship with your Son, Jesus.

We pray that the New Evangelization will renew the Church, inspiring all Catholics to “go forth and make disciples of all nations” and transform society through the power of the Gospel.

We pray for all members of the Church, that we heed the words of Christ —“do not be afraid”—and strengthened by the Holy Spirit’s gift of courage, give witness to the Gospel and share our faith with others.

We pray that we may become like the father of the prodigal son —filled with compassion for our missing brothers and sisters—and run to embrace them upon their return.

We pray that all people yearning to know Christ and the Church may encounter him through the faithful who witness to his love in their lives.

Loving God, our Father, strengthen us to become witnesses to the saving grace of your Son, Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen

Disciples Called To Witness: The New Evangelization

A statement by the USCCB Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis

Are you a 3G Catholic is one of the very best pieces written about the **New Evangelization** we found! Filled with both information and inspiration, Father Larry Swink uses humor and familiar language intertwined with Church teachings to help us understand the **WHAT** and **WHY** of the New Evangelization. Pour yourself a cup of tea and make the commitment to read this one all the way through during your personal prayer time---you may find yourself wanting to do it more than once---we did!

HINT: Do not let the references scare you off, just skim over them on the first read.

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ARE YOU A 3G CATHOLIC?

*Father Larry Swink, Pastor, **Jesus the Divine Word**, Huntingtown, Maryland*

Today we live in a society that is hooked on high-speed information technology. We get so excited about the amount of bandwidth our cell phone has and how fast we can get our e-mail. My iPhone is a 3GS, and now it is a dinosaur next to the new 4G. Yet, in our efforts to evangelize a greatly secularized and paganized culture, are we as quick to get out the Good News of Jesus Christ and his saving message? Are we, in other words, “3G Catholics”? I propose that, to get the Gospel message out to a culture that has eclipsed Jesus out of its vision, we need to:

- Get off the couch and bring souls to Christ
- Get reconnected to the mission for all baptized to spread the Gospel, no matter what our age
- Get over ourselves; it is all about God’s grace

In 1988, Pope John Paul II wrote a letter called ***On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World*** (Christifideles Laici). In this address to the Church he used Matthew 20 to explain why the lay faithful needed to go out and bring Jesus to the world and souls to Christ. Essentially he is asking us to get off the couch and bring souls to Christ.

The First “G”: Get Off the Couch and Bring Souls to Christ!

Jesus says, “You too go into my vineyard” (Mt 20:4).

In the Gospel of Matthew 20:1-16, the “marketplace” is the world, the “vineyard” is the Church where God wants us to bring souls, and the “landowner” is God the Father who hires us “to bring souls into his Kingdom.”

Among the many problems facing the world, one stands out from the rest, namely, how few people know Christ on a personal basis. Many people live and die without ever knowing Christ on a personal basis.

“Since the work that awaits everyone in the vineyard of the Lord is so great, there is no place for idleness.”

Saint Gregory the Great says, “Each one should examine themselves to see how energetically they are working in the vineyard of the Sower. Perhaps we have not dedicated everything we have to the service of the Lord. The people who really work for him . . . are those who are anxious to win souls and bring others to the vineyard”

St. Gregory the Great, **Homilies on the Gospels**, 19, 2

Father Leo Trese in his book **Seventeen Steps to Heaven** says, **“How many converts did you win to the Faith during the past year? . . . During the past 10 years? . . . During your lifetime? Is there a single person of whom you can truthfully say ‘I am the one who brought the person into the Church?’”** In the same book he also writes, **“Very few converts were won over exclusively by a priest’s preaching and persuasion . . . in nine out of ten cases, a convert’s initial interest in the Catholic Church was inspired by some Catholic friend or acquaintance.”**

Leo J. Trese, **Seventeen Steps to Heaven: A Catholic Guide to Salvation**, rev. ed. [Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 1902], 147

The laity is called to bring the Gospel to the world, to bring souls to Christ and be salt of the earth. The Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People states:

[The laity is to be more diligent,] in fidelity to the mind of the church, in the explanation and defense of Christian principles and in the correct application of them to the problems of our times.

Lay people ought themselves to take on as their distinctive task this renewal of the temporal order. Guided by the light of the Gospel and the mind of the church, prompted by Christian love, they should act directly in this domain and in their own way. As citizens among citizens they must bring to their cooperation with others their own special competence, and act on their own responsibility; everywhere and always they have to seek the justice of the kingdom of God. The temporal order is to be renewed in such a way that, while its own principles are fully respected, it is harmonized with the principles of the Christian life and adapted to the various conditions of time, place and people. Among the tasks of this apostolate Christian social action is preeminent. The council desires to see it extended today to every sector of life, including the cultural sphere.

Second Vatican Council, **Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People [Apostolicam Actuositatem]**, no. 7; see also **Dogmatic Constitution on the Church [Lumen Gentium]**, nos. 33 ff.: A.A.S. 57 [1965], 39 ff.;

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy [Sacrosanctum Concilium], nos. 26-40; A.A.S. 56 [1964], 107- 111; **On the Means of Social Communication [Inter Mirifica]**, A.A.S. 56 [1964], 145-158;

On Ecumenism [Unitatis Redintegratio], A.A.S. 57 [1965], 90-107; **On the Pastoral Office of the Bishops in the Church [Christus Dominus]**, nos. 16, 17, 18;

On Christian Education [Gravissimum Educationis], nos. 3, 5, 7; **On the Church’s Missionary Activity [Ad Gentes Divinitus]**, nos. 15, 21, 41;

On the Ministry and Life of Priests [Presbyterorum Ordinis], no. 9. **All in Vatican Council II: Volume 1: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents**, ed. Austin Flannery [Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1996].)

One of the effects of salt is that it was used and is still used as a preservative to keep something from going bad. We salt meats to keep them from going sour. Catholics must be salt to the world to keep society from going bad. **How effective have we been in the last forty years?**

Think about it: How many Catholics are not going to Church regularly today? How many Catholics have not used the Sacrament of Reconciliation in many years? How many couples are not getting married in the Church and are living in sin through cohabitation? Many! The world today is very confused about what life is about. They do not know the Ten Commandments and how they can live them through the grace of Christ. I visited a CCD class in my parish and asked the children what the third commandment was.

A little boy said, "Be nice." We have work to do. Who will bring these souls to Christ?

The Church would answer **"the laity."** The **"average Joe"** who works with the people who have lost touch with their faith; the mom who waits in the carpool line with the fallen-away Catholic; the college kid who finds out his buddy has not been to church. All are called to bring souls back to Christ. The members of the laity are the ones who have to get off the couch and bring souls back to Christ.

The Second "G": God Has a Mission for You, No Matter What Your Age

Notice that the landowner in Matthew 20:1-7 calls the workers at different hours of the day: dawn, nine o'clock, noon, three o'clock, and five o'clock. Some of the Fathers of the Church say that this reference represents the different stages of a person's life. The dawn group includes those who are baptized as babies. The nine o'clock group includes those who receive the faith in their youth. The noon group includes those who come into the faith in adulthood. The three and five o'clock groups refer to those who come into the Church in their more mature years.

So what does this mean for us today? God has a mission for all who come into the Church, no matter how old they are. In ***Apostolicam Actuositatem***, Pope Paul VI states, ***"Children too have an apostolate of their own. In their own measure they are true living witnesses of Christ among their companions"*** (no. 13).

Cardinal Francis Arinze said in a speech, "Like converts like." In other words, doctors convert doctors, firefighters are good at bringing other firefighters to Christ, and mothers are good at bringing other mothers to Christ. The point is, all are called to bring people to Christ!

Today, ask the Holy Spirit to suggest one family member, friend, co-worker, or other person that you might hold in your prayers. Make it your mission to get that person to Church and confession by Easter so that he or she will be singing alleluia with us when we celebrate as we do every Sunday that Christ has risen from the dead!

It does not matter if you are young or old: God has a mission for you to bring souls to Christ!

The Third “G”: Get Over Yourself -- It Is All About God’s Grace

Notice at the end of Matthew 20 that all the workers received the same wage, whether they worked all day or just for two hours. Jesus says:

““My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?”

Matthew 20:13-15

Our Lord is making an important point here. The “day’s wages” for every person is God’s grace. Jesus wants us to understand that his grace is a pure gift. The fact that I was born into a devout family and am a priest today is a grace. The fact that all of us are here now is a grace!

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church we learn, “Grace is favor, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to his call.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd ed. [Washington, DC: Libreria Editrice Vaticana—United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2000] no. 1996; see also Jn 1:12-18; 17:3; Rom 8:14-17; 2 Pet 1:3-4

What does that mean? We need to pray that God opens up the hearts of those we are trying to bring back to the Church. The founder of Opus Dei wrote in his book of meditation **The Way**, “If you are not a man of prayer, I don’t believe in the sincerity of your intentions when you say that you work for Christ”

St. Josemaria Escriva, **The Way**, “Prayer” no. 109

We have to pray in order to bring souls to Christ! Not too long ago at parochial school where I was working, a teacher came to me in distress because her daughter was not going to Church. She had gotten engaged and had decided to have a marriage ceremony outside of the Church in several months and was intent on having this sacrilegious wedding ceremony. I asked if her daughter would talk to a priest. She said, “I have tried to have her talk to several priests but she will not budge on this issue!” So I told the lady to pray a novena to Saint Rita of Cascia and then asked her to call me back. St. Rita is the patron saint of “impossible cases.” Nine days later the daughter called me to ask if I would prepare her fiancée and herself to get married in the Catholic Church. Alleluia! We must constantly be praying, offering up sacrifices for souls in need, and asking them to pray that God give them grace to hear the word of God and put it into effect!

Today Jesus gives each one of us this message: Get off the couch and bring souls to Christ! God has a mission for you, no matter what your age! Get over yourself; it is all about God’s grace!

Be a 3G Catholic!

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GRACE REARRANGED: THE NEW EVANGELIZATION

By Grace Mazza Urbanski

About the new evangelization: Remember when tucking your pants **INSIDE** your tube socks was totally rad? While many 1980s trends have (thankfully) fallen away, Pope John Paul II's "*new evangelization*" seems to have survived the test of time. It's not just surviving; it's thriving. In the 1980s, Pope John Paul II called for a new evangelization of the world, an approach to sharing the Gospel---in a new way---new in its ardor, expression, and methods. JP II started a fire that is now blazing in parishes, on social media, and just about everywhere.

Some big hitters have recently trumpeted the new evangelization---

- Pope Francis: Within the first several paragraphs of his November 2013 apostolic exhortation **Evangelii Gaudium**, Pope Francis highlighted three important audiences for the "new evangelization for the transmission of the faith." These are the regular churchgoing crowd, the baptized but non-practicing folks, and the people who have never heard about Jesus or who reject him out of habit.
- Father Robert Barron: His DVD set is called **Catholicism: The New Evangelization**. In it, he emphasizes that the Catholic faith is "about an encounter so overwhelming that you want to tell the whole world. It is an encounter with Jesus Christ."
- The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: The USCCB goes so far as to capitalize the term New Evangelization and to dedicate an entire resource section to the concept, highlighting a critical component of our worldwide initiative: "The New Evangelization invites each Catholic to renew their relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church."

My work with the **Apostleship of Prayer** serves the new evangelization in a small—but paradoxically great—way: I help people cultivate a very practical habit of daily prayer. The new evangelization calls for disciples with a deep personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and prayer is a personal, practical, and powerful way to meet the person of Jesus, to form his new disciples.

- **Personal:** Jesus speaks to us in our own hearts and through the circumstances of each day. Jesus waits patiently for the gift only you can give: the gift of yourself, each day. Christ offers himself in the Eucharist every day for us, and we can respond by offering in return all our works, prayers, joys, and sufferings. No one can do this for us. If we want, we get to spend the entire day with Jesus, who loves each one of us as if we were the only human person he ever created.
- **Practical:** No instructions required! No login necessary! Praying can be as simple as breathing. Some people find memorized prayers helpful, such as the Morning Offering or the rosary. But the one thing necessary is a heart open to the Heart of Jesus. Like Martha's sister Mary (Luke 10:38-42), we please Jesus when we pay attention to him. If we look for Jesus in the midst of our daily lives, we will find him everywhere.
- **Powerful: *Prayer is powerful.*** When we share our heart's desires with the Lord, beautiful and wonderful things happen: our hearts become more like the generous Heart of Jesus, and we grow in awareness of how God listens to us and gives us all good things. At the end of the book of Job, God tells Job's friends to ask him to pray on their behalf: "Let my servant Job pray for you. To him I will show favor" (Job 42:8). Through God's grace, Job demonstrated his faithfulness to the Lord, the God who then delights in the

"This is the new evangelization: intimate, personal encounters with Jesus that go viral. The more we pay attention to God, reaching out in daily prayer and service, the more we may begin to notice the constant presence of God. If we try this "unfailingly each day," as Pope Francis suggests, our mindfulness may become the norm. The Apostleship of Prayer wants to help us all practice this mindfulness. Contact us to find out more!"

Praying with Grace is a continuing blog on the website of the Apostleship of Prayer. Please visit and check out more about this exciting multimedia outreach of Fr. James Kubicki, S.J. and Grace Urbanski. www.apostleshipofprayer.org

SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU FIND THE JOY OF JESUS

1. **Read the book of Psalms which teaches us so much about being joyful.**
 - a. Read one each day during your quiet time
 - b. Use the music resource in your parish to read the texts in a more contemporary language
 - c. Listen to the psalms in your car as you drive, letting the poetry wash over you---but don't get too distracted!
 - d. Find a study guide that "leads" you through the Psalms

2. **Start a Bible study group and study various passages that focus on the Joy of the Gospel.**
 - a. Use a concordance and simply follow the word JOY throughout the scriptures
 - b. Discuss or Journal ways the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit bring JOY into your life
 - c. Find a knowledgeable leader for the group (your parish DRE? Diocesan Formation Director? Deacon or Religion Teacher?)

3. **Read and study the "Joy of the Gospel", *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation.**
 - a. Read a section and then journal on it
 - b. Surf to find commentaries and articles by theologians
 - c. Invite a group of friends to "study" it with you
 - d. Ask your pastor or spiritual advisor to give a talk on this topic

4. **Use your INBOX for daily prayer---use google/bing and find what you like best!**
 - a. Sign up to receive daily messages from St Faustina's Diary or Daily Meditations
 - b. Receive Scripture readings and/or reflections every day
 - c. Use inspirational quotes to focus your prayer time



GRATITUDE AND ATTITUDE JOURNAL

Date _____

Today I am grateful to God for:

I found JOY in:

I pray for guidance and God's help on:

Date _____

Today I am grateful to God for:

I found JOY in:

I pray for guidance and God's help on:

Date _____

Today I am grateful to God for:

I found JOY in:

I pray for guidance and God's help on:

PERSONAL ENRICHMENT RESOURCE

An essential element to the New Evangelization is renewing and strengthening your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Begin simply, by expanding your quiet time, that special prayer time you set aside each day. Choose a single quote and read it to yourself several times, slowly. Following the example of our Blessed Mother, ponder the words in your heart; hold them close, allow them to take root, and in the silence their wisdom and meaning for you will emerge.

“If angels could be jealous of men, they would be so for one reason: Holy Communion.”

St. Maximilian Kolbe

"Consult not your fears but your hopes and your dreams. Think not about your frustrations, but about your unfulfilled potential. Concern yourself not with what you tried and failed in, but with what it is still possible for you to do."

