



# Leaven

The Newsletter of the  
Religious Education Office



## Just Living It

"God is Good, All the Time" was cheered by over 300 6th, 7th and 8th graders during the Jr. High Rally on Sunday, March 5th at St. Mary Immaculate Parish in Plainfield.

John Lamperis, the keynote speaker, did a wonderful job of helping the participants to live their faith, which was the theme of the event: "Just Live It". Mr. Lamperis shared that part of living our faith is helping the poor and needy of our world. He then gave them an opportunity to give to the CRS program Operation Rice Bowl and the youth came forward to give \$322.85 in donations.



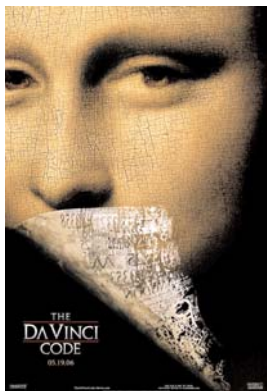
The day was lead by Emcee John Doheny, a High school student from St. Raphael's Youth Ministry Leadership team. The rally was also filled with music as Dan Wolf led songs throughout the day and the band, Hook Line and Sinker performed at the conclusion. A special thanks to Mark Herwaldt, the rally coordinator, who helped make the day a success.

Part of the fun time of Rally Day, a donut-eating contest!

## Responding to Questions about *Da Vinci Code*

Joyce Donahue

On May 19, 2006, unless a pending lawsuit about intellectual property rights delays it, Director Ron Howard's film version of *The Da Vinci Code* will open in theaters near you.



When people see this fictional account of mystery and intrigue surrounding a supposed descendent of Jesus and Mary Magdalene on film, the lines between truth and fiction may become blurred. Some of the major questions that people have had after reading the book are:

- Was Jesus Christ divine?
- Was he married to Mary Magdalene and did they have children?
- Did Constantine "invent" modern Christianity?
- Did Leonardo Da Vinci bury secret codes about Jesus and Mary Magdalene in his art?
- Has the Church systematically and purposely covered up the truth?

When responding to questions about the Code, perhaps it might be useful to remember that the National Directory for Catechesis

describes elements of American culture as challenges to the proclamation of the Gospel. If we as church leaders ignore the influence of highly popular cultural events that have the potential to confuse or reshape people's views of Christ and the Church, or worse yet, treat them negatively, people in our faith communities may simply dismiss us as irrelevant.

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**APRIL  
2006**

## UPCOMING CLUSTER MEETINGS

Please attend your local cluster meetings for assistance, support and information. The next meetings will be as follows:

**Directors of Adult Faith Formation -**  
April 27, 2006 - 12 pm  
SCPC, Romeoville

**Ford-Iroquois CRE Cluster -**  
May 5, 2006 - 6:30pm  
Location - TBA

**Joliet-Will DRE Cluster -**  
May 18, 2006 - 10:00am  
St. Paul the Apostle,  
Joliet

**Kankakee-Grundy DRE Cluster -**  
May 11, 2006 - 1:00pm  
End of Year Luncheon

**Northeast Dupage DRE Cluster -**  
May 18, 2006 - 10:00am  
Notre Dame,  
Clarendon Hills

**Special Needs Cluster - TBA**

**West Dupage DRE Cluster -**  
May 11, 2006 - 10:00am  
Location TBA



# *A Time To Sow*

**Tom Quinlan**  
Director



In March I was invited to speak to parish leaders in another diocese on the topic of “Evangelization and Parish Renewal”. It was a wonderfully energizing time and there are plans for a continued exploration of this rich and important topic.

In what can be fairly called a tumultuous time for our Church, here in this diocese and more broadly, I don’t think it has ever been more essential that parishes look at the evangelization question. We are together at a crossroads moment, not just as we await a new bishop, but as we are confronted with numerous forces in our midst that have the power to challenge the influence and erode the practice of Catholic faith.

Not too long ago, the religion page of the Tribune’s Metro section had two articles that, for me, framed this dynamic. One article, much larger and with a huge picture, was on the burgeoning Spanish-language ministry up at Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington. The other was about the consolidation plans of a large and aging order of religious women, with significant ties to Chicagoland.

Perhaps no one else who read that page made the connection that I did. For me, this page named how our Catholic Church is in real and significant ways is in a retrenchment mode and how many evangelical Christian churches are expanding, often with a large Catholic population. Someone put it this way: *We’re losing market share!*

This reality should focus those of us in diocesan and parish leadership to seek answers as to why this is happening. Some answers are unique to a particular parish community and some are applicable throughout our culture. And if we are able to get a handle on the *why* question, then our attention can turn to ultimate question, “What can we do about it?”

There is no easy, quick-fix answer to the question of evangelization and parish renewal. There are many facets to it and it will look a little different in each parish community. But I am more convinced than ever that it is our God-given responsibility, as leaders who love and serve the Church at this time and in this place, to boldly, creatively and prayerfully tackle the reality of dwindling Catholic affiliation and practice.

The natural tendency for individuals or groups under stress is to “circle the wagons”, “pull in the horns”, and close ranks. I have to wonder if there has ever been a more stressful time to be a part of the Church, at least in recent generations. So, it would be natural for some of us to want to close our eyes to the big-picture, systemic factors working to diminish our Church and pretend they are not present. And yet, for any leader, any parish to do so would be a betrayal of the Gospel mandate of Jesus Christ. We are compelled by our Lord to proclaim his Good News to the ends of the earth, whatever the challenges, whatever the cost! Now more than ever are our parishes called to be a prophetic presence, reaching out to the disaffected, the disillusioned, the marginalized and the unchurched.



That’s why it is so exciting for me to see ways in which some parishes are creating new ministry efforts, and some parishes are looking at possibly radically realigning how they are doing things. They recognize the wisdom, inferred in our new *National Directory for Catechesis*, that our efforts to evangelize and catechize must be designed to meet people where they are at, and thus, have a better chance to effectively re-evangelize them.

(Continued from Page 2)

Here are just three examples of efforts that are underway: 1.) A number of parishes, under the coordination of diaconate candidates, have started outreach ministries to former and inactive Catholics in their communities. It is important, beautiful and rewarding ministry that will make a real difference in people's lives. 2.) Some parishes are working to upgrade the catechetical and communal experience of sacramental preparation for parents. You may know by now, how essential I believe this is, especially for Baptism and Eucharist! 3.) In a final round of training in *Generations of Faith*, 13 new parishes are exploring the whole parish paradigm for doing faith formation this spring. Hopefully, these parishes will find gain insights that will bring a renewed vitality to their catechetical ministry efforts.

I am most grateful to all of you for the ways you are looking beyond the current modes of ministry, to see if there are possible minor operational adjustments and/or major paradigm shifts in vision that can help to bring renewal to your parish. Your willingness to carry on in the face of the ordinary and extraordinary challenges in our ministry these days is worthy of great praise and commendation. Your openness to exploring opportunities to build and strengthen the core evangelizing/re-evangelizing mission and methods in your parish is a mark of your true, prophetic vocation as catechetical leader!

If your parish would like to have me serve as a consultant to its exploration of evangelization and parish renewal, feel free to contact me anytime I would welcome the opportunity.

(Please see the reminder about *The Outreach Initiative* below, which is a brand new grant funding opportunity! It is designed to assist parishes in bearing some of the financial burden associated with certain aspects of outreach and renewal. You only have until **May 1st** to apply for these funds! I hope you will consider this opportunity.)

## The Season for Applying For Diocesan Grants Is NOW!

Be sure to consider the three ways the Catholic Education Foundation for the Diocese of Joliet is making funds available to you and your parish for 2006-07:

- **Leaders for the Future:** Funding for individuals currently in ministry in the diocese to assist in their pursuit of a graduate degree in a related area. Application deadline is **June 2nd**.
- **Religious Education Grant:** Funding for catechetical programs that wish to develop an innovative approach to religious faith formation. Application deadline is **April 28th**.
- **The Outreach Initiative (BRAND NEW):** Funding that targets evangelization and adult formation initiatives which seek to foster parish renewal. Application deadline is **May 1st**.

Consult the REO website for more information. Or contact Peggy Kobe (815 834-4033 or pkobe@dioceseofjoliet.org) regarding *Leaders for the Future*, and Tom Quinlan (815 727-6411 or tquinlan@dioceseofjoliet.org) regarding *Religious Education Grants* and *The Outreach Initiative*.



### Congratulations to all the recipients of the 2005-2006 Religious Education Grant!

(From left to right): Peggy Kobe (Education Foundation); Judy Glander - St. James the Apostle, Glen Ellyn; Penny Guinta - Holy Trinity, Westmont; Dolly Matthews - St. Joseph, Addison; Thomas Quinlan (REO); Father Thomas Milota - Sacred Heart, Lombard (not pictured).