St. John XXIII

“God does not love you because you are good; God loves you because God is good. God does not love you because you are good; you are good because God loves you.”

Father Richard Rohr

"An authentic faith - which is never comfortable or completely personal - always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it."

Pope Francis

"Jesus Christ does not teach us a spirituality 'of closed eyes,' but one of 'alertness,' one which entails an absolute duty to take notice of the needs of others and of situations involving those whom the Gospel tells us are our neighbors. The gaze of Jesus, what 'his eyes' teach us, leads to human closeness, solidarity, giving time, sharing our gifts and even our material goods."

Pope Benedict XVI

“When it comes to life, the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude.”

G. K. Chesterton

“Sometimes our light goes out but is blown again into flame by an encounter with another human being. Each of us owes the deepest thanks to those who have rekindled this inner light.”

Albert Schweitzer

“Faith is taking the first step even when you don’t see the staircase.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

“How splendid is fasting that is adorned with love, break your bread generously with one who is hungry otherwise yours is not fasting but saving.”

Vespers of Tuesday of Lent, Maronite liturgy

“Growth is the only evidence of life.”

Cardinal John Henry Newman

"Serving others requires objective and professional expertise, but something more is needed---an open heart that allows itself to be touched by the love of Christ, and thus gives to our neighbor, who needs us, something more than a technical service. That something more is love, in which the other person is able to see Christ, the loving God."
Pope Benedict XVI

"God speaks in the silence of the heart, and we listen. And then we speak to God from the fullness of our heart, and God listens. And this listening and this speaking is what prayer is meant to be..."

Blessed Mother Teresa

"Next time a sunrise steals your breath or a meadow of flowers leaves you speechless remain that way, say nothing and listen as heaven whispers, "Do you like it? I did it just for you!"
Max Lucado

"If you want peace, work for justice."
Pope Paul VI

"The Ascension tells us that in Christ our humanity is raised to the heights of God and so, each time we pray, earth unites with heaven."
Pope Benedict XV

"If you want justice, America, defend life!"
Pope John Paul II

"The Resurrection without the Cross is superficial, just as the Cross without the Resurrection is despair."

Father Robert Baron

"In order to discover the character of a people, we have only to observe what they love."

Saint Augustine

"No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."
Eleanor Roosevelt

"We let ourselves be overcome by human respect, and cease to show ourselves true followers of Our Lord before the world. . . We see truth trodden underfoot, and we remain silent. Why? Because we are cowards. Oh, how we need to renew our faith, to rekindle our hearts in the sublime principles of our holy religion."

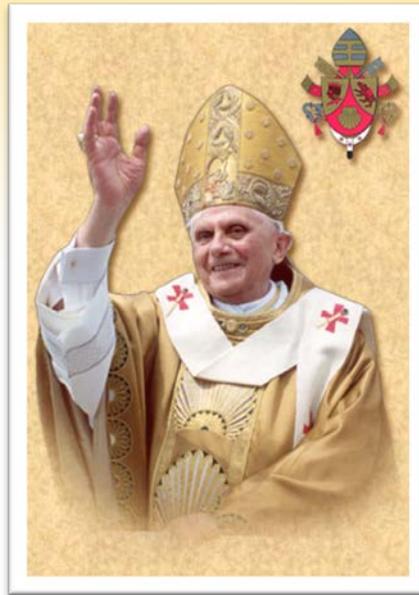
Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini

"God's mercy is patient, but we should not let pass by the opportunities he gives us."

Pope Benedict XVI

"A population that does not take care of the elderly and of children and the young has no future, because it abuses both its memory and its promise."
Pope Francis

SECTION 2 - SHARING THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL WITH OTHER CATHOLICS



“Help each other to live and to grow in the Christian faith so as to be valiant witnesses of the Lord. Be united, but not closed. Be humble, but not fearful. Be simple, but not naive. Be thoughtful, but not complicated. Enter into dialogue with others, but be yourselves.”

Pope Benedict XVI, Genoa, Italy, May 18, 2008

SHARING THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL WITH OTHER CATHOLICS

We, as Catholics, have a responsibility, to share the gospel with others---even other Catholics! There are so many opportunities to do so. Parish settings are easiest; we share our faith with others in discussions and prayer experiences during CCW meetings, during mass and in visiting and sharing afterwards, in Bible study groups and religious book clubs, just to name a few. Informally, the times and places are endless, but introducing faith into the conversation might be a bit harder. In the workplace, at ball games, neighborhood get-togethers, and family gatherings---each is an opportunity to share the JOY you have found in Jesus. All it takes is an openness and a willing spirit!

You may have heard that the third largest religious group in the United States is Catholics who no longer practice their faith. Thankfully, in recent years, there has been a renewed focus on reaching out to them, sometimes called “fallen away Catholics.” This group is a big part of why the New Evangelization is called NEW---we are called to RE-evangelize those Catholics who have lost (or never made) a connection with Jesus Christ and his Church. They may have “heard” the Word, but it did not take root in their hearts.

Many excellent and comprehensive programs are available to parishes to help in this effort. **“Catholics Come Home”** is one such program. Through a series of beautifully produced videos, the program reaches out to Catholics with an open and loving invitation to return to the Church. The program has a wealth of ideas, videos, and testimonials. Check it out at www.catholicscomehome.org.

“Re-Membering Church” is another widely used and successful program, first developed by the same group that created “RENEW.” This explanation was found on the St Benedict Parish website, from the Diocese of Tulsa, Oklahoma:

Re-Membering Church is a welcoming program designed to reach out with love and concern to those who are considering returning to the Catholic Church. The name actually has a twofold meaning. Participants who have been away both “remember” their Catholic roots and “re-member” or become a member again of the Catholic community.

In **DISCIPLES ON THE WAY**, The Most Reverend David L. Ricken, DD, JCL, Bishop of Green Bay, suggests that we encourage a **“Re-Membering” Church Program.** He suggests to each of us:

“Re- Membering” Church Program”:

- Most want to come back in their hearts
- Be a true friend; ask why they left the Church
- Provide a listening ear, discuss (you must know your faith) with the goal of providing hope
- Ask them to judge the Church by the people who strive to live up to its ideals; not those who fail (both laity and religious)

And Bishop Ricken reminds us that sainthood is the job description for the serious Catholic; give a good example yourself.

Eileen O'Connor, NCCW Leadership Commission

LET US PRAY

Prayer from

"The Joy of the Gospel"

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION, EVANGELII GAUDIUM

*To the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful
On the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World*

Mary, Virgin and Mother,
you who, moved by the Holy Spirit,
welcomed the word of life in the depths of your humble faith:
as you gave yourself completely to the Eternal One,
help us to say our own "yes" to the urgent call, as pressing as ever,
to proclaim the good news of Jesus.
Filled with Christ's presence,
you brought joy to John the Baptist,
making him exult in the womb of his mother.
Brimming over with joy,
you sang of the great things done by God.
Standing at the foot of the cross with unyielding faith,
you received the joyful comfort of the resurrection,
and joined the disciples in awaiting the Spirit
so that the evangelizing Church might be born.
Obtain for us now a new ardour born of the resurrection,
that we may bring to all the Gospel of life which triumphs over death.
Give us a holy courage to seek new paths,
that the gift of unfading beauty may reach every man and woman.
Virgin of listening and contemplation,
Mother of love, Bride of the eternal wedding feast,
pray for the Church, whose pure icon you are,
that she may never be closed in on herself
or lose her passion for establishing God's kingdom.
Star of the new evangelization,
help us to bear radiant witness to communion,
service, ardent and generous faith,
justice and love of the poor,
that the joy of the Gospel may reach to the ends of the earth,
illuminating even the fringes of our world.
Mother of the living Gospel,
wellspring of happiness for God's little ones,
pray for us.
Amen. Alleluia!

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS – EVANGELIZE!

Our call to evangelize is rooted in our Baptism, in our Church whose primary mission is to tell the Good News. Today it is through us that Christ proclaims salvation, this great gift of God which frees us from evil and leads us to “the joy of knowing God and being known by Him, of seeing Him, and of being given over to Him.”

Evangelii Nuntiandi 9

Sister Albertine Paulus, RSM
Director of Evangelization, *Retired*
Diocese of Knoxville, Tennessee

Evangelization happens when we are so caught up in that encounter with Jesus that we can't keep still about it. Not always with words. A smile, a joyful face, a generous heart and hand, a willing ear – all these speak of Jesus within and the precious knowledge that no matter what, He loves me and will take care of me.

By our life and actions, we set the stage for “sharing our story,” or simply relating a personal or family event that has God's hand written all over it. People are drawn to goodness, and most are hungry for faith stories.

Pope Francis is a great example of active evangelizing. He reaches out, he touches, he smiles and his goodness shines out. People all over the world are listening to him, reading his morning homilies, watching news about him, enjoying his generous, simple gestures of love. Jews, Orthodox, Muslims, heads of state, religious leaders, immigrants, prisoners, homeless persons everywhere feel his love, his concern, his non-judging welcome to all. And the response is unbelievable.

So what can I do to be the evangelizer I am called to be?

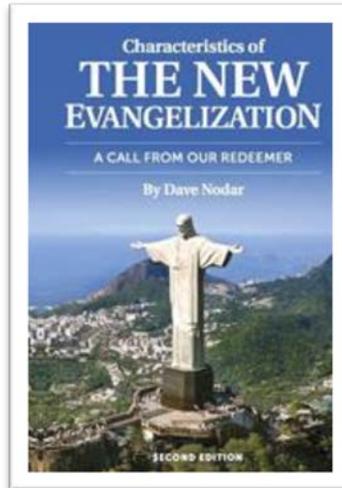
1. Grow God in your life: prayer, daily Mass when you can, Scripture reading, help to persons in need. Talk to God about your joys and sorrows, about your life. Then listen to Him.
2. Cultivate a peaceful, joyful, loving heart – and let it show on your face! Don't judge.
3. If you are asked – or the opportunity presents – don't be bashful about sharing what God has done in and for you. Try to answer questions simply and honestly.
4. Take time to listen to others. Offer to pray with or for someone, or simply say, “God bless you.”

A final word: In Baptism we are called to “spread the Good News.” In reality, God does most of the evangelizing – we merely provide the human vehicle.

WHAT ARE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION?

Characteristics of the New Evangelization

Excerpt from a booklet by Dave Nodar



There (exists in our Church) what John Paul II called an intermediate situation. Within countries there are entire groups of the baptized who have lost a living sense of the faith, or no longer consider themselves members of the Church. In this case what is needed is a “*new evangelization*” or a “*re-evangelization*” . . . Some need their faith to be renewed and enlivened. Others have had little or no training in the Christian faith and essentially need to be evangelized with the basic Gospel and receive formation in the faith (catechesis).

In *Redemptoris Missio*, this re-evangelization seems to be primarily what Pope John Paul II refers to when he talks of the new evangelization.

This re-evangelization is no small undertaking for the Catholic Church in the United States. . . . In our country “*it is painfully clear that many Catholics (and other Christians) have not been effectively incorporated into life in Christ. Baptized as infants many have never made a personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Gospel. As adolescents and adults many drift away from the Church. Evangelization must be directed to the Church itself.*”

In the face of directly anti-gospel proclamations that are constantly being proclaimed to Christians in many countries there needs to be the clear proclamation of Jesus Christ as Lord and his Gospel. People need to be regularly inspired, encouraged and formed in their faith in order to live a Christian lifestyle.

...The time is long overdue to recognize that evangelization cannot be limited to (those who have never heard the Good News, but re-evangelization or the “new” evangelization is equally important.)

All quotes from *Redemptoris Missio*

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To read the complete booklet go to: http://www.christlife.org/evangelization/articles/C_newevan.html

KEYS FOR WELCOMING CATHOLICS BACK TO THE LORD'S TABLE

This article is full of quotes and citations—don't let it scare you! Instead of the "footnote" format, John and Therese Boucher have imbedded the source of their information and quotes into the body of the article. They offer some history, some papal wisdom and some very practical ideas for sharing faith with others and welcoming them back to Church. The seven "keys" they present are a great blueprint for your evangelization effort.

Keys for Welcoming Catholics Back to the Lord's Table

by John and Therese Boucher

Ever wonder why the path from religious education sessions to Sunday liturgies is too complicated or uninteresting for many parents? Ever wonder what we can do to help? We are not alone. The *2008 Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics* study reports that only 23 percent of American Catholics regularly attend Sunday Mass (cara.georgetown.edu/sacraments.html). This means that 77 percent are missing and are in need of invitations to come back and see themselves as invaluable members of our local parishes. We propose **Seven Doors** that lead to the Lord's Table and that we can help unlock for those who do not regularly attend church. Together we hold many keys to faith, if we choose to use them in the name of Jesus, the Christ. The Universal Church encourages us to reach out to all the baptized.

"The time has also come for a new evangelization in the West, where many of those baptized lead totally un-Christian lives and more and more persons maintain some links to the faith but have little or a poor knowledge of it . . . 'This particularly concerns countries and nations of the so-called First World, in which [conditions promote] a life lived 'as if God did not exist.'"

Synod of Bishops, XIII Ordinary General Assembly,

The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith, Lineamenta, no. 9,

www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20110202_lineamenta-xiii-assembly_en.html

Simply put, evangelizing means consciously opening doors that can lead to new faith for inactive Catholics. It means identifying, strengthening, and successfully using seven doors into parish life, or seven complimentary stages in the parish evangelization process.

These stages are not new, and they are rooted in the New Testament and in the teaching of the Church:

1. Befriend people
2. Share faith stories
3. Retell the Christ story.
4. Invite to conversion
5. Bring into community
6. Call to discipleship
7. Call to stewardship

On the Church's Missionary Activity, a decree in the documents of Vatican Council II, describes these steps as part of a dynamic process of evangelizing that includes Christian witness, dialogue, a charitable presence to others, the proclamation of the Gospel, a call to conversion, the catechumenate, and formation of community through reception of the sacraments.

See Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes*, nos. 10-18, in Vatican Council II: **Volume 1:**

The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, ed. Austin Flannery [Northport, NY: Costello Publishing, 1996]

Pope Paul VI also referred to these stages when he wrote in an apostolic exhortation, "Evangelization, as we have said, is a complex process made up of varied elements: the renewal of humanity, witness, explicit proclamation, inner adherence, entry into the community, acceptance of signs, apostolic initiative. . . . [We must] relate these elements rather than place them in opposition, one to the other, in order to reach a full understanding of the Church's evangelizing activity"

Evangelization in the Modern World [Evangelii Nuntiandi], no. 24,

www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi_en.html

And finally, the **Catechism of the Catholic Church** assumes an appreciation of this entire process when it states, "The sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church: it must be preceded by evangelization, faith, and conversion. It can then produce its fruits in the lives of the faithful: new life in the Spirit, involvement in the mission of the Church, and service to her unity"

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2nd ed.

[Washington, DC: Libreria Editrice Vaticana–United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2000], no. 1072.

Seven Doors into Parish Life

1. Befriend People

Welcoming and befriending inactive Catholics is at the heart of reaching out. It happens at the doors of the church, through parish programming, at picnics, through an Internet presence. The list is endless. Befriending means building quality relationships in families, in parishes, and when we serve others through works of charity and social justice.

2. Share Faith Stories

We encourage faith sharing when we listen in a caring way to life stories and ask, "What does this mean for you?" or "What roles does faith play in your life?" We also encourage faith when we share similar experiences and the ways that God has been present in our own lives and we affirm faith when we acknowledge new steps toward God or toward the Church.