## YOUTH MINISTRY CLUSTERS

### Senior High Youth Ministry Cluster

(Aurora, Bolingbrook, Lisle, Naperville, Oswego)

April 6, 2006

Our Lady of Mercy, Aurora

2:00pm - 4:00pm

May 11, 2006

St. Margaret Mary, Naperville

2:00pm - 4:00pm

### Junior High Ministry Cluster

(Aurora, Bolingbrook, Naperville)

April 4, 2006

St. Raphael, Naperville

3:45pm

May 2, 2006

Holy Spirit, Naperville

3:45pm

### Joliet Cluster Youth Ministry

(St. Paul, St. Jude, St. Ray, St. John, St. Mary Nativity, Holy Family, St. Bernard, SS Cyril & Methodius)

Meets on the 1st of each month

Location - TBA

### South of the Border Cluster

April - No Meeting

May 24, 2006

St. Walter, Roselle

All Meetings begin at 10am

**RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION OFFICE**

(815) 727-6411  
Fax (815) 722-7361

**Thomas Quinlan**

Director  
tquinlan@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Brian Topping**

Assistant Director  
Whole Parish Faith Formation  
btopping@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Helen Johnson**

Catechetical Associate  
Leadership Formation  
hjohnson@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Joyce Donahue**

Catechetical Associate  
Child Catechesis & Curriculum  
jdonahue@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Rosie Owens**

Catechetical Associate  
Adult Faith Formation &  
Evangelization  
rowens@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Paul Mach**

Catechetical Associate  
Young Adult & Youth Ministries  
pmach@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Pat Dennison**

Consultant  
Rural Catechesis  
pdennison@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Madonna Healy**

Consultant  
Special Needs  
mhealy@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Jennifer Lange**

Office Manager  
jlange@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Jeanne Pirc**

Media Librarian  
jpirc@dioceseofjoliet.org

**Mary Agnes Maloney**

Receptionist  
mmaloney@dioceseofjoliet.org

**(Continued from Front Page)**

The *NDC* recommends that our proper response to challenges from the culture is to rely on Christ “with firm confidence” to assist us in proclaiming the truth (p. 40). What the *Code* highlights for us is the critical importance of good, sound catechesis about Christ and Church history. Here it is – the proverbial “teachable moment” being handed to us courtesy of Dan Brown and Ron Howard.

If the *Code*’s story is compelling to many and raises questions about Jesus’ humanity and the Church’s credibility, these are natural opportunities for discussion and for solid formation about truths of the faith. We at the REO encourage you not to feel threatened by the film version of *Da Vinci Code*, but rather to take advantage of this “teachable moment” to provide sound catechesis and opportunities for discussion. We also encourage you to use resources that honor adult learning that go beyond merely answering the factual questions, but provide opportunities for discussion and integration of larger issues of faith.

**The best comprehensive resources for parishes to use with adults and teens:**

**de-coding Da Vinci**, Amy Welbourn, Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2004. This excellent resource deals with the major questions. Each chapter has discussion questions, so it can be used for group study. An accompanying online study guide can be found at <http://www.osv.com/DaVinci/DaVinciGuide.pdf>

**USCCB** – Official response site of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: [www.JesusDecoded.com](http://www.JesusDecoded.com) features many articles and resources to back up the Jesus Decoded television special slated for late May on NBC affiliates\*\*

**Other Recommended Resources:**

“**Da Vinci Code is More Fantasy than Fact**”, Andrew Greely, *National Catholic Reporter*, October 3, 2003. This article is available online at [http://natcath.org/NCR\\_Online/archives2/2003d/100303/100303m.htm](http://natcath.org/NCR_Online/archives2/2003d/100303/100303m.htm)

“**Mary Magdalene and The Da Vinci Code: Separating Fact from Fiction**”, Christopher Heffron, St. Anthony Messenger, posted online at <http://www.americancatholic.org/About/PressRoom/Magazine/prsam0604.asp>

“**Cracking the Da Vinci Code: Theologian Sr. Elizabeth A. Johnson on Mary Magdalene**”, Carol Ann Morrow, St. Anthony Messenger, July 2004 – online at <http://www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Jul2004/Feature2.asp>

“**A Theologian Looks into the Da Vinci Code**”, Gerald, SJ Collins, Address to the John Carroll Society of Washington, January 9, 2005. Published in *Origins*, January 27, 2005, or if you are not a subscriber, it is online at [http://www.sfcabriniparish.org/fk5\\_01\\_30\\_05.html](http://www.sfcabriniparish.org/fk5_01_30_05.html)

**Opus Dei** speaks out in self defense at <http://www.opusdei.org/art.php?w=32&p=7017>

**Our Sunday Visitor’s** web page - a rich collection of articles, ordering information for their pamphlet on the topic, and more. Go to <http://www.osv.com/DaVinci/index.asp>