3. Retell the Christ Story

We can help open the door to Jesus. The Good News of the Gospel is that we are not alone. When the time is right, we can share our understanding of Jesus, who is Shepherd, Lord, Brother, and Redeemer. By sharing this news, we put flesh on the tenets of the Apostle's Creed, our baptismal vows, and even the Sign of the Cross. Our confidence in God's love becomes contagious.

4. Invite to Conversion

When someone's lifelong journey of faith gets sidetracked or halted, we can offer inactive Catholics an awareness of Christ's loving presence. We can facilitate new encounters with Jesus Christ. We can invite someone into reflective silence or into praying aloud with us, asking the Holy Spirit's help to rediscover Jesus and to welcome the embrace of the Church.

5. Bring into Community

Jesus is already present to all the baptized. But we can affirm the actions of the Holy Spirit who draws us all together. When the time is right, we can invite someone to a small or large gathering of our faith community or to an evangelizing parish event. If our invitation is rejected, we refocus on God's unconditional love for those we invite. We may also invite inactive Catholics to return to the Eucharist, as we seek God's guidance about engaging them in the fuller, deeper life of discipleship within the parish. For example, we might seek meaningful ways to include inactive Catholics whose marriages are not recognized by the Church and cannot receive the Eucharist.

6. Call to Discipleship

We can open the door to more meaningful Catholic discipleship by extending ongoing, open-ended invitations to let Jesus transform every part of our personalities, actions, relationships, and choices. We can call them to a life of love and faithfulness through the vocations of marriage, single life, religious life, or the priesthood. We can help them explore faith in daily life as the key to transforming the world. We can assist them in exploring ways to apply Gospel values at home, in the community, and in society at large.

7. Call to Stewardship

We can invite others to service in God's name, to consecrate gifts and resources by laying them at the apostles' feet just as the early Christians did (see Acts 4:35). We can encourage stewardship as a normal flowering of discipleship. Stewardship is not the same as philanthropy. One hundred percent is given to God. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' document *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response* speaks of stewardship as the fruit of intentional discipleship to Jesus Christ, lived out in the Church and the world.

www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/stewardship/

Promote the Evangelization Process

Engaging inactive Catholics in this process can help eliminate the revolving door experience they have with the Church. The evangelization process is a dynamic spiral and an ongoing journey toward the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It gradually draws inactive Catholics deeper into the larger parish community, echoing the RCIA/catechumenate process. So we need to examine each stage as it happens in our parish, realizing that stages might happen simultaneously and in no particular order. Then we might ask these questions:

- How can a particular stage be more deeply rooted in the Gospel and reflect life in Jesus Christ?
- How can each stage become a more successful doorway to fuller participation in our parish?
Which stage needs the most attention?
- Which stage gives a particular person the best opportunities to use his or her gifts, according to the prompting of the Holy Spirit?
- And finally, this process is most fruitful when we use our gifts alongside all the members of the Body of Christ.

Evangelizing is not just the ministry of a few individuals. It is everyone's call! Jesus addresses everyone when he says, "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age".

Matthew 28:19-20

Bear Witness to Jesus, the Word of God

Pope Paul VI explains this challenge further. *“Here lies the test of truth, the touchstone of evangelization: it is unthinkable that a person should accept the Word and give himself to the kingdom without becoming a person who bears witness to it and proclaims it in his turn.”*

(Evangelii Nuntiandi, no. 24)

So let us encourage each other to proclaim Jesus, evangelize, and seek training in everyday faith-sharing skills, so we might open doors to faith and to the Lord’s Table. Let us open all the doors for reaching inactive Catholics. And let us imitate **St. Frances Xavier Cabrini**, who prayed, *“This will be my main interest, the purpose of all my steps, my comings and goings; . . . to love Jesus, to seek Jesus, to speak of Jesus and to make Jesus known”*

(Mary Louise Sullivan, MSC, **Mother Cabrini, “Italian Immigrant of the Century”**
[New York: Center for Migration Studies of New York, 1992], 164)

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APPLYING WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

Suggestions to apply what you have learned:

1. As a A/DCCW, consult with your Arch/Bishop:
 - a. Does your arch/diocese have a "New Evangelization" program in progress
 - If so, offer to assist with the program and promote it through the CCWs.
 - Propose the use of this NCCW Program
 - b. Is your arch/diocese a partner with www.catholicscomehome.org (View their website to see the information and services offered.)
 - If so, offer to assist with the program and promote it through the CCWs.
 - If not, work with them to determine if they would be interested in doing so, offering to assist in the program.
2. Start **"Jam and Jelly"** ministries at your parish, offering free jam to take as a "door opener" to invite someone to mass or mend a relationship. The women in the CCWs would prepare the jams and cards. (For more information, see "Jam and Jelly" Resource Material in Component 3- Hospitality and Welcome.)
3. Develop a parish newcomer program administered by your CCWs. Include a small gift (such as a parish cookbook, houseplant, or religious book) along with information about all of the organizations in the parish, when they meet, age group, who to contact, etc. Also include a recent parish directory. Plan a reception after one Mass periodically to "Meet and Greet" the new parishioners---once a month or quarterly. Assign a contact person in the same age group for each newcomer as a mentor and to help in the transition to the new parish.
4. Organize a "welcome home" reception during homecoming week, inviting all current and former parishioners. Invite all to a mass that weekend or have the reception just after the mass. Use materials such as those outlined in the Catholics Come Home or a similar program.
5. Promote an evening of sharing stories about ways that women successfully invited family members back into the Church. Or how someone in their own family CAME back to the church. Or their own "detour years." This may give parents hope that are saddened that their adult children no longer attend Mass. Give it a catchy title, like **"Is there is a Missionary in Your Family?"**



6. Place an **“EVANGELIZING ARTICLE”** including a personal experience (that’s Witness!) in your A/DCCW newsletter:

Eileen O’Connor and Jean Kelly
2014 NCCW Leadership Commission

Recently I had the opportunity to listen to a CD by Father Francis J. Hoffman, (FatherRocky) Executive Director of Relevant Radio. He was addressing a group of college age Catholic men and women and in his talk, he covered what he called the 4 L’s. YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH: LEARN IT, LIVE IT, LOVE IT (...and you’ll never LEAVE IT!) BUT He also went on to an additional L - the 5th L- which he referred to as LAZINESS among our Catholics that over time becomes a habit.

One of the examples he gave was -- someone missing Mass one week-end and pretty soon it’s easy to miss the next week-end and the next and the next and soon never going. This CD (only \$10, a great thought provoking message) along with other resources can be purchased through Relevant Radio website: www.relevantradio.com

By our very Baptism we are to be witnesses to our faith - the NEW Evangelization is really calling each of us to deepen our faith, believe in the Gospel message and go forth to proclaim the Gospel. We need to take advantage of all opportunities to learn about our faith whether it be to listen to a speaker, host a bible study evening or get together to study a question and answer from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We need to help each other get to know God and feel comfortable in defending our Catholic Faith. Summer may be the time to do some studying when we aren’t bogged down with lots of tasks that occur during the school year.

2014 Spring Edition of the New Ulm DCCW Newsletter
Donna Sanders, Editor

SECTION 3: HOSPITALITY AND WELCOME



“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”

Matthew 10:40

“Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels.”

Hebrews 13:1-2

“As Catholics we are called to take concrete measures to overcome the misunderstanding, ignorance, competition, and fear that stand in the way of genuinely welcoming the stranger in our midst and enjoying the communion that is our destiny as Children of God.”

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity, 2000

THE MINISTRY OF HOSPITALITY



Research shows that people do not attend Mass regularly because they do not feel connected to the parish community:

- They do not feel they will be missed...
- They do not feel a sense of fellowship with parishioners...
- They do not feel needed...
- They do not believe anyone cares...

As the Bishops remind us in *Disciples Called to Witness*, they are not strangers! They are members of our own families, our neighbors and co-workers, people we know and greet at the grocery store. The “C&E Catholics” are among them---we see them at Mass on Christmas and Easter---and we recognize them from our neighborhoods, our jobs, our community businesses and other civic and professional organizations in which we are active.

What can we do to welcome them back? To make them feel that they are valued and needed in our local parish and the larger Church? How can we become the loving, welcoming person that will turn it all around and help them understand how important they are and how much they are missed? That is the essence of the Ministry of Hospitality!

Hospitality is about welcome and building relationships, and relationships are the foundation of membership. Christian hospitality is rooted in Scripture and is comprised of both presence and attention as well as reaching people where they are, not always waiting for them to come to us. This is true in the Church and every group, large and small. You have heard that people decide whether or not to buy a house in less than five minutes. The initial paragraph often dictates whether you will read an article in the magazine or move on. When meeting a new person, first impressions count! So a warm welcome, a smiling face, a sincere and personal greeting must come FIRST.

We can do this!! We can commit to arriving early and searching out new faces at Sunday Mass, and simply offering a warm welcome. We can triple the number of ministers of hospitality (greeters/ushers) on the Sundays when we know there will be a higher attendance and more new faces. Christmas and Easter, yes, but don't forget Mothers' and Fathers' Days, Sundays of holiday weekends, and special feasts of ethnic importance in your area. Look each person in the eye, smile, and offer a handshake and a personal greeting: “Good morning, welcome to St. Ann's” or “Good morning, we're glad you are here!”

We can do this in our community!! Recognizing people who we've noticed at Church once in a while when we see them at the bank, at a HS football game, or waiting at the dentist, and making that connection a part of our greeting and conversation. We can greet newcomers in the subdivision with a smiling invitation to come to Sunday Mass with us. Increasing our own visibility can help, too. Wearing a parish T-shirt, having a parish school bumper sticker, religious jewelry, rosary beads in the hospital waiting room---all mark us as Catholic, and help others identify us if they are looking.

We can do this at home, too!! Make attending mass as a family a priority. Encourage signing up for ministries at the same mass time—at least most of the time. You might have to attend Sunday evening LIFETEEN mass with the teens (and invite a teenaged cousin who doesn't always get to mass) or get moving earlier than you want to because Grandpa is an usher at 8am (and bring a neighbor who has transportation or mobility issues.) But Preschool Religious Education or is only offered at 10am and Mom sings in the 11:30 choir---but you know that if you prioritize it, it can happen. Maybe not every Sunday, but more often than Christmas and Easter. All of these things connect us to the parish---both the ministries and the family time together----don't neglect either.

If your parish does not have a Ministry of Hospitality, meet with the pastor and volunteer to start one. If you have one in place, join the ministry/committee. Ask if your CCW can take responsibility for one Sunday a month---not just one weekend in October when you are recruiting---let the Council of Catholic Women be the loving, welcoming evangelists at every one of your church doors!

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair



For extensive information and ideas on how Hospitality and Evangelization work together download: *CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY* from the Archdiocese of Louisville, KY. The 65 page download is a free resource and includes a list of excellent resources as well as templates for questionnaires and record keeping. The resource can also be ordered in hard copy (502) 585-3291 at a reasonable cost.

<http://www.archlou.org/evangelization/evangelization-resources/evangelization-tools/>

LET US PRAY

Welcoming the Stranger: A Prayer for Hospitality

CHRISTIAN HOSPITALITY, Archdiocese of Louisville, KY.

Loving God, Your Son Jesus said your kingdom is like a banquet
a festive gathering for all people of every race and color –
a table at which the lonely find company,
the hungry savor rich foods, and fine wine,
and strangers enjoy warm family ties.
Jesus calls us to build this kingdom here on earth.
Teach us, Lord, the ways of hospitality.
Give us the spirit of joyful welcome and the sensitivity
to help people on the move feel they belong.
Grant that our tables at home
may draw our new neighbors from other lands into a loving community
and that the Eucharistic tables in our parishes may
prefigure that banquet in heaven where all are one with You,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.
Amen.

This contemporary prayer was found on the internet no author was given---but the message is clear: we are to be open, welcoming, and loving to every person we encounter, placed in our path by our loving God, made in His image---even when it is hard to see!

Heavenly Father, Help us remember that the jerk who cut us off in traffic last night is a single mother who worked nine hours that day and is rushing home to cook dinner, help with homework, do the laundry and spend a few precious moments with her children.

Help us to remember that the pierced, tattooed, disinterested young man who can't make change correctly is a worried 19-year-old college student, balancing his apprehension over final exams with his fear of not getting his student loans for next semester.

Remind us, Lord, that the scary looking bum, begging for money in the same spot every day (who really ought to get a job!) is a slave to addictions that we can only imagine in our worst nightmares.

Help us to remember that the old couple walking annoyingly slow through the store aisles and blocking our shopping progress are savoring this moment, knowing that, based on the biopsy report she got back last week, this will be the last year that they go shopping together.

Heavenly Father, remind us each day that, of all the gifts you give us, the greatest gift is love. It is not enough to share that love with those we hold dear. Open our hearts not to just those who are close to us, but to all humanity. Let us be slow to judge and quick to forgive, show patience, empathy and love.

Amen

JAM AND JELLY MINISTRY

Purpose:

To serve as a tool for evangelization, healing broken relationships, and “spreading” God’s love. The “Jam and Jelly Ministry” can open doors and begin a process of welcome and healing in a friendly and personal way.

How it works:

- Parishioners who enjoy making jams and jellies are encouraged to donate them. A date to make the jam/jelly together in the parish kitchen can be a fun day of fellowship as well as service!
- Someone loves computer graphics and design. Find them---and have them design small cards to be stored on a computer, and printed as needed for accompanying the jam. You may decide to use text with openings such as:
 - “I’d like to invite you to come to Mass at my church.”
 - “I’d like to talk to you about my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”
 - “I am sorry I have offended you. Please forgive me.”
 - “I’m sorry our relationship has been broken. Can we begin anew?”
 - “I’m sorry I haven’t been a good neighbor. I’d like to make a new start!”
 - “I know you are going through some rough times. May God be with you and let me help share your burden.”
- Those wishing to participate in the outreach activity, present a jam with the appropriate card, gives it to the person they visit.
- Donations accepted from parishioners:
 - Extra fruits/vegetables,
 - Jars,
 - Sugar and Pectin,
 - Other supplies,
 - Any monetary donations are used to purchase the cards to print and supplies not donated.
- Specific instructions should be developed for safety in preparation and handling of jams and jellies (such as labeling ingredients, expiration dates, methods of sealing, etc.):
 - Labels contain all ingredients and an expiration date (one year after prepared).
 - Labels are monitored for expiration dates; one month prior to the expiration date jams and jellies are donated to a homeless shelter.
- For more detailed information about this ministry contact Eileen O’Connor.
ejoconnor@msn.com

Eileen O’Connor, NCCW Leadership Commission

2013 STAR IDEAS

NCCW Leadership Training Development Team

Signs can be a great benefit in giving directions to meeting/event locations. Place additional signs to say "Welcome" and "See You Next Time." Other signs can point to purposes of projects, collections, service efforts and more. Design signs as a place to write prayer petitions and for membership sign in and info updates. Be creative and inventive in sign development and use to reflect the best for your council.

As part of Council Sunday, one Spiritual Advisor announced the Wednesday noon Masses this month would be offered especially for women at different stages of life. One week a Mass for retired women, the next week for mothers with young children, and then women working in the community, with the last Wed. of the month for mothers of 'tweens and teens. Membership begins with relationship---identifying women in the same stage of life with common schedules and opportunities is a great idea for Council membership outreach.