“**No Church Conspiracy against Mary Magdalene**”, Rosemary Radford Reuther, *National Catholic Reporter*, February 9, 2001 – online at [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1141/is\\_15\\_37/ai\\_70926901](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1141/is_15_37/ai_70926901)

\*\*Be sure to watch for the upcoming documentary *Jesus Decoded*, produced by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops through the Interfaith Broadcasting Commission, available on DVD and to NBC affiliate station on or after May 21, 2006. This was filmed to help separate faith from fiction. *Jesus Decoded* presents clear, accurate information on Christian and Catholic beliefs about the person of Jesus, his disciples, and the formation of the books included in the official canon of the Bible. Shot on location in Israel, Turkey, and Italy. See <http://www.interfaithbroadcasting.com/program.aspx?PID=246> for more information.

**Cathedral Days Attracts Over 500 5th & 6th Grade Pilgrims**



Fr. Thomas Paul of St. Mary of Gostyn, Downers Grove, invites students during Cathedral Days to share his enthusiasm for the architectural beauty of the soaring ceiling of the Cathedral of St. Raymond. Fr. Paul, one of the design team members for the Cathedral renovation, has led this annual tour for 14 years.



John Lamperis prepares students for a pull-up game to help them understand the Church's invitation to community. Lamperis helped fifth graders participating in Cathedral Days from around the diocese to meet one another and share fun while learning about the diocese and their role as the Catholics. Lamperis is from Joyful Hope Presentations, Geneva.

YLC 2006



To get the early bird special of \$165.00 per participant, all forms and money have to be into the REO and complete by **Monday, May 1st at 4:30pm.** More registration can be added to your parish at the regular cost later.

More information can be found on the REO website at [www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo](http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo) or contact Paul Mach at [pmach@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:pmach@dioceseofjoliet.org) or 815-727-6411.

Registration is now available online at [www.sauvtrax.com](http://www.sauvtrax.com)

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HEAR YE,  
HEAR YE !!!



2006-2007 Contract Renewal Materials for "returning" parish catechetical leaders are available on the REO website in the password protected section.

Are you retiring?  
Changing ministries?  
Changing parishes?  
Please let the REO know of your plans. Contact either Helen Johnson, Catechetical Associate for Leadership & Formation or Tom Quinlan, Director of the REO.

If you know of someone who is interested in securing a parish catechetical ministry position advise them to contact Helen Johnson at 815-727-6411 ext 261 or [hjohnson@diocese-ofjoliet.org](mailto:hjohnson@diocese-ofjoliet.org).

A graphic of a rolled-up scroll with wooden rollers at the ends. The scroll is unrolled in the center, revealing text. The text is written in a serif font and is centered on the scroll. The background of the scroll is a light brown, parchment-like texture.

### Small Christian Community Resource for the Easter Season 2006

Following the wonderful response to 'Lenten Longings', the REO is promoting *At Prayer with Mary* as a faith sharing option for small Christian communities in the Diocese.

The seven sessions of *At Prayer with Mary* provide a balance between The Angelus, The Hail Mary, The Memorare, and the Magnificat and the person of Mary. By reflecting on the Mary's humanity, we discover a wonderful model of love and Christian living to help us as we continue our journey of faith.

Session 1	Mary: Model of Faith
Session 2	Mary: Mother of Sorrows
Session 3	Mary: Mother of Compassion
Session 4	Mary and Joseph: A New Beginning
Session 5	Mary, Joseph, and Jesus: Family
Session 6	Mary: Spouse of the Holy Spirit
Session 7	Mary: Mother of the Church

Order copies of *At Prayer with Mary* from the REO by **April 13, 2006** for delivery the week of April 24, 2006. Please see the **inserted** order form.

## NCCL Conference & Expo



**Arrives in Chicago April 30, 2006 - May 4, 2006**  
**Hyatt Regency O'Hare Hotel Rosemont, IL**

In a matter of days catechetical leaders from across the United States and Canada will gather for the annual meeting of the National Conference for Catechetical Leaders. Hope you will be there!

On **Thursday, May 3rd** between **5:00 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.** all are invited to gather in the chapel (Room Delta A-B) for prayer before going to the NCCL Awards Banquet.



# The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation



## E-LEARNING COMES TO THE JOLIET DIOCESE IN JULY 2006

### What kind of courses will be available?

Over 26 courses and seminars are available. These range from Scripture, Jesus, Prayer, Ecclesiology, Sacraments, Catholic Beliefs, Media Education, Catholic Social Teaching, with others being designed on a regular basis. Newly developed seminar and course on the *National Directory for Catechesis* will be launched this year.