Our large parish CCW had trouble finding the "right" time for monthly meetings---so we organized into "guilds" which meet once or twice monthly (their choice of time and place) and quarterly "membership" meetings with interesting speakers for everyone to come together. We just recently added a Latino Guild and are hopeful that this will strengthen relationships in our parish and promote Council at the same time!

Honor all of your spiritual advisors at your convention banquet. Make it about them instead of all about CCW. Show a PowerPoint with pictures of all of them and tell something about each SA. Consider a special blessing for the spiritual advisors from the women of Council.

Chicago - Vicariate IV has 60 parishes in its boundaries. The Vicariate President sent a religious Christmas ornament and card from the Vicariate Board to each pastor and each president of the CCW or other woman's group in the parish. Then, in January, a letter went to those who were not affiliated with ACCW asking to come to speak with their women about the advantages of being affiliated with ACCW/NCCW. In the first year, 6 parishes became new affiliates!

Design a calendar of events for the year. Use pictures and/or a colorful background. Don't forget your organization name or logo. Save it in a jpeg format, or scan it in after printing. Send this file to your local store that prints pictures when they are having a sale of 10-15 cents for a 4"x6" picture. Have enough printed for your members and extras for prospective members. Add a strip of magnet to the back so that it can be put on the refrigerator for easy and quick reference throughout the year. An inexpensive and effective tool to keep CCW in the forefront!!

Our affiliation president asked each of us to personally invite a woman not currently a member of our council to our next meeting, which was a luncheon. (It may take several times to get a yes response, but keep trying!) We were given a brief instruction on how to ask and a short statement of who we are and what we do. At the next meeting we had over 125! This resulted in over 40 new members who are still active today. We average 80+ women at every meeting.

Sponsor a half-day retreat in Advent, given by someone well known, if possible. Authors are good; gives them a chance to sign and sell their books. Have vendors there ---we found "cottage industries" or individuals more interested at that time of year than brick-and-mortar stores. Feature live music as part of your prayer and to end the breaks. Ask your Board to bring Christmas decorations to recycle/sell at your own vendor table. Also, use pixie poinsettias (in white or pink to keep the colors in Advent) as table centerpieces and have extras (red) on hand to sell. End with Mass celebrated by the Bishop. Serve donated breads and rolls in the morning; no lunch is needed.

SECTION 4: HEARTS TO LOVE AND HANDS TO SERVE



"We cannot keep to ourselves the words of eternal life given to us in our encounter with Jesus Christ: they are meant for everyone, for every man and woman. ... It is our responsibility to pass on what, by God's grace, we ourselves have received."

Pope Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, 2010

"By your work you show what you love and what you know."

St. Bruno

"True power is service. The Pope must serve all people, especially the poor, the weak, the vulnerable." (If he can do it, so can you!)

Pope Francis

LIVING THE CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

We are all familiar with the corporal works of mercy, found in the Gospel of St. Matthew 25:24-40, where Jesus tells us that whatever we do to the least people, we do to Him. This is our inspiration for service! Often, women may not want to make time to participate and join an organization unless they feel they are helping others and will be involved in direct service. The active service of your Council is a great opportunity to help others and, maybe, attract a wider array of members----and evangelize at the same time!

CHOOSE from these suggestions to highlight the evangelizing elements of the SERVICE you already do living out the corporal works of mercy:

1. Serving Dinner at the local Homeless Shelter.
 - a. Wear your NCCW aprons and/or parish-CCW t shirts---something that identifies you with the Church.
 - b. Include a little note about God's love on the tray if allowed.
2. Knit, crochet, quilt or sew baby blankets for the local crisis pregnancy center. Include a prayer with your CCW affiliation name.
 - a. Gather as a group and pray for the infants and mothers in crisis as you work.
 - b. Include a note saying "lovingly made by the women of St. Mary's Council of Catholic Women who are praying for you and your new baby."
 - c. A prayer card might be included with a Madonna image, helping to connect the young mother to our Blessed Mother.
3. Hold a "donations only" lemonade stand after Mass and use the proceeds for Water for Life through Catholic Relief Services.
 - a. Use a clear glass (or plastic) pitcher to hold donations.
 - b. Give each person a little 3 ounce empty cup with a slip of paper saying **THANKS FOR PROVIDING CLEAN WATER** and the CRS website info on it. (www.crs.org/nccw).
 - c. Be sure to have brochures or flyers with your CCW information and the partnership with CRS available on the table.
4. Help with a local Habitat for Humanity house.
 - a. Always wear your CCW t-shirt or NCCW apron, whether using a hammer or serving the workers lunch.
 - b. Participate in the closing prayer service with the family and workers.
 - c. Look for opportunities to put the local building project into the prayers of the parish.
5. Send cards or visit those you know that are in the hospital.
 - a. From both your parish and neighborhood.
 - b. If your parish does not have a designated minister to bring the Eucharist to hospitalized or homebound parishioners, offer to do this---special training will be required in most dioceses.
 - c. Include a special prayer and note from your council.
 - d. Include these folks on your CCW e-prayer chain.

6. Reach out to those who are in prison.
 - a. Help with a communion service or Mass at a prison (if allowed).
 - b. Offer to be a part of the music ministry for prison or detention center.
 - c. Donate and help collect spiritual reading materials.
 - d. Collect Christmas cards with a holy text (and stamps!) for prisoners to send to their families.

7. Provide funeral luncheons in your parish.
 - a. Stamp the placemats with your CCW's name and include a comforting prayer.
 - b. Place information about joining the bereavement ministry of your CCW on a small table, available as people leave.

8. Plan ways to help change the culture that promotes adoption as another option to an unplanned pregnancy.
 - a. Adopt a room---paint and furnish or refurbish---at a local facility where moms who choose life can stay free of charge.
 - b. Start an adoption support prayer group for those "waiting" for a baby.
 - c. Invite a speaker from the diocesan adoption office or one approved by Catholic Charities to help educate parishioners about adoption.

9. Pray at an abortion clinic.
 - a. Wear t-shirts, aprons or something that identifies your Council ---in Florida sun protective prolife umbrellas are used.
 - b. Bring rosaries made by your council members for participants (with a note about how they were lovingly made, of course!)

10. "Share the Bounty" of your garden with those less fortunate.
 - a. Take the "extra" vegetables from your home garden to a local soup kitchen or homeless shelters.
 - b. Bring a small selection of home grown produce to seniors who are home bound---and be sure to add a prayer card!

REMEMBER: All suggestions are subject to approval by your Spiritual Advisor (for parish activities) and those in charge (for community outreach efforts.) We always want to share the JOY we have found in Jesus and our Catholic faith in a non-threatening and loving way.

GOAL: They will know we are Christians by our LOVE!

Jean Kelly, NCCW Leadership Commission

LET US PRAY

Prayer to Our Lady of Evangelization



O Mary, Mother of Jesus and Mother of his Church,
we are mindful of the role you play in the evangelization of souls who do not yet know Him.

We are mindful of how missionaries came with the power of Christ's Gospel and committed the success of their work to you.

As the Mother of Divine Grace you were with the missionaries in all their efforts.

And as Mother of the Church you presided over all the activities of evangelization and over the implantation of the Gospel in the hearts of the faithful.

You sustained the missionaries in hope and you gave joy to every new community that was born of the Church's evangelizing activity.

You were there with your intercession and your prayers, as the first grace of baptism developed, and as those who had new life in Christ your Son came to a full appreciation of their Christian calling.

We ask you, Mary, to help us to fulfill this mission of evangelization which your Son has given to his Church and which falls to us.

Mindful of your role as Help of Christians, we entrust ourselves to you in the work of carrying the Gospel ever deeper into the hearts and lives of all the people.

We entrust to you our missionary mandate and commit our cause totally to your prayers.

To Jesus Christ your Son, with the Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit be praise and thanksgiving forever and ever.

Amen.

Catholic Online

EVANGELIZATION IN SERVICE



The Service Commission of the National Council of Catholic Women is evangelization in motion. All that is necessary is a *heart to love and hands to serve*. Our evangelization must be connected to Jesus Christ, His teachings, His life and the promise of His kingdom. The New Evangelization calls us to deepen our faith and carry the message out into the world. In order to keep the evangelization alive, we must give it away! The effectiveness does not come from what we know, but often from what we do---from the way we serve others, especially the poorest of the poor, the marginalized and the most defenseless.

There are two elements of evangelization, witness and sharing. **Witness** is a simple living of our faith and **sharing** is the spreading of the Gospel. We don't have to have all the answers; we just have to know the Truth and a willingness to try!

Action follows contemplation. The Evangelization of the Service Commission reverberates with action. Focusing on the importance of global solidarity, family life, and concerns of women and children, all our programs are evangelization in action. By making a difference in society and our world, we are growing in our own faith. We are also being used by the Holy Spirit to evangelize through our attempt to reach those whose faith may be in crises, those who feel alienated, and those who have drifted away from the Catholic Church.

Hearts to love and hands to serve; we are the hands and hearts Jesus Christ works through. We have the opportunity to turn everything we do into a prayer or a witness to others. The action we take may be the only evangelization someone experiences. We pray that the love of Christ shines through our eyes and our faces. As Mother Teresa said, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love."

Pope Francis tells us, "Do not become too polite to speak of theology calmly over tea. We have to become courageous Christians and seek out those who are the flesh of Christ." But what if we make a mistake? "Well, what of it," he continued, "Get on with you: if you make a mistake, you get up and go forward: that is the way. Those who do not walk in order not to err, make the more serious mistake."

Nancy Poll, 2014 NCCW Service Commission Chair

"THE GIFT OF LOVE"

LOCAL NEWS

The Catholic Times • November 17, 2011

14

Working together to present 'The Gift of Love'

By GRACE MULLEN
PRESIDENT, MARSHFIELD DCCW

MARSHFIELD – Recently the Marshfield Deanery Council of Catholic Women (DCCW) met with the Knights of Columbus Council #1799. Grace Mullen, president of the Marshfield

DCCW, spoke at the meeting about a joint effort of working together on deanery projects. She pointed out that "Both organizations have extraordinary histories and activities. The Deanery Council of Catholic Women are women of service and have given an amazing 82,744 hours

of service to our parishes and communities this past year. They have numerous supportive programs and ministries. We know the Knights are very generous in service to our parishes and community and it's evident with all of their activities."

"It's apparent that we share

our love of God and our Church and respect for human dignity. Because of this we can be of service together on some projects," she said.

Mullen then presented three projects that would be of mutual interest to the two councils and benefit parishes and communities.

need by doing something we love. We hope we are providing some comfort to these parents at such a difficult time in their lives," Pflugradt said.

It's well known that the Knights of Columbus and the Council of Catholic Women are very pro-life and it's evident when visiting the parish cem-

2011-2012
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CT/Contributed photo
Posing for a photograph during the the meeting between the Marshfield DCCW and the Knights of Columbus Council #1799 are (left) Diane Andraska, La Crosse DCCW president; Grace Mullen, Marshfield Deanery DCCW president; Pattie Pflugradt, Marshfield Deanery DCCW vice president and Daniel Flees, Knights of Columbus grand knight.

One of the projects is The Gift of Love. Deanery vice president, Pattie Pflugradt presented the program. "The Gift of Love is a beautiful, caring and loving project to help give moms some comfort after losing a baby. ... We provide memorial keepsake boxes filled with items like a handkerchief, a cross, a poem, information about the baby, maybe a lock of hair, foot or handprint or a photograph of the baby if available," she said.

"Blankets, kimonos, isolette covers, hats, booties and sweaters are provided by the ladies to the Birth Center at Ministry of St. Joseph Hospital Learning to Cope and the Neonatal Intensive Care unit. Elegant burial outfits are also made for the little angels that pass away. These babies are placed in tiny caskets for burial and they are made with loving care," Pflugradt said.

She also noted that the Knights have offered to make some of these little caskets, which are then lined with satin cushions, a pillow decorated with lace, ribbons, a cross, all put together with loving care. "The death of an infant whether from miscarriage, stillborn or a newborn death is one of the most devastating experiences any parent could face. It's gratifying to us to help those in

eteries and you see engraved on the memorial monuments, "In loving memory of the unborn, you will never be forgotten."

The memorials are also in memory of the stillborn and premature deaths of babies that it may bring some closure and comfort to grieving parents. There is a place to pray for babies and their mothers and for an end to abortion.

Of the 10 parishes in the deanery, six have a beautiful memorial in their cemeteries. The second project involves the Knights helping PCCWs to establish a memorial in the other four parishes. Already, one of the four parishes without a memorial, Copus Christi in Marshfield, is working to establish a memorial in their parish cemetery.

The third project is to promote both PCCW and the Knights to high school graduates by enclosing information and an invitation in a congratulation card to them about our two councils. Dan Flees, Marshfield Knights of Columbus Grand Knight said, "They are very receptive to all three projects."

Pflugradt said that if anyone desires to help with these projects, she can be contacted at 715-207-8348 or via e-mail at maskipaski@solarus.net.

"Extend your mercy towards others, so that there can be no one in need whom you meet without helping. For what hope is there for us if God should withdraw His Mercy from us?"

— St Vincent de Paul

cut out and return

2011-2012 Diocesan Annual Appeal		Please select ONE of the following:	
	Record of Total Pledge	<input type="checkbox"/> Check – Make check payable to: Diocese of La Crosse	
	Total Gift \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Direct payment from my checking account	
	Initial Payment \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Master Card or Visa	
	Balance \$ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Gift of Stock	
Name: _____		<p style="text-align: center;">Cut out and return this pledge card to: Diocesan Annual Appeal P.O. Box 4004 La Crosse, WI 54602-4004</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>For additional information, call the Diocesan Annual Appeal Office at 608-791-2653</i></p>	
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The Diocese of LaCrosse, Wisconsin

SECTION 5: HOLY HOLIDAYS



“Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I assure you that whomever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.”

Mark 10:14-15

“I assure you that unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven. The greatest in the Kingdom of heaven is the one who humbles himself and becomes like this child. And whoever welcomes in my name one such child as this, welcomes me.”

Matthew 18: 3-4

“The CHRISTIAN FAMILY is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the "domestic church" where God's children learn to pray "as the Church" and to persevere in prayer. For young children in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church's living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit.”

“For Christians a special gratitude is due to those from whom they have received the gift of faith, the grace of Baptism, and life in the Church. These may include parents, grandparents, other members of the family, pastors, catechists, and other teachers or friends. "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2685, 2220

SHARING FAITH WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Sharing faith with young children is a special gift. They bring such enthusiasm and natural joy of life and ask questions that catch us off guard and astound us with insight--some of them about God! Parents, Godparents and Grandparents have a sacred obligation to be their best teachers and to do everything we can to fill their lives with opportunities to learn more, ask questions, and experience all the wonders of growing up Catholic.

One of the best ideas is to make our holiday celebrations HOLY. It's a great start to purchase your family tree where the signs read "CHRISTMAS TREE LOT" (not "Holiday Trees") and buy a magnet that says "Keep Christ in Christmas" to put on the car, but that's just the beginning. Think about making every holiday HOLY and CATHOLIC.....Birthdays, Holy Days, Saints' Feasts, Marian days, even some national holidays. And in doing so, you just might be re-evangelizing the entire family!

Sharing faith with young children MUST include activities --arts and crafts, poems and songs, prayers to recite and colors to match! Include as many senses as you can to make a lasting impression and help the children experience "being Catholic!"