### What is the online course format?

Courses run for 3-6 weeks. Each course is capped at 15 participants; a course can even be set up for a group from one parish. This is designed to be an experience within a small virtual community, not an independent study. Courses are password protected.

### What does one need to participate?

You need to feel relatively comfortable with using a computer and the internet and have these two things available to you.

### Why would I be interested?

Distance: It is too far to drive to take a particular course.

Interest: The courses currently offered in the geographic area are not of particular interest.

Time: Diocesan or parish formation courses are not offered at a convenient time.

Be sure to read this section on a regular basis for more information about VLCFF and check out the enclosed pamphlet with course and schedule information. Please contact Helen Johnson (hjohnson@dioceseofjoliet.org) or Rosie Owens (rowens@dioceseofjoliet.org) or call 815-727-6411 with questions.

### Generations of Faith, Round 3 Begins!



**John Roberto explains what the Generations of Faith process has to offer.**



**Parish staff members talk about the Generations of Faith principles.**

## REO CALENDAR

**April 6, 2006**

Parish YM Meeting  
SCPC, 10am - noon  
Contact: Paul Mach

**April 19, 2006**

Generations of Faith  
SCPC, 9am - 3pm  
Contact: Brian Topping

**April 27, 2006**

Adult Faith Association  
SCPC, Noon - 2:30 pm

**April 30 - May 4, 2006**  
NCCL Spring Meeting  
Rosemont, IL

Contact: Tom Quinlan

**May 18, 2006**

Parish YM Meeting  
SCPC, 10am - noon  
Contact: Paul Mach

**May 25, 2006**

REO Board Meeting  
SCPC, 10am - noon  
Contact: Tom Quinlan

**June 22, 2006**

Adult Faith Association  
SCPC, Noon - 2:30 pm

**July 9, 2006**

Theology on Tap (Week 1)  
Location and Time TBA  
Contact: Paul Mach

**July 16, 2006**

Theology on Tap (Week 2)  
Location and Time TBA  
Contact: Paul Mach

**July 21-23, 2006**

Youth Leadership Conference  
Lewis University, Romeoville  
Contact: Paul Mach

**July 23, 2006**

Theology on Tap (Week 3)  
Location and Time TBA  
Contact: Paul Mach

**July 26, 2006**

Conversation with Tom  
Far South- Location TBA, 7pm  
Contact: Tom Quinlan

**July 27, 2006**

Conversation with Tom  
Kankakee-TBA, 10am  
Contact: Tom Quinlan



# Formation Wheel

Helen Johnson

## Volunteer Management Continued

### GATHERING THE WORKERS

Where are volunteers found? Are they hatched? Can we find them under rocks in the garden? Do they belong to the mystical volunteer registry of the world? Maybe there

are dozens waiting in line outside your door? Probably not!

We cannot say definitely where volunteers can always be found, but there is one place we know that they never can be found. They don't come as a result of parish bulletin announcements. At least not the type or the quantity of volunteers we really need.



There are many ways to recruit volunteers, but the absolute best way to not only recruit but also to keep is by using the example of Jesus. Jesus called disciples to the service of the Church by name. He used personal invitation. Jesus called Simon Peter and his brother Andrew, then James and John, the sons of Zebedee (Matthew 4:18-22); Peter, Andrew, Philip and Nathaniel (John 1:35-49). It looks like Jesus recruited half of his ministry team in a matter of hours, while he was walking along a beach no less, calling them by name and inviting them to follow him and see.

Where are we to find these people we call by name? And then invite them to our ministry area? Where can we possibly find the time to be warm and inviting to as many people we will need? How about forming a ministry team whose task is to look for people who might want to serve the community? Their focus is to recruit with the personal touch – to find out what people like to do, where they have served before, what their gifts are, their professional jobs, their hobbies and their availability. This group would have job descriptions, databases, telephone lists, lots of refreshments and note cards. They would have time to drop in on parish meetings and stay longer after Mass on the weekends. This group would be responsible for advertising - creating and distributing flyers, Sunday bulletins, volunteer opportunity slips with parish program registrations; making announcements and posters; reviewing parish census lists; sending recruiting letters, following up with phone calls, etc. They may even host a "Come and See" information session where prospective volunteers could hear about what tasks are available and what is required to participate in the ministry. In short, this group makes a commitment to connect with people all year round. In doing that, relationships are formed that have the potential to secure the volunteers needed for the ministry.