Share these ideas with parents in pre-school and elementary religious education programs and parish "Mom & Tots" groups. If your parish or your CCW has a young mothers' Bible Study, ask for a time to speak with the group. Speak with the coordinator of Baptism preparation and RCIA and offer to come and share ideas with them or present to the groups yourself. Helping young parents to share their faith is evangelizing, too!!

MARK THE LITURGICAL SEASONS

At the dinner table, use a tablecloth or runner with the season's color or choose a different table prayer (grace) for each of the liturgical seasons. You may choose to add it to the family's regular table prayer.

ADVENT:

Come Lord, Jesus, be our guest, and may all our family be blest! AMEN. (purple)

CHRISTMAS

Let us pause before we eat and think about the ones in need of food and shelter and of love, please bless us all dear God of all. Amen. (white)

LENT

For every cup and plateful, please make us truly grateful. Forgive us when we're wasteful, for we're all God's family. (purple)

EASTER

Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ is Risen, Alleluia! Bless our food and our family, Alleluia! (white)

ORDINARY TIME

Be present at our table, Lord, Be here and everywhere adored. AMEN. (green)

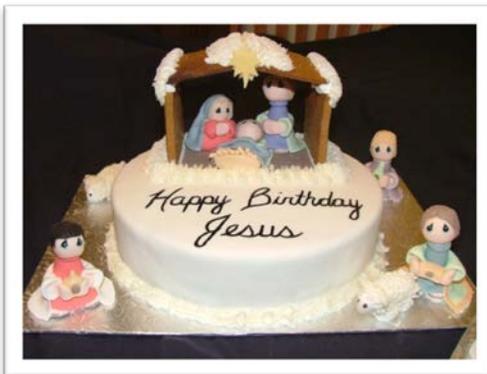


ADVENT: Greet your children with a cheery **“HAPPY NEW YEAR!”** on the first Sunday of Advent. Encourage them to greet everyone on the way into Church the same way. Won’t everyone be surprised that these little ones know it is the beginning of the new Church year? Choose an Advent Calendar that has scripture verses for each day and read them aloud just before bedtime.

Don’t be afraid of Santa---embrace him and share the story of St. Nicholas. Be sure to have bags of gold coins (chocolate, of course) when you tell the tale, or to place in their shoes on the night of December 5th. Make the feast day extra special and give toys to a local collection/Advent Giving Tree on Dec. 6th, following St. Nickolas’ lead!



CHRISTMAS: **Decorations Count!** Place the crèche in a place of prominence, use banners with a message of Jesus’ birth and put Jesus or angels on your lawn instead of reindeer or a snowman. Ornaments on your family’s tree can also be chosen with the Christmas message in mind. If you are out shopping and cannot find any ornaments or Christmas cards with a religious theme, be sure to take an extra moment to let the manager know how disappointed you are and how inconvenient it is to have to go to another store.



Christmas is a BIRTHDAY, right? Children understand Birthdays---so have a Birthday Cake for Jesus! We have a special little crèche (plastic, so it can be washed) and we only use one candle, but it’s a tradition our family loves. We always invited friends over on the 26th, and made it part of that celebration.

Gift giving is the perfect time to talk to children about being grateful and giving thanks. Encourage them to make thank you cards for everyone who gives them special time or a material gift over the Christmas holiday. Be sure to sit down and prepare your own handwritten thank you notes where they can see your example! You will want to use religious Christmas stamps, so think ahead and save some!

The Feast of the Holy Family is all about YOUR family, too. Don’t let this beautiful celebration get lost in the craziness between Christmas and New Year! Plan a special family meal and let the youngest children tell the story of Mary and Joseph and baby Jesus. If you have a child-friendly nativity set, they can use the figures as props! We have wooden blocks with the main characters painted on them that works well----and Fischer Price sells a “Little People” set that is just perfect.



LENT: 40 days: Young children do not understand the passage of days and weeks in the same way older children and adults mark time. **Focusing on “doing something extra”** during this season and moving towards Easter, a Butterfly Tree makes a fun and easy activity. Long recognized as a symbol of transforming life, even young children learn about caterpillars and butterflies. Using green pipe cleaners, called chenille sticks in craft stores, fashion 40 caterpillars by wrapping them loosely around a pencil. Of course the kids should do this---and perfect is not expected! Place them on a tree made from a branch secured in a can of quick drying plaster or a vase of floral marbles—whatever you have on

hand. In a small basket next to the tree, place 40 butterflies. These can be purchased, crafted, or simply cut from colored paper. Instruct the children that each day of LENT they will remove a caterpillar, and replace it with a butterfly---and share with the family the GOOD DEED they did that day. (Rotate if more than one child.) When Easter arrives, the tree will be full of butterflies and ready for the next season!!

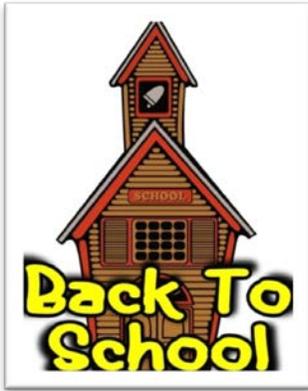


EASTER: Holy Easter Baskets. The Easter basket is a tradition and every child fully expects to find one full of goodies, “hidden” or not, on Easter morning. But, it’s up to parents and grandparents to make that basket reflect the real meaning of Easter, and not be all about the big bunny. Did you know that you can purchase a chocolate cross instead of a chocolate Easter bunny? Will you include a coloring book of Saints or the Mass from the Catholic Bookstore in the basket? Those plastic eggs are a perfect place to hide a rosary, or a small plastic cross as well as jellybeans. How about pencils with a scripture verse? A DVD of a religious movie or Christian cartoon like Veggie Tales is a great addition. Easter Eggs can be decorated with a religious theme with stickers and liturgical colors! It is not harder---just takes a little planning---and sharing the truth of our faith is well worth the extra time.

Does your home reflect the Joy of Easter through the entire season? Is there an Alleluia banner or an empty cross greeting all who enter? Is there a great butterfly, sign of new life, for children to ask about? Are the cards you received from friends and relatives displayed until Pentecost? Just as you marked the 40 days of Lent, mark the 50 days of Easter! Use stickers on the family calendar or add flowers to your butterfly tree...just a simple reminder that the Season of Easter continues.

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair





ORDINARY TIME: The time marked “Ordinary” in the Liturgical Calendar is anything but dull! These weeks between the “BIG SEASONS” are the perfect time to highlight favorite saints, ethnic traditions, and some of those lesser known traditions unique to being Catholic.

AUG/SEPT: School begins. Make the first day of school even more special with a card to each child, godchild or grandchild reminding them of your prayerful support of their efforts and endeavors. Enclose a prayer card with their Saint name, or the patron of their favorite activity or subject or career. It’s something you can do from pre-school through college!

OCT: The month of the ROSARY! If your parish has a group that makes rosaries, you could take your children to learn. If your parish sends rosaries to military personnel or mission areas, you could collect some. If your family has never prayed the rosary together, begin a new tradition. Google some historical facts---explain that the 150 Hail Mary prayers coincide with the 150 Psalms and began as a way for lay people to pray with the monks. The fact that ordinary people could not read and write is a teachable moment to show school aged children how the history they learn in school and the history of the Church are woven together. (You might have to explain monks and lay people, too!)



MAY: Create a Shoebox Marian Shrine. Even if you never made one as a child, the name pretty much tells the story. All you need is a shoebox, an inexpensive statue of Mary (or even a photo of a statue in your parish,) some basic art supplies and maybe a few disposable silk flowers. What happens is a total transformation----and a special focus for talking about Mary during May---and throughout the year. You might even take out that little shrine for every Marian Feast. And think how surprised a Godmother or Grandmother would be if given one for Mother’s Day!



SUMMER: Family vacations! Where will you attend Mass on vacation? How is the church the same (and different) from your own parish church? It is important to include your children in conversations about these things---it helps them to recognize the special things in the sanctuary and the church. Encourage your children to observe and ask questions about every “new” environment in which they celebrate the Eucharist.

Let your imagination, ethnic customs, and quirky family traditions add many, many more special celebrations to make your own wonder-filled Holy Holidays!

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair

LET US PRAY

A Mother's Prayer for her Children

This prayer is from a small booklet entitled **Mother's Manual**, a collection of prayers compiled by Fr. John Heart, OMI. The individual prayers were gathered from around the world, but do not list authors.



Holy Mother Mary,
Who by virtue of your divine motherhood,
hast become mother of us all
I place the charge which God has given me,
under your loving protection.
Be a Protecting Mother to my children.
Guard their bodies and
keep them in health and strength.
Guard their minds and keep their thoughts ever holy
in the sight of their Creator and God.
Guard their hearts and keep them pure and strong and
happy in the love of God.
Guard always their souls and ever preserve in them,
faithfully, the glorious image of God
whom they received in Holy Baptism.
Always Mother, protect them and keep them
under your Mothering care.
Supply in your all-wise motherhood,
for my poor human deficiencies
and protect them from all evil.

Amen.

Queen of the Most Holy Family,
Pray for us.

CELEBRATE MARRIAGE ON VALENTINE'S DAY

Something Special for Parents and Couples



A **Cana Dinner** is a special evening sponsored by the Deanery Family Life Committee (or the CCW!) for married and engaged couples. The evening's itinerary usually begins with Mass, at which there is a couples' blessing and is followed by a catered dinner with a speaker, entertainment by a local DJ, and of course dancing! Gift baskets and drawings are sometimes offered. This is not necessarily limited to Catholic couples, and others might be encouraged to "come and see." In our area, the entire Deanery has good representation with both men and women from the Deanery/Vicariates involved in all aspects of the evening, from hosting to publicity, registration and attending. Only 3 -4 meetings a year are needed to keep everyone informed. The event is held each year at a parish or other larger facility, such as a hotel, if needed, to celebrate the sacrament of marriage.

Speakers are chosen to highlight the joys and help with the challenges of living a Catholic marriage. Some speakers in past years have addressed differences in family life, how couples worked through difficulties and learned ways to see God's grace in every situation. Tips to strengthen a good marriage, and how to create a good team were also popular topics. Dynamic, well informed speakers who will appeal to both men and women should be chosen. An excellent speaker, John R. Buri, Ph. D. from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN, is actively involved in marriage preparation and marriage enrichment programs. Dr. Buri is the author of "**How to Love Your Wife,**" and can be contacted through the University Dept. of Psychology. If you are interested in a more local speaker, check your own Diocesan offices and Catholic Universities near you.

The event is held annually on a Saturday evening in February near Valentine's Day. Ticket prices vary from \$50-\$60 per couple depending the meal and speaker. To hold a successful event, as always, publicity is very important! Announcements are placed in all church bulletins in the deanery including non-Catholic churches. (Remember---invite everyone to "Come and See!") Advertisements are also placed in the local newspapers, the Catholic paper and Relevant Radio.

In addition, an announcement is placed in parish bulletins inviting those unable to attend to donate the cost of a ticket, which allows the committee to grant scholarships to couples who would not otherwise be able to attend. Some parish CCW affiliations send scholarship donations, too!

Diane Andraska, Diocese of LaCrosse

RESOURCES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Suggestions to enhance your family celebrations of Holy Holidays

Family Books:

- **The Passover Celebration** by Leon Klenicki and Myra Cohen
Approved by The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith and The Liturgy Training Program of the Archdiocese of Chicago, this step-by-step explanation and script for celebrating a Seder Meal will enhance family and parish celebrations.
Copyright 1980, Latest printing: 2007 (available from AMAZON)
- **A BOOK OF THE LIVES OF SAINTS**---there are so many and which is the best match for your family will take some serious browsing in your local Catholic bookstore and/or online.

GIFT BOOKS

Give a child a Catholic book for birthdays, feast days, and any holiday to make it more holy!

- **For the Children**
Words of Love and Inspiration from His Holiness Pope John Paul II
Copyright 2000 by Calloway Editions, Inc published by Scholastic Press
ISBN 0-439-14902-9
- **When is this Singing Part?**
A Take-me-to-church Mass Book for preschoolers by Belle Flynn and Peggy O'Connell.
Copyright 1985 Pflaum Press
ISBN-13: 978-9995060985 ISBN-10: 9995060981
- **The Miracle of Me**
by Amy B Pedersen is a perfect gift for an expectant mom or soon to be sibling. Beautiful photos of the developing child as well as basic facts and figures. Also a perfect book to accompany the Spiritual Adoption of the Unborn program.
Copyright 2007
Published by Marion Press, www.marian.org
ISBN 978-1-59872-738-8
- **The Butterfly Tree**
by Joan Lowery Nixon is a gentle and beautifully illustrated book which deals with the death and memories of a great grandmother.
Copyright 1979 Our Sunday Visitor
ISBN 0-87973-355-1

WEBSITE:

<http://loyolapress.com/praying-as-a-family.htm>

Find family prayers, click on **Catholic Kids** to find monthly arts and crafts suggestions and so much more.

SECTION 6: REACHING OUT TO YOUNG WOMEN IN COLLEGE AND BEYOND



“This is what is needed: a Church for young people, which will know how to speak to their heart and enkindle, comfort, and inspire enthusiasm in it with the joy of the Gospel and the strength of the Eucharist; a Church which will know how to invite and welcome the person who seeks a purpose for which to commit his whole existence; a Church which is not afraid to require much, after having given much; which does not fear asking from young people the effort of a noble and authentic adventure, such as that of the following of the Gospel.”

St. John Paul II, *For the XXXII World Day of Prayer for Vocations*, 1994

“Evangelization means presenting the vision and tradition of our faith and inviting others to experience faith. Evangelization will be a strong component in a ministry to young adults. After all, women and men in their twenties and thirties are the largest segment of the Catholic population, and they are the least active part of the same population.”

John C. Cusick, Katherine F. DeVries, *The Basic Guide To Young Adult Ministry*, 2001

INVITATION, HOSPITALITY AND EVANGELIZATION

Sharing personal stories from your own life experience is a very powerful way to talk about your faith. Include personal experiences and family stories when you share with others. This is witness!

My husband once said to me, in the context of a new church building fund drive, “*They are doing this all backwards. They should build the school first.*” My son titled his master’s thesis “*The Church’s Preferential Option: Young Adult Ministry.*” My husband’s comment reflects the way “*it used to be*” in a very Catholic neighborhood in a mid-west city. My son, although born in very Catholic Texas, was raised in the southeast, in the middle of the Bible belt, surrounded by the outreach and proselytizing of numerous faith communities in high school and college. Both men clearly recognize the need to prioritize the faith formation of our youth---from the “*traditional*” Catholic parish grade school beginnings through the questioning and searching of teens and young adults. My husband would say “*learn the basics, understand the Church teachings, and do service*” and my son would say “*Fall in love with Jesus, help others, and make a difference.*” Whether you identify more with the words and focus of my husband or those of my son, the essence remains the same: we must prioritize the faith formation of our youth. Imagine the possibilities!

It might surprise most Catholics to learn that in 1997—almost 2 decades ago, the USCCB published “**Sons and Daughters of the Light: A Pastoral Plan for Ministry with Young Adults**” and it has been over 30 years since Father John Cusick started “**Theology on Tap**” in 1981. If you have never heard of either one, it is not surprising, but it is eye-opening---or should be! If your parish does not have a dedicated outreach program to young adults, why not? And if your Council of Catholic Women does not have a dedicated outreach program to young adult women, why not?

If your first response is “*HOW??*” or “*We have no idea where to begin!*” or “*They are not interested in our group,*” my 30-something son summed it up this way: “*Mom, the important thing is it comes down to: **Direct, Personal Invitation, Hospitality and Evangelization.***”

3-steps---we can DO this! And the truth is, these are the STRENGTHS of members of the Council of Catholic Women!

Direct, personal invitation means you have to FIND them and SPEAK to young adults. They are working, going to the gym, meeting their girlfriends for a coffee and using the weekends to catch up, do laundry, exercise, shop for groceries, and unwind. If they are at Mass on Sunday, they probably are not taking home the bulletin to double check the times and dates of next weeks’ meetings! The invitation must have a clear focus, a definite time limit, and include something which lets them know that their participation will make a difference. Young adults are not just looking for an opportunity to “*get away*” for a couple hours!

- Start with the SPIRITUAL: direct, personal invitations to a ½ day of reflection after Sat morning Mass or a special rosary for those serving in the military.
- Make certain that they will feel welcomed: greet, introduce, listen and match them up---they have much to share with each other! A CCW meeting might be the first time young adult working Catholic women in your area become aware of each other.
- Don’t PUSH membership, but do get basic contact information.
- Plan an ACTIVITY: Make their time count—paint the church foyer, plant a Mary garden, join an All Women Habitat team, serve at a local homeless shelter or soup kitchen.
- STICK TO THE TIME LIMIT—Start and end on time!

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair

LET US PRAY

The Present Moment Prayer

St. Faustina's Diary

O My God,

When I look into the future, I am frightened,

But why plunge into the future?

Only the present moment is precious to me,

As the future may never enter my soul at all.

It is no longer in my power to change, correct or add to the past;

For neither sages nor prophets could do that.

And so what the past has embraced I must entrust to God.

O present moment, you belong to me, whole and entire.

I desire to use you as best I can.

And although I am weak and small,

You grant me the grace of Your omnipotence.

And so, trusting in Your mercy,

I walk through life like a little child,

Offering You each day this heart

Burning with love for Your greater Glory.

AMEN.

The Serenity Prayer

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; the courage to change the things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him forever in the next. Amen

The Young Catholic Woman website/prayers

KEEPING COLLEGE KIDS CONNECTED



Most suggestions can be done as an individual or as a group!

COLLEGE! Often, it's the first time young people leave home, live away from family, and find themselves totally in charge of their schedules and activities. Participating in the local parish or campus ministry must be a conscious choice, as they won't be herded into the car with the rest of the family every Sunday morning. How can we help them stay connected to their faith?

PACKING: When they begin to pack, be sure that a small crucifix is tucked among the sheets and towels. Many dorms will not allow students to hang things on the wall, so the kind that stands up (in a small block of wood or tiny piece of marble) is perfect. A Bible---their confirmation one, perhaps---and a copy of YOUCAT, maybe a small book of inspirational quotes might be slipped into their box of books. You can even point out that inspirational quotes are often useful for writing assignments. All of them will be tangible reminders of their Catholic faith.

MOVE-IN-DAY: If you have a local college or university, your CCW might organize "Move-in-Day" help and provide a brochure of your parish mass times, a map to get there, and any young adult activities---information and welcome!! Imagine the impact if you included a baggie of home-baked cookies...

CORRESPONDENCE: Even in this age of texting and email, getting snail mail is still very special. Buy some cute little cards and pre-address them so you can send a quick note even if you are in a hurry. I know a woman who sent one to her daughter in college on her lunch break every Monday for 4 years. Sometimes it just said hello, and thinking about you. Sometimes it was something funny her younger siblings said, or a note about the neighbor's garden. And sometimes, it was about a Sunday homily, someone in their parish community, or a celebration at church---keeping her connected.

FEAST DAYS: Send a Catholic e-card to celebrate All Saints Day, St. Patrick's Day, and St. Michael the Archangel, and the Feast of the Guardian Angels. They were born when St. John Paul II was Pope, so include his feast day, one of the many for Our Blessed Mother, and any others they loved as a child. And be sure to include a note reminding them of their personal connection in the message space. For their own name day feast give them something special---a gift card or a small, unexpected check.

CARE PACKAGES: Send a box with funny napkins and homemade cookies or brownies to the Catholic Center, Newman House, or Campus Parish Young Adult Ministry Office every once in a while. Where college kids are gathered, snacks for fellowship time are always welcome. Include a card that says "from John's mother with love and prayers!" Corny is ok---you're the mom.

WE ARE CALLED TO WITNESS!

APPS, BLOGS and TEXTS: Suggest some of the free Catholic APPS and BLOGS. Send contemporary inspirational messages to their inbox—from a variety of sources, not just Scripture or the Pope! Encourage them to find a speaker they enjoy and listen to Podcasts or online videos. Ask them to share what they like with YOU!

UNDERSTANDING PEER MINISTRY: The most important factor in young people making contact and staying connected to campus ministry programs is peer ministry. Successful campus ministry programs are always peer driven. Outreach by other college students, programs directed to gathering and attracting young Catholics (usually involving free food or music) are most likely to get your child or grandchild to the Catholic Center, Neumann House or Campus Parish. Encourage them to try it....attend a few times....bring along a friend (maybe someone from their HS Search.)

DON'T ACT SURPRISED: If your “never been really interested in signing up for Adoration” child suddenly bubbles over with excitement over an all-night Adoration event with witnessing (by other students) and music (maybe even live.) Be ready to listen to faith experiences which are totally new to you. If the campus has an interfaith or Christian prayer group which your child or grandchild is attending, don't panic!

THE BOTTOM LINE: COMMUNICATE!!! Do not be afraid, but keep it balanced. Do not be afraid to talk about Church or Catholic traditions and practices. Keeping your college kid connected to their Catholic faith is an essential part of your responsibilities as a parent, Godparent or grandparent. BUT don't be so concerned with “Catholic sharing” that your conversations become predictably single focused or they will simply nod in agreement and ignore your best efforts.

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair



WYD - WORLD YOUTH DAY



Our efforts to reach young people need to be more proactive than reactive! Sending/sponsoring a young person to attend World Youth Day (WYD) might be the thing that **KEEPS** her in Church later on. WYD is primarily for youth aged 17-35. Young people who are high school, college/university, even college grads and beyond. Here in the United States we don't usually think of 21-35 years old as "youth," but this term includes young adults in other parts of the world.

- If there is a young person in your life who is considering whether or not to go to the next **World Youth Day---Krakow, Poland in 2016**---Encourage them!
- If there is a young person in your life who never considered it, plant the seed now! What a gift to a niece or Godchild.
- If there is a young person in your life who wants to go, help them get there!
- Your CCW could start now, working with your Young Adult Ministry, helping with fundraisers and travel miles.

Young people do not "attend" World Youth Day---they experience it, they participate in it, they eat—sleep—and LIVE it! If you have any doubts, ask someone who attended any previous WYD event---St John Paul II started them in 1984!

- Your CCW might hold a WYD alumni event and invite previous attendees from the area to speak to your HS youth group!
- Advertise the Spiritual and Physical Preparation, as well as photos and a wealth of information available at www.worldyouthday.org.

They come back ON FIRE in the SPIRIT, IN LOVE with JESUS, CONNECTED to the Holy Father and EXCITED to be Catholic.

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair

WEB RESOURCES FOR YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

1. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship/campuses-and-young-adults/ideas-for-ministry-to-young-adults.cfm>

- Ideas for Ministry to Young Adults.
- Web Site lists many very good ideas and activities to involve young adults on the parish or diocesan level.

2. RENEW International—Renew Theology on Tap

<http://www.renewintl.org/Renew/Index.nsf/vpages/AboutToT?opendocument>

- **RENEW Theology on Tap** offers an innovative solution to one of today's most pressing pastoral concerns: how to reach out to young Catholic adults. Young adults can sometimes be overlooked to the extent that even their absence goes unnoticed. **RENEW Theology on Tap** reaches young adults where they are, while inviting them to discover how faith can give sense to their everyday lives. It is a way for dioceses and parishes to discover (or rediscover) these young adults in comfortable, relaxed settings.

3. RENEW International—Campus Renew

<http://www.renewintl.org/Renew/Index.nsf/vPages/CampusRENEW?OpenDocument>

- Campus RENEW is a two and a half year (or 5 semester) process which facilitates renewal and transformation on college campuses. Small Christian communities, groups of eight to twelve students who come together weekly to share their faith, are the building blocks of this process. These communities create opportunities for students to experience community, spirituality, and to be challenged to service.
- The result is a process which creates and nurtures small Christian communities on college campuses through leadership formation, quality faith sharing resources, and onsite and offsite pastoring.

4. 101 Twitter Resources-The Very Best Hashtags, Chats, Lists and Tools—How to reach your College Students on Twitter. Download:

http://charityhowto.com/blog/blogs/101TwitterResources.pdf?utm_source=iContact&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Amy&utm_content=WARMING+EMAIL%3A+Twitter+Tools

5. National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association <http://www.ncyama.org>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/ncyama>

National Voice for the young adult ministry in the US

Mission: Our mission is to help build up the Roman Catholic Church's ministry to young adults in their late teens, 20s and 30s across America. NCYAMA works with local dioceses, parishes, campuses, and groups to achieve this goal by **equipping them with the best resources** in the field, offering **training, consulting, and workshops** on young adult ministry and evangelization, and **networking with and advocating** for Catholic leaders working with young adults from coast to coast.

6. Young Adult Ministry – In a Box

<http://www.yaminabox.com/>

Subscription Service \$. However offers “**Step by Step**” free with ideas to pique the interest of young adults. Each week you’ll receive updates with relevant ways to connect the Church to the lives of young adult:

- News stories and contemporary discussion ideas to help you start conversations about current events
- Relevant readings — A young adult’s take on the upcoming Sunday readings
- Saints for our times — Introduce young adults to the Saints of the Church and their meaning in our lives today
- Quick tips that will help you improve your ministry with young adults
- Featured activities and best practices that will help you plan for the future

Examples:

- Craft Night
- Aqua wars—water battles
- Pizza and a Movie
- Helping the Environment: Invite young adults to join in a composting project at the church.
- Religious Road Trip to explore different parishes or communities
- Summer Prayer Night—Pray under the stars or Bible on the Beach
- Charity Walk-Run-Bike- Hike -- whatever is popular in your area

7. National Catholic Young Adult Ministry Association - <http://www.ncyama.org>

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8. You Tube: Answering your questions on You Tube <http://cymhub.com/>

Offers many interesting and exciting ways to attract young adults- for example:

Video: “We Adore” by *Outside da Box* which is a youth ministry video on the Holy Eucharist and Eucharistic Adoration. by Eric Gallagher

[Eric Gallagher@ericjgallagher](mailto:Eric.Gallagher@ericjgallagher) has over 10 years of experience in full-time youth ministry in the Diocese of Sioux Falls where he currently serves as the Director of Youth Ministry for the Diocese.

9. Pinterest: Youth and Young Adults Ministry Ideas

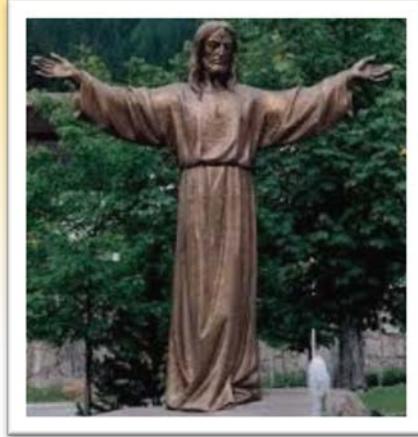
<http://www.pinterest.com/sassyshoeskate/youth-young-adult-ministry-ideas/>

Quotes, Scripture, Bible Studies geared to young adult interest.

10. Blogs:

<http://www.patheos.com/blogs/christianpiatt/2012/03/seven-reasons-why-young-adults-quit-church/>

SECTION 7: FAITH SHARING IN EVERYDAY LIFE



“We must carry Jesus in our hearts to wherever He wants to go, and there are many places to which He may never go unless we take Him to them. None of us knows when the loveliest hour of our life is striking. It may be when we take Christ for the first time to that grey office in the city where we work, to the wretched lodging of that poor man who is an outcast, to the nursery of that pampered child, to that battleship, airfield, or camp...”

Caryll Houselander (1901–1954)
Lay Catholic artist, mystic, poet, religious writer

“As Christians we must replace malice with innocence, force with love, pride with humility, and prestige with service. Being disciples of the Lamb means living not like a besieged citadel, but rather as a city set on a mountain, open, welcoming and supportive. It does not mean adopting a closed attitude, but rather proposing the Gospel to all, showing by the witness of our lives that following Jesus makes us freer and more joyful.”

Pope Francis, Angelus, January 19, 2014

THE APOSTLE PHILIP: A 3 STEP MODEL FOR EVANGELIZATION

Pope Francis reflected on the three things necessary for an effective evangelization, saying it requires **docility, dialogue with people, and trusting in the grace of God** which is more important than bureaucracy.

For the first requirement, he pointed to Philip the apostle as an example of docility.

“You can’t evangelize without dialogue. It’s impossible **because you must begin from where the person who is to [be] evangelized comes from.** And this is so important...Dialogue. Spend time with that person because that person is who God wants you to evangelize. It’s more important to give him or her the news about Jesus, but according to who he or she is---not how it should be, but how he or she is right now.”

Turning to the second element, Pope Francis noted how Philip uses dialogue in order to announce the gospel to the Ethiopian minister.

“He, Philip, obeys, he’s docile and **accepts the calling from the Lord.** Certainly he left behind many things that he ought to have done, because the Apostles in that period were very busy evangelizing. He leaves everything and sets off. And this makes us see that, without this docility or meekness before the voice of God, nobody can evangelize, nobody can announce Jesus Christ...”

Continuing his reflection on the story of Philip, Pope Francis points out that the Apostle baptizes the Ethiopian and this **places him in the hands of God and of his grace.**

“Let’s think about these three moments of evangelization: the docility to evangelize, to do what God is requesting; secondly, a dialogue with the people, but during this dialogue, you begin from where these people come from; and thirdly, trusting in grace. Grace is more important than all the bureaucracy. ‘What prevents this?’ Remember this. So many times we people of the Church are a factory to create obstacles so people can’t arrive at grace. May the Lord help us to understand this.”

Excerpted from Pope Francis’ catechesis on Acts 8:26-40
ZENIT: e-news from Rome; subscribe at www.zenit.org

SHARING YOUR FAITH IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Sharing your faith is something you do every minute of every day—intentionally or not. You are a Catholic Woman—and so the Catholic faith is measured by those who know you according to your actions, your words and your attitude. The way we greet and treat our friends and neighbors is the first step. The way we respond to their needs and arrive with help, or food, or an offer to drive them to an appointment, follows. How you spend your free time, what organizations you join, what groups you support----all of these are observed and help to shape how others define being Catholic. The blessing is that we evangelize by our very lives!



But how do we intentionally evangelize? When would you share your faith with non-Catholics?? The answer is all the time!! Pope Francis points out in **the Joy of the Gospel: Evangelii Gaudium**, 127... “Being a disciple means being constantly ready to bring the love of Jesus to others. This can happen unexpectedly and in any place: on the street, in a city square, during work, on a journey.”

We live in neighborhoods where everyone is not Catholic. We work in offices, schools, hospitals and factories where everyone is not Catholic. We serve on community committees and non-profit boards where everyone is not Catholic. We shop, get our hair done, and sit in waiting rooms where everyone is not Catholic. Every casual conversation is an opportunity to share your faith---so put your faith in the conversation!