Besides doing the things mentioned above, the recruitment team will need to pray for volunteers to come forward and make a commitment. They will lead the parish in a continuing prayer that asks for new volunteers. The team would also initiate prayers of thanksgiving and blessing for active volunteers. They may also recruit others to pray specifically for the recruitment efforts; people who are homebound, retired persons, former volunteers, parents and even former ministry participants.

Since the apostles were the first volunteers Jesus recruited to the ministry that began our Church, we can look to the apostles as patron saints of the volunteer recruitment effort. After all, these volunteers answered Jesus' invitation without a job description or a brochure telling what their ministry might require (not that I am advocating for this today!). By their faith, they persevered in carrying out Jesus' mission to the ends of their lives. The apostles can serve as inspiration and role models as volunteerism is addressed in local settings. Remember to ask for the intercession of the apostles when managing your volunteers.



*(Continued on Page 2)*



*(Continued from Page 1)*

Some parishes do not set up a recruitment team. In these situations it is more likely that volunteers are recruited haphazardly by cajoling people who are already too busy and sometimes on the verge of burnout to take on one more volunteer task. Sometimes even laying on guilt is utilized as a strategy, whether it is intentional or not. In such situations as this, it is no wonder that there is a high turnover of volunteers each year and recruitment has to start all over again from the beginning.

Recruitment teams offer catechetical leaders assistance with one of the leaders' most important responsibilities – securing the right person for the ministry role. As the catechetical leader you are not removed from the process, rather when the recruitment team identifies candidates you then meet with the people individually and together discern their involvement, the final step before making a commitment. Recruitment teams are your legs, arms, eyes and ears in the community.

**HELPFUL HINTS FOR RECRUITING** (*Recruiting and Training Volunteer Catechists, Teresa Smith, NCCL & Loyola Press, 1998*)



- Announcements, whether in the parish bulletin, newsletter or on a bulletin board should be clear that an invitation is extended to hear more about the situation. It is disappointing for someone to call in response to an ad and find out that the phone call is all that is needed to participate.
- When announcements are made at liturgies or meetings it is important to have a recruiter present to answer questions, hand out literature and secure a phone number for a follow up call.
- The literature should be attractive and informative, so that the prospective volunteer can learn something about the ministry. It should be simple, to the point and include a phone number where someone will actually answer or make sure an answering machine assures the caller that someone will indeed call back.

one will indeed call back.

- Use good paper and a good printing process; a photo or logo that conveys the spirit of the ministry is important. Children's drawings can be inexpensive and elicit great opening conversations.
- Don't skimp on the literature that will be presented as the invitation to your ministry; if you have something well thought out that prospective volunteers can put their hands on, they get the idea that your ministry area is concrete and your need for help is real
- A sense of seriousness about volunteer work is good; as you are inviting people, you may want to ask them to complete a little questionnaire about their desire for volunteer service. Then discuss their responses at the discernment meeting. Here are some questions you may want to include on the "Before You Volunteer" questionnaire:

*Is there a cause you would like to support?*

*Is there any particular area of ministry in which you have a special interest?*

*Besides helping others, what would you like to gain from volunteer work? (A chance to meet new people? To have a chance to use talents you don't use in your job? To learn new skills?)*

*Do you like working directly with people or do you prefer helping in other ways?*

*Do you work best in a group or a one to one situation?*

*Do you enjoy a leadership role?*

*What surroundings are best for you – quiet and uncluttered or stimulating and noisy?*

*How much time can you give and what hours would you prefer?*

*Is there anything else you would like us to know about your interest in volunteer work?*

- When hosting a "Come and See" event you would present an overview of the ministry area and the volunteer tasks related to it; have literature available (maybe a video and/or photo board of previous activities) and current volunteers who can answer questions and offer hospitality. This could be an evening gathering with cheese and crackers, or a Saturday morning continental breakfast, or maybe a Sunday afternoon ice cream social. Be sure to get names, addresses, phone numbers and the best time to reach them.
- Although these strategies are more complex than what Jesus did at his early recruiting sessions, remember our world is a lot more complex today. Remember that the prospective volunteer is sizing up both you and the ministry area, so you certainly want to be perceived as offering a worthwhile opportunity. Be organized and punctual. Demonstrate from the start that you take your ministry and their interest in it very seriously.

Is the development of a volunteer recruitment team a possibility for your parish?

List the ways you currently contact and recruit potential volunteers. Do some of your approaches need to be made more personal? How can you make them more personal?



## PLANNING FOR A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY

Brian D. Topping

The last issue of *Leaven* explored how strategic planning can help build a successful ministry. It also identified the first two steps of strategic planning: assessing your current ministry and identifying your purpose. This issue will explore step two in more depth, and discuss step three.

**Step #2 in Strategic Planning – identify your purpose.** The rest of the strategic planning process depends on correctly identifying your purpose. It is critical to know how your ministry supports the mission of the parish specifically and how that specific purpose is different from that of other ministries. Think of this as an *essential purpose*.



An important distinction must be made here. *Essential purpose* does not equal methodology. Methodology is how you go about achieving an *essential purpose*, which will be discussed later in the planning process. In some parishes, catechetical ministry is an example of this. Forming people in faith is an *essential purpose*. Achieving that *essential purpose* for the various age groups involves different methodologies, each of which is often named its own ministry. Examples include religious education, junior high ministry, youth ministry, young adult ministry, and adult faith formation.



Why is this important? Some ministries in a parish exist to accomplish an *essential purpose* alone. Other ministries in a parish exist to employ a methodology in support of an *essential purpose* in part (for a specific age group). Using catechetical ministries for various age groups in a parish as an example, each one of those ministries needs to both accomplish its own goals in implementing age-specific methodology **AND** realize that it is working together with other ministries to accomplish the *essential purpose*. Without this understanding, the rest of the strategic planning process will only serve to support successfully implementing age-specific methodology rather than successfully achieving an *essential purpose*.

**“Using catechetical ministries for various age groups in a parish as an example, each one of those ministries needs to both accomplish its own goals in implementing age-specific methodology AND realize that it is working together with other ministries to accomplish the *essential purpose*.”**

Before moving on to the next step in the planning process, you need to identify if your ministry exists to achieve an *essential purpose* on its own (and what that is) or in conjunction with other ministries. If you are involved in catechetical ministry, a conversation with leaders of other catechetical ministries within the parish might be helpful. If you find your ministry works with others to accomplish a larger *essential purpose*, you will need to identify what part of that your ministry is directly responsible for and how your ministry supports the other parish ministries working toward the same *essential purpose*.

**Step #3 in Strategic Planning – clarify organizational mission and values.** Because your strategic planning may not involve the entire parish, it is acceptable to view this step as “clarify your ministry’s mission and values.” This should only be done once step two has been accomplished. Using the results from step two, take a look at your ministry’s mission statement and primary values. How well does it fit? If it fits well, move on to the step #4.

To develop a new mission statement, begin with the purpose from step two and answer the following questions: We do what? To/for whom? For what reason(s)? Put your answers to these questions in a short statement to make a mission statement. Primary values define the ministry while it goes about the work of accomplishing its mission statement. Examples of primary values might include collaboration, catechesis that is life-long, using discernment and/or consensus, etc. Write out your mission statement and primary values to make sure they are in alignment with your purpose prior to moving on to step four.

**Step #4 in Strategic Planning – assessing the internal and external ministry environments.** Many organizations benefit the most from this step. It helps frame the context in which you minister. Next month’s article will focus almost entirely on doing this step properly.

In the meantime, feel free to contact me with any questions about what you have read so far by phone or email: 815-727-6411 or [btopping@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:btopping@dioceseofjoliet.org).

*On a Mission from God*

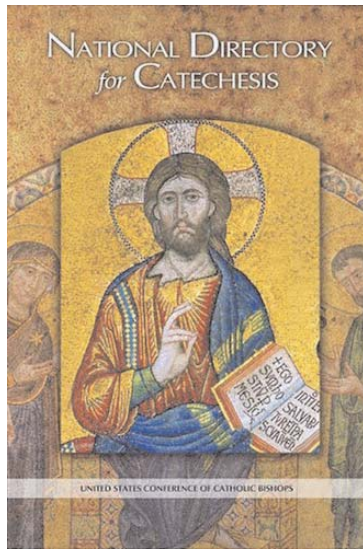


## WHAT THE NDC SAYS ABOUT LITURGICAL CATECHESIS: SACRAMENTS

Joyce Donahue

The *National Directory for Catechesis* is clear and direct: "Catechesis and Liturgy originate in the faith of the Church...Catechesis both precedes the Liturgy and springs from it." NDC, #34 p. 110.

The heart of liturgical catechesis, catechesis for and from the sacraments, when done well, unites believers to the very core of the Church. The NDC says effective sacramental catechism is:



- Comprehensive and systematic integrating knowledge and life
- Fundamentally Trinitarian
- Presents Christian life as a journey to the Father in the Son and through the Spirit
- Appropriate to age level, maturity and circumstances of the catechized
- Intended for all members of the community, takes place within and involves the community
- Involves parents in the preparation of their children
- Is integrated into a comprehensive catechetical program
- Focuses on symbols, rituals and prayers within the rites
- Implements a thorough experience of *mystagogia* following the celebration. (114)

This does not sound particularly new. It is based on what we have learned from the catechumenate process. But, how well are we doing it for ALL who receive sacraments? We need to be reminded that all catechesis "accompanies a continual conversion to Christ" (116) nourished by the sacraments and flowing from them. The key word is *continual*.