- When you chat with strangers in line at the grocery store or post office mention something you read or someone you saw at Mass---this opens the door.
- When you greet new neighbors, often with food in your hands, add a little holy card with promised prayers to the casserole or chocolate cake.
- When you share baby stories with pregnant women and young moms you barely know---talk about a recent baptism, your grandchild’s toddler religion class or the moms “n” tots group in your parish.

We are talkers, and usually talking is easy for women! But there are other ways to share your faith with friends and neighbors, too. Have you ever considered that the way you decorate your home and what you put in your front yard can evangelize? Every bedroom in our home has a crucifix, including the guest room—and not everyone who visits is Catholic. Hotels have a Bible in the nightstand---does your guest room? Is there a favorite statue of the Blessed Mother in your kitchen or den? Do you display art depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary?

WE ARE CALLED TO WITNESS!

When a guest arrives and enters your front door, what is the first thing they see? There is a cross, a prayer and a key rack next to my front door—and a risen Christ crucifix at the top of the stairs.

Make it a habit to bless yourself before saying grace when eating at a restaurant, alone or with your friends and family. The simple motion of blessing yourself sets you apart as a Catholic—and says to others around you that you are not afraid to let that be known. The way you address and treat the wait staff is also an opportunity to share the values of your faith, recognizing the dignity of work and workers---at every level.



Your front lawn is an opportunity to share your faith with the entire neighborhood, dog walkers, joggers and even those who just drive by. Saint Francis or Our Lady of Grace might be in your garden. At Christmas, a crèche scene or an angel can add to the message that we celebrate the birth of Christ! If you live in an apartment or condo, use your windows to hang a banner with a Christian message or place cut out shapes of the nativity figures.



Even the jewelry you choose to wear can prompt someone to ask you about your faith. You might wear a crucifix as a necklace or ring, one of those popular magnetized bracelets with all the saints' pictures, or a rosary bracelet (which can be slipped off and prayed if you find yourself waiting in line someplace!) Wearing the image of Our Lady of Good Counsel as a pendant, earrings or a pin can be evangelizing and also open the conversation about our organization. And don't forget your NCCW pin(s) and scarf!

Opportunities abound, you just have to be ready to seize them! Plan ahead what you will say if someone asks which church you attend in town or why your children do not attend the local elementary school. Have a simple and positive message ready, stressing the love of God, the blessings you receive, the grace that sustains you, and your desire to follow Christ. Be genuine and talk about how you feel—no one can challenge that. Practice when you are alone in the car on the way to work or vacuuming the house before guests arrive. If you keep a journal, you might decide to write one sentence each day which expresses how your faith is important to you and central in your life.

Be a witness for Christ everywhere you go and with everyone you know!

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair
Eileen O'Conner, NCCW Leadership Commission

LET US PRAY



Loving God, you called us each
by name and gave your only Son
to redeem us.

In your faithfulness, you sent
the Holy Spirit to complete
the mission of Jesus among us.

Open our hearts to Jesus.

Give us the courage to speak His name
to those who are close to us
and the generosity to share His love
with those who are far away.

We pray that every person
throughout the world be invited
to know and love Jesus
as Savior and Redeemer.

May that love transform
every element of our society.

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord.
AMEN.

Web Site of St James Catholic Church, Basking Ridge, NJ

EVANGELIZE IN YOUR HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD



1. Take a personal inventory of your home's message to visitors. Would a stranger walking into your home know you were Christian? Catholic?
2. Invite Council members to wear their favorite piece of Religious jewelry to the next meeting and be prepared to share the story of where it came from, who it is associated with in the family, or anything of interest connected to the piece.
3. At a Parish CCW meeting, break into small groups of no more than 8 and share "Something holy in every room of my house." If time allows, go room by room around the group. Begin with the entryway, then bedrooms, guest room, family room, kitchen, etc. Talk about how this evangelizes visitors---especially non-Catholic neighbors and friends of your children. Discuss ways to bring these items into conversation when giving someone a "tour."
4. Start a neighborhood prayer breakfast, meeting one weekend a month. This might be just women, or couples, even entire families! The prayer can be rotated and limited to 10 minutes. A grace might be sent home with the participants to pray until the next gathering. Your neighborhood might be mostly Catholic or you could be the ONLY Catholic---either way works. Each person/family would share THEIR own faith through the prayer they plan.
5. Have prayer cards on hand to include with meals you deliver to neighbors who are sick, have a new arrival, or have lost a loved one.
6. Before the Christmas holidays ask Council members to take an inventory as they decorate their homes. Which tally is higher---holy or secular? Share the holy holiday tradition they most remember from their childhood. Ask what holy holiday tradition their children most remember.
7. Make a list of places (local nurseries, statuary markets, etc.) where religious garden statuary can be purchased and make it available to all parishioners.

“THE SALESMAN”

A few years ago a group of salesmen went to convention in Chicago. They had assured their wives that they would be home in plenty of time for Friday night’s dinner. Well, as such things go, one thing led to another. The meeting lasted longer than anticipated.

Their flights were scheduled to leave, and they had to race to the airport. With tickets in hand, they barged through the terminal to catch their flight back home. In their rush, one of these salesmen inadvertently kicked over a table, which held a display of baskets of apples. Apples flew everywhere. Without stopping or looking back, they all managed to reach the plane in time for their nearly missed boarding, ALL BUT ONE. He paused, took a deep breath and experienced a twinge of compassion for the girl whose apple stand had been overturned. He told his buddies to go on without him and told one of them to call his wife when they arrived at their home destination and explain his taking a later flight.

Then he returned to the terminal where the apples were all over the floor. He was glad he did. The 16-year-old girl at the apple stand was totally blind! She was softly crying, tears running down her cheeks in frustration, and at the same time helplessly groping for her spilled produce as the crowd swirled about her, no one stopping or to care for her plight.

The salesman knelt on the floor with her, gathered up the apples, put them into the baskets, and helped set the display up once more. As he did this, he noticed that many of them had become battered and bruised; these he set aside in another basket. When he had finished, he pulled out his wallet and said to the girl, “Here, please take this \$20 for the damage we did. Are you okay?” She nodded through her tears. He continued on with, “I hope we didn’t spoil your day too badly.”

As the salesman started to walk away, the bewildered blind girl called out to him, “Mister. . . Are you Jesus?” He stopped in mid-stride, and he wondered. Then slowly he made his way to catch the later flight with that question burning about in his soul: “Are you Jesus?”

That is the question we must ask ourselves, every single day.

Would anyone mistake us for Jesus?

That’s our destiny, is it not? To be so much like Jesus that people cannot tell the difference as we live and interact with a world that is blind to His love, life and grace. If we claim to know Him, we should live, walk and act as He would. Knowing Him is more than simply quoting Scripture and going to church. It’s actually living the Word as life unfolds day to day.

FROM DAILY CATHOLIC MEDITATIONS FOR FAITH, LISTENING, AND PEACE (www.SilentInsight.com)

SECTION 8: SOCIAL JUSTICE SHOWS GOD'S LOVE



...In our day Jesus' command to "go and make disciples" echoes in the changing scenarios and ever new challenges to the Church's mission of evangelization, and all of us are called to take part in this new missionary "going forth"...

Pope Francis
The Joy of the Gospel

"Thus the Church's social teaching is itself a valid instrument of evangelization. As such, it proclaims God and His mystery of salvation in Christ to every human being, and for that very reason reveals man to Himself. In this light, and only in this light, does it concern itself with everything else: the human rights of the individual, and in particular of the "working class", the family and education, the duties of the State, the ordering of national and international society, economic life, culture, war and peace, and respect for the life from the moment of conception until death."

St. John Paul II
Centesimus Annus

CHARITY AND JUSTICE



We read on the USCCB website: ***“The work of the Church is to bring all people into relationship with God, and also to transform and sanctify the society in which we live*** (U.S. Catholic Bishops, DISCIPLES CALLED TO WITNESS: THE NEW EVANGELIZATION). Thus, “the Church teaches that **social justice is an integral part of evangelization**, a constitutive dimension of preaching the Gospel, and an essential part of the Church's mission" (U.S. Catholic Bishops, COMMUNITIES OF SALT AND LIGHT).”

And we ask ourselves---are we, as members of parish communities and members of the National Council of Catholic Women in particular, participating in this work of the Church---transforming and sanctifying our society? Or in the words of our NCCW Mission Statement: “...respond(ing) with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world.”

YES! Through our local charitable works and international programs, community projects and education, prayer and support---and through our efforts to advocate for laws and practices which uphold human dignity and the value of every person. When our efforts combine --charity and justice--grounded in prayer and propelled by the Gospel message, we are indeed helping to transform and sanctify our society. This correlation between our works of charity and efforts to achieve justice and evangelization are reinforced in **Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization.** (U.S. Catholic Bishops)

"Additionally, the works of charity and justice as well as the promotion of solidarity, justice, peace and stewardship of creation build up the kingdom of God. Increasingly, we recognize that generosity of spirit and commitment to charity and justice are vehicles to bring people into relationship with Jesus and his Church. Social justice and direct service opportunities, especially for adolescents and young adults, provide powerful experiences with the person of Jesus. Service, when understood as serving Christ in others and as a means to share the Gospel, has the ability to bring the server and the one being served closer to Christ."

U.S. Catholic Bishops

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair

LET US PRAY



Prayer for Social Justice

Lord Jesus, Carpenter and King, supreme Sovereign of all men, look with tender mercy upon the multitudes of our day who bear the indignities of injustice everywhere. Raise up leaders in every land dedicated to Your standards of order, equity, and justice. Grant unto us, Lord Jesus, the grace to be worthy members of Your Mystical Body, laboring unceasingly to fulfill our vocation in the social apostolate of Your Church. Sharpen our intellects to pierce the pettiness of prejudice; to perceive the beauty of true human brotherhood. Guide our minds to a meaningful understanding of the problems of the poor, of the oppressed, of the unemployed, of all in need of assistance anywhere. Guide our hearts against the subtle lure of earthly things and undue regard for those who possess them. May we hunger and thirst after justice always.

Amen

Catholic.org/prayers

EVANGELIZING THROUGH ADVOCACY



Evangelizing through advocacy happens on two levels – reaching out to the poor and vulnerable in service and working to change unjust structures that impact the dignity of human beings.

The line of the song that says *“they will know we are Christians by our love”* speaks volumes about how our demeanor and treatment of people will be judged. Our charitable works serve all as Christ commanded us, regardless of faith denomination. Service providers and volunteers must exude God’s love in their interactions, a witness to our belief that people are more important than possessions and are made in the image and likeness of God.

People were drawn to Jesus Christ by his message of love and mercy, an example we see today in how Pope Francis lives and walks among the people. We are called to make a difference not only by our actions but the way we live in society, reflecting the joy of the Gospel.

Our religious beliefs have been under constant challenge from outside influences including societal trends, government and the courts. From protecting the life of the unborn to declaring that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, the Catholic Church has been a leader in upholding moral truths and natural law.

While the Church has partnered with government to provide for people’s needs, we will never compromise our religious beliefs. As lay faithful, we work for a just society by promoting the common good. The state can provide funding for material poverty but the Church provides love to meet spiritual poverty.

We are all called today, clergy and laity, to participate in society, proclaiming the Word of God and witnessing to the truth of the life and dignity of the human person.

Sheila Hopkins, NCCW Spirituality Commission Chair

SUGGESTIONS FOR OUTREACH

The programs, projects, legislative advocacy and works of NCCW, your A/DCCW and your local Council are designed to assist all members! Here are some suggestions to help both CCW members and those to whom the outreach is directed to hear and live the Good News of Jesus Christ (evangelization). For organizational purposes, these suggestions are divided into the main themes of justice, but often overlap, and are designed to be inserted as a part of your Council Calendar of meetings, events, prayer and service opportunities.

CHARITY

Sponsor collections of gently used, never opened, excess and unwanted items that can be put into the hands of those who most need them.

- Join in national charitable events/projects which have a local impact such as working with the parish youth on Soup-er Bowl Sunday or sponsoring a Women's Build (Habitat for Humanity).
- Knit caps for chemo patients, scarves for the homeless or prayer shawls for hospice and nursing home patients----and pray a rosary together while you work as a group.
- Assess the areas of need in your parish and choose a new one to address each year i.e.: hunger ministry, clothing exchange, homelessness, international "sister" parish, etc.
- Include cards in all items that are donated which indicate that your Council of Catholic Women made/sent these things with love and PRAYERS.
- Invite the leader of Catholic Charities in your Diocese to speak at your Diocesan Convention or Women's Conference and ask for a list of volunteer opportunities.

JUSTICE

- Include a prayer for social justice in your Council's meeting plans---perhaps as a closing (or sending forth) prayer. i.e.: Archbishop Oscar Romero's prayer which begins: It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view."
- Host a discussion group and review the 7 themes of Catholic Social Teaching as outlined on the USCCB website.
- Advocate for adequate state and national funding to serve the unborn and elderly---for all needs, attention and services, not only against abortion and euthanasia.
- Ensure that your parish practices fair hiring practices and provides just wages and benefits to all employees.
- Request that the Sunday Liturgy's Prayers of Petition include issues of social justice.
- Place different quotes about Catholic Social Justice in the bulletin to help educate your entire parish community.
- Publish a list of resources for social issues in your Convention book.

SOLIDARITY

- Ask a parish leader to facilitate a study group to discuss the meaning of Solidarity and Sustainability in the Church.
- Suggest that your parish serve only Fair Trade coffee at all parish events.
- Discuss the implications of combining all the Americas into one grouping (North, Central and South) as St John Paul II did, and how it impacts the call to evangelize with the director of Hispanic Ministry of your parish/diocese.
- Host an international event where parishioners are invited to share their cultural heritage, in costume, food, dance, music, and Catholic traditions.
- Use CRS and CROSS articles from Catholic Woman and their websites to educate members of the issues we are helping to change and the needs which continue.
- Invite a resettled refugee to share her story.

PEACE

- Incorporate the NCCW Prayer for Peace (by Louanna Chavez Mahera, 2008) into affiliation meetings and personal prayer time.
- Pray the *Stations of the Cross for Peace* by Matthias Newman, OSB Liguori Publications (ISBN 9780764812750).
- Purchase only non-violent toys for Christmas gifts---include on the gift card: "Celebrate the Birth of the Prince of Peace"---when donating to a Giving Tree or Toys for Tots.
- Use Pax Christi litanies, prayers and posters to promote the message of peace.
- If you have a MCCW (Military Council of Catholic Women) in your area, plan a joint meeting with a speaker, or invite one of the military wives to share.
- Create a place in your parish hall or gathering area where parishioners can post prayer requests for those serving in the military, or collect gift cards for care packages.
- Check all written materials in your parish to eliminate violent language and analogies
- Learn what you can do to advocate for an end to the death penalty in your state.
- Invite a speaker from your Diocesan Peace and Justice Office to speak to your affiliation.

STEWARDSHIP of CREATION

- Promote reuse, repurpose and recycle programs in your home, parish and community.
- Plant a tree each year on church grounds in honor of your Spiritual Advisors' anniversary of ordination or profession of final vows.
- Participate in local playground construction/upkeep.
- Support legislation that prohibits clear cutting or stream pollution in your state.
- Donate to a national park restoration project or if you are lucky enough to have a national park in your area, volunteer on a trail or lodge clean-up day.
- Join in local efforts to clean up empty lots, create a local park, or build a walking trail along the green belt.
- Invite a speaker on a local environmental initiative to your affiliation meeting and open the meeting to the entire parish.

Jane Carter, NCCW Leadership Commission Chair

WEB RESOURCES ON SOCIAL JUSTICE

1. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm>

Seven Themes Of Catholic Social Teaching

- Life and Dignity of the Human Person
- Call to Family, Community, and Participation
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Options for the Poor and Vulnerable
- The Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers
- Solidarity
- Care for God's Creation
- Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis

2. <http://www.cctwincities.org/CatholicSocialTeachingMajorDocuments>

Listing of Major Documents concerning modern Catholic social teaching issued by national bishop conferences and the Vatican

The Catholic World Report

3. http://www.catholicworldreport.com/Item/2173/what_is_social_justice.aspx

- Three part series defining social justice with historical significance
- Highlights news briefs regarding current issues
- Links to Catholic World Report Blog
- Links to Video Streaming by the Ignatius Press
- Catholic Education Resource Center

4. http://www.catholiceducation.org/directory/Current_Issues/Social_Justice

Listing of current issues concerning Social Justice

5. New York State Catholic Conference

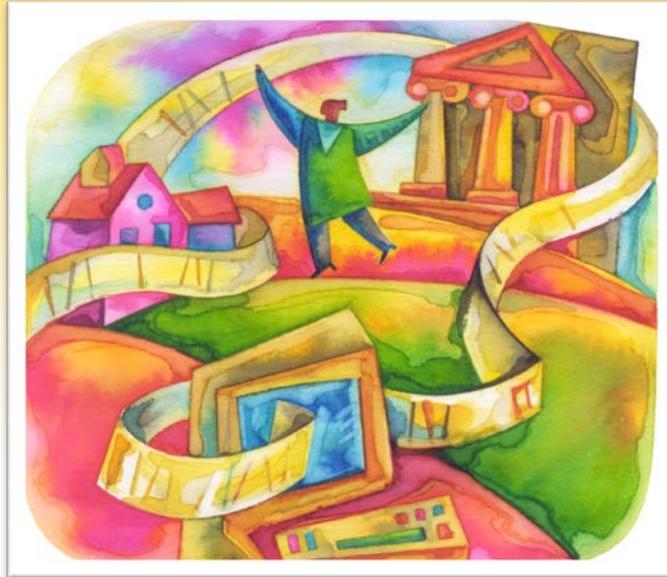
<http://www.nyscatholic.org/2012/10/pursuing-justice-catholic-social-teaching-and-issues-in-contemporary-society/>

Pursuing Justice: Catholic Social Teaching and Issues in Contemporary Society including Recommendations for future action:

- Organize a "Catholic Action Network Sign-Up Weekend" in your parish.
- Invite your lawmakers to visit your parish, school, soup kitchen, or other ministry.
- Begin a dialogue with lawmakers through letters, birthday notes, Christmas cards.
- Sign up to be on your lawmakers' mailing lists.
- Attend lawmakers' town hall meetings, open houses, and virtual Q and A sessions.

Jeanie Illian, NCCW Leadership Commission

SECTION 9: LEARNING NEVER ENDS



“While all these elements are essential, the important thing to remember is that there is no step-by-step recipe for evangelization. The Holy Spirit will use your natural gifts and talents for the work of evangelization if you are open and willing. Before long, you’ll begin to see that you’ve developed your own style of evangelization!”

Lorraine Hanley Duquin, Our Sunday Visitor (OSV)
“What the CHURCH Teaches: Evangelization” 2004

RESOURCES

If anything in the NCCW Catholic Women: Called to Witness Program has left you asking “Why?” or “What else?” this list will serve you well as a jumping off point for further study. It is not meant to be exhaustive—but a great collection to begin your own personal search and study!

Websites

- www.usccb.org Go to “Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization” for a look at the whole document.
- www.osv.com Type “Untangling the Catholic Web” in the search box and you’ll get a wonderful resource on Catholic websites, blogs, places to go for news and a lot more.
- www.ewtn.com Website of the EWTN Global Catholic Network.
- www.newadvent.com Loads of Catholic information and links.
- www.catholic.com blogs, library, videos, speakers list, forums.
- www.awakeningfaith.org Paulist Evangelical Ministries invite and welcome inactive Catholics.
- www.pemdc.org Paulist Evangelical Ministries – offers two resources. *Invite* is for seekers or those who are not affiliated with any religious tradition. *Catholics Reaching Out* provides ways to reach inactive Catholics.
- www.CatholicsComeHome.org Wonderful videos and explanation of this program inviting inactive Catholics to return to the Catholic faith.
- www.whycatholic.org Will help you increase your enthusiasm for sharing faith with others.
- www.alphausa.org Offers ten sessions to introduce the faith to people who do not attend church and to inactive Catholics who are loosely connected.
- www.catholicsreturninghome Offers a book along with the website that provides an understanding of why people leave the church and why they return.
- www.archlou.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Christian-Hospitality.pdf The Archdiocese of Louisville has an excellent booklet on Christian Hospitality at this site.
- www.vatican.va/auguri-francesco/pont_2014/en/index.html#1 To view the on-line book of photos and phrases taken from Pope Francis’ speeches over the past 12 months. Follow these links from the website: Resource Library-Holy Father-Francis-First Anniversary of the Pontificate.
- www.gbdioc.org/images/ebook/disciples-on-the-way.pdf To view a booklet written by Bishop David Ricken of the Diocese of Green Bay on the New Evangelization.
- www.hcfm.org (Holy Cross Family Ministries) Sign up for newsletters, activities for families to do together, prayer of the day and more.

Books

- **Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church**, by Christoph Cardinal Schoenborn. Available at Catholic bookstores and Amazon.com.
- **Evangelizing Catholics: A Mission Manual for the New Evangelization**, by Scott Hahn. Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division. Available at Catholic bookstores or Amazon.com.
- **The Urgency of the New Evangelization: Answering the Call**, by Dr. Ralph Martin, published by Our Sunday Visitor. Available at Catholic bookstores and Amazon.com.

Speakers

- Father Luke Strand, Director of Vocations for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee (www.archmil.org) – speaks on Catholic identity, how our vocation calls us, and how each of us can live out what God intends for us.
- Monsignor Eugene Morris, Archdiocese of St. Louis, (www.archstl.org) national speaker, radio host, theology professor.
- Deacon Ralph Poyo has started New Evangelization Ministries to equip parish pastoral teams with the vision and tools they need to help parishioners achieve an active relationship with Christ. Located in Steubenville, Ohio at www.deaconralphpoyo.com or www.newevangelizationministries.org
- Dr. Lawrence Feingold, associate professor at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary. He speaks on marriage and the family at the heart of the New Evangelization. www.archstl.org

Special Bible Study Resources for Teens (and Adults)

- **T3 - The Teen Timeline** (excellent!) 8 Part Bible Study for Teens and Adults (DVD) Worksheets provided by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization. www.catholiccompany.com/t3-teen-timeline-i11000
- **T3 - Thy Kingdom Come: Matthew** 8 Part Study on the Gospel of Matthew for Teens and Adults (DVD) Worksheets provided by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.
- **T3: Acts - The Keys and the Sword** 4 Part Bible Study for Teens and Adults (DVD) Discussion questions and resources provided by the Office of Catechesis and Evangelization.
- **T3: Revelation - The Lion and the Lamb** 4 Part Bible Study for Teens and Adults (DVD) with Leader and Participant Booklet.

DVDs

- **Catholicism: The New Evangelization** by Father Robert Barron. Includes 4 DVDs, study guide, leader's kit. For information and to order go to www.catholicismnewevangelization.com
- **Symbolon: The Catholic Faith Explained** featuring Dr. Edward Sri in a series designed to help Catholics understand their faith, live it and articulate it. For information and to order to go: www.symbolonrcia.org
- **Renewal Ministries: The New Evangelization** featuring Dr. Ralph Martin and Dr. Scott Hahn. For more information and to order the 4 DVD set go to: www.renewalministries.net
- **Catholicism 101: Essentials for the Journey** by Jeff Cavins (DVD) This 10 Part Series comes with workbook to guide you through the series. www.catholicism-101.com/index.htm

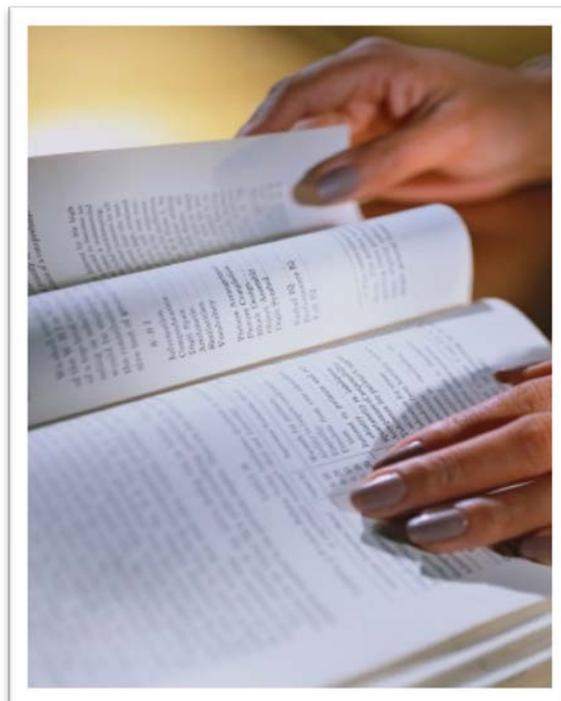
CDs – learn in the car

- **Evangelizing Catholics: The Bible, the Eucharist and the New Evangelization** by Dr. Scott Hahn, Lighthouse Catholic Media Available at www.lighthousecatholicmedia.org
- **Sharing Your Catholic Faith** by Dr. Tom Curren, My Catholic Faith Press. Available at www.mycatholicfaithpress.org
- **How to Bring Fallen Away Catholics Back to the Church** by Dr. Scott Hahn, Lighthouse Catholic Media. Available at www.lighthousecatholicmedia.org
- **I'm Not Being Fed** by Jeff Cavins, Lighthouse Catholic Media. Available at www.lighthousecatholicmedia.org
- **The Challenge of the New Evangelization** by Father Robert Barron, My Catholic Faith Press. Available at www.mycatholicfaithpress.org
- **Your Catholic Faith: Learn It, Live It, Love It (...and you'll never Leave It!)** by Father Francis J. Hoffman (Fr. Rocky of Relevant Radio) Available at www.relevantradio.com

Blogs

- Everyday Faith Blog – go to www.osvparish.com/blog.aspx
- www.catholicv.com/blog
- www.apostoliclady.com
- See www.catholic.com for a list of blogs

Pat Cetera, NCCW Leadership Commission



IN CONCLUSION

“Jesus gave those first disciples the Great Commission to bring his Gospel to the ends of the earth. That commission is now ours. We must share our faith, and the opportunities are everywhere. By our words and by the witness of our lives, we can proclaim Jesus’s Good News to those who may have drifted away from the faith or never heard the Gospel. This sharing can be with family members across the dinner table, with our next door neighbors, with colleagues at work, even at the sidelines at children’s soccer games. Standing in the truth of our faith, we can share that truth with love.”

“New Evangelization” Passing on the Catholic Faith Today

Cardinal Donald Wuerl,
Relator of the Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization.

The National Council of Catholic Women: “We are Called to Witness” Program was developed and compiled to help each of us to live out our mission---to grow in spirituality, to respond with Gospel values to the needs of the Church and society in the modern world, and to educate all Catholic women.

NCCW 2014 Leadership Commission

Pat Cetera, New Evangelization Sub-Committee Chair, Diocese of Jolliet

Jane Carter, Leadership Commission Chair, Diocese of Knoxville

Jeanie Illian, Archdiocese of Chicago

Jean Kelly, Director of the Province of Milwaukee

Eileen O’Connor, Province of Des Moines

Additional help from Diane Andraska, Diocese of La Crosse

+ With special thanks to Jeanie Illian for graphic design and formatting +

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Overview of NCCW “We are Called to Witness” Program

Jane Carter

Introduction

The New Evangelization and the National Council of Catholic Women:	
A Good Match	Rev. James G Stembler
“Pope Francis Reawakening the Life of Faith”	Karen Hurley, DSS
What is the New Evangelization?	Kevin Cotter
What about Those “Fallen Away” Catholics?	Jane Carter
Overview of the 3 Year Strategic Plan (USCCB)	USCCB
How to use the NCCW Program in your CCW Affiliation	Jane Carter

1. Finding the Joy of Jesus in Yourself

It All Begins with You	Eileen O’Connor
Prayer	USCCB: <i>Disciples Called To Witness: The New Evangelization</i>
“Are You a 3-G Catholic?”	Father Larry Swink
“Grace Rearranged: The New Evangelization”	Grace Mazza Urbanski
Suggestions to Find the Joy of Jesus	Eileen O’Connor
Gratitude and Attitude Activity	Eileen O’Connor
Personal Enrichment Resource	Jane Carter

2. Sharing the Joy of the Gospel with Other Catholics

Sharing the Joy of the Gospel with Other Catholics	Eileen O’Connor
Prayer	Pope Francis: <i>The Joy of the Gospel</i>
“Spread the Good News---Evangelize!”	Sr. Albertine Paulus, RSM
“What Are Characteristics Of The New Evangelization?”	Dave Nodar
“Keys for Welcoming Catholics Back to the Lord’s Table”	John and Therese Boucher
Applying What You Have Learned	Eileen O’Connor, Jean Kelly, Donna Sanders

3. Hospitality and Welcome

The Ministry of Hospitality	Jane Carter
Prayers	Christian Hospitality Archdiocese of Louisville, KY and Internet
Jam and Jelly Ministry	Eileen O’Connor
Star Ideas	NCCW Leadership Training Development Team

4. Hearts to Love and Hands to Serve

Living the Corporal Works of Mercy	Jean Kelly
Prayer	Catholic Online
Evangelization in Service	Nancy Poll
“The Gift of Love”	Marshfield CCW, Diocese of LaCrosse

5. Happy Holidays

Sharing Faith with Young Children Jane Carter
Prayer Mother’s Manual, a collection of prayers compiled by Fr. John Heart, OMI
Cana Dinner Diane Andraska
Resources for Young Children Jane Carter

6. Reaching Out to Women in College and Beyond

Sharing Personal Stories Jane Carter
Prayers www.theyoungcatholicwoman.com/prayers
Keeping College Kids Connected Jane Carter
World Youth Day Jane Carter
Web Resources for Young Adult Ministries Jeanie Illian

7. Faith Sharing in Everyday Life

Three Step Model for Evangelization Pope Francis
Sharing Your Faith in Everyday Life Jane Carter
Prayers St. James Catholic Church and Diocese of Metuchen
Evangelize in Your Home and Neighborhood Jane Carter
Eileen O’Connor
“The Salesman” Daily Catholic Meditations for Faith, Listening and Peace

8. Social Justice Shows God’s Love

Charity and Justice Jane Carter
Prayer www.catholic.org/prayer
Evangelizing Through Advocacy Sheila Hopkins s
Suggestions for Outreach Jane Carter
Web Resources on Social Justice Jeanie Illian

9. Learning Never Ends

Resource Pat Cetera

Conclusion Cardinal Donald Wuerl

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