Certainly it is common to involve parents in sacrament preparation of children. However, how involved is the whole community? Do those who have received sacraments have the opportunity to engage in age-appropriate reflection on the experience, or are families simply allowed to "disappear?"



*Mystagogia* – ongoing reflection on sacraments and their influence on life is, the most often, missing of the key elements for sacramental catechesis. The school-year model is largely to blame, but so is lack of intentionality and expectation on the part of parish leadership.

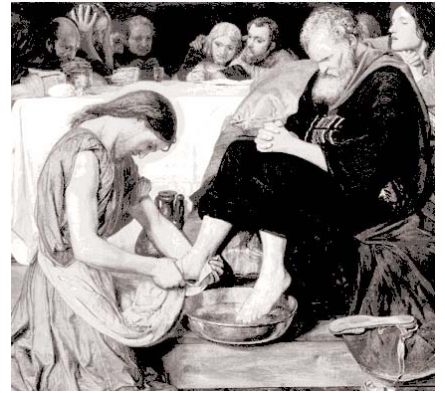
The whole Christian life after Baptism can be described as *mystagogia* on the meaning and call of Baptism, with continual renewal through reflection on the Eucharist as its center. Does this describe what is going on in your faith community? Are there repeated opportunities for children, youth and adults (including those with special needs) to reflect on their experiences of sacraments, especially the Eucharist? If not, it's time for a change!

***"Mystogia* - ongoing reflection on sacraments and their influence on life is most often missing of the key elements for sacramental catechesis."**



## LEAD BY SERVING...

“And during supper Jesus...got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around his waist. Then



he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.”

(John 13: 2-5, 12-15)

Clearly Jesus had no intention of being the only servant leader. He demonstrated and then urged his disciples to do the same. There is a major difference between trying to dominate the leadership spotlight for your own glorification and encouraging others to take an active role in the leadership process. Jesus seems to be leading others – or perhaps in this case we should say serving others – to lead themselves to service. Thus servant-focused leadership not only transcend the leader's own temptation to fall prey to leadership myths (such as that leaders should know all the answers, receive all the fame and glory, and so on) but also encourages others to do the same.

From *The Leadership Wisdom of Jesus – Practical Lessons for Today*, Charles C. Manz, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc, San Francisco, 1998.

## USING THE DIOCESAN FAITH FORMATION CURRICULUM & STANDARDS AS A BASIS FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

Joyce Donahue



Did you know that *The Faith Formation Curriculum and Standards* were designed to accomplish the lifelong formation of disciples? It's not just for children, but is based in standards which contribute to the formation of all believers, no matter what their age.

The curriculum is based on the *General Directory for Catechesis*, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* (paragraph 75). In fact, the Outcome (being) statements for each of the four goals are based on statements from the RCIA and the implication that the formation leads to the fullness of discipleship as described in the RCIA.

Although the curriculum is nominally set up for PS-8, because its primary use is for schools and religious education programs, the grades 6-8 standards can easily serve as a topical launch pad for adult faith formation. Ask yourself if the average adult in your parish knows or practices the standard sufficiently. If not, consider offering formation specifically aimed at that standard.

If adults in your community need enrichment on basic tenets of the faith, the diocesan curriculum standards and certainly the upper grade discussion questions can be used as is or adapted. The resource bibliographies in the curriculum contain a rich trove of books, videos and web sites for catechists or any interested adult. The excerpt from the Pontifical Bible Commission's document on fundamentalism (Appendix F) can be used to help adults understand how Catholics read and interpret the Bible. These are just a few examples of resources from the curriculum that you may find useful.

If you have not had a chance to get familiar with the curriculum itself since it came out last spring, we suggest you consider taking some time to study the materials. Go to <http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/religionCurriculumProject.asp> or get the CD-Rom or the printout of the curriculum and its accompanying resources that was sent to each parish DRE last spring.

With the completion at the end of this month of materials for assessment (testing or evaluation of student performance), the Diocese hopes that all parish and school faith formation programs will make use of this resource... as a guide to formation for learners of all ages. The bottom line is that the *Faith Formation Curriculum and Standards* are a resource for all catechetical leaders, no matter what age group(s) they serve.

