



## Bishop J. Peter Sartain Begins His Ministry in Joliet



Bishop J. Peter Sartain leaves the Cathedral of St. Raymond on June 27th, 2006 after being installed as the fourth Bishop of the Joliet Diocese. During the installation he was seated in the *cathedra*, a symbol of his teaching office. Many representatives from around the diocese were present to welcome the new Bishop.

The episcopal heraldic achievement, or bishop's coat of arms, is composed of a shield with its charges (symbols), a motto scroll ("of you my heart has spoken"), and the external ornaments. The shield is the central and most important feature of any heraldic device. By heraldic tradition, the personal arms of the bishop of a diocese are on one side and on the other side appear the arms of the diocese in which he serves. See the *insert* in this issue for a complete description of the coat of arms for young people!



## Vespers Service



Before the Vespers service on June 26, 2006, Bishop Sartain is received by the gathered community of the diocese. At the doors of the Cathedral of St. Raymond, Bishop Imesch (along with Bishop Schlarman and Deacon Ed Petak) greets Bishop Sartain and presents him with a crucifix to reverence. Bishop Sartain is then presented with Holy Water to bless himself and sprinkle those around him.

(Photo Courtesy of the  
*Catholic Explorer*)

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## 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 -**

**August 24, 2006**  
SCPC, Romeoville  
12:00 - 2:30pm

### **West DuPage Cluster August 10, 2006**

Denise Klimas' House  
10:00am

### **Ford-Iroquois Cluster**

**September 14, 2006**  
St. Peter, Clifton  
6:30pm

**November 9, 2006**  
St. Edmund, Wateska  
6:30pm

### **Joliet-Will Cluster**

**September 21, 2006**  
Immaculate Conception,  
Morris; 10:00am

**October 12, 2006**  
St. Francis, Bolingbrook;  
10:00am

**December 14, 2006**  
Christmas Luncheon

### **Kankakee Cluster**

**September 14, 2006**  
SS. Patrick & Teresa,  
Kankakee; 1:00 - 3:00pm

**October 12, 2006**  
St. Paul, Peotone  
1:00 - 3:00pm



**Tom Quinlan**  
*Director*

# *A Time To Sow*



I am conscious of time as I write this mid-summer reflection for our catechetical community of leaders. Time, which is not static, but dynamic...not limitless, but so very precious. This particular time is significant for me as it is right on the heels of Bishop Sartain's installation and just before I complete my fifth year as your director of the diocesan Religious Education Office. In this unique moment, I find myself wanting to both look back and look ahead as I consider the state of the REO and the catechetical landscape, here in the diocese and, indeed, the world in which we minister.

As I revisit these past five years in which I have had the privilege of leading and serving our collective diocesan catechetical efforts, I am conscious of how much has happened to all of us in that time. Think about it. Since 2001, we've had 9/11, the clergy abuse scandal, ongoing military action both in Afghanistan and Iraq, the South Asian tsunami, the death of Pope John Paul II, the destruction of a major American city from a hurricane, and the transition from Bishop Imesch to Bishop Sartain. Certainly, countless other significant events could be named as well, from the local to the international. (Hey, Chicago even won a World Series!) It has been a momentous half decade. And of course, each of us has in these past years dealt with our own births, deaths, illnesses, joys and burdens, failures and successes.

In reflecting on these last five years in the REO, I am filled with a deep sense of gratitude for how many talented, generous and faith-filled people have been called to build up Christ's Church through their leadership in faith formation ministry. I am so lucky, in my position, to have been able to come to know many of you who are in parish ministry and the tremendous work you do each day in the name of our Lord and of the Church. Likewise, I have been blessed to serve along side wonderfully gifted colleagues on the diocesan level, both in other agencies and most especially on a day-to-day basis within the REO.

At times I have been frustrated that change can be a slow process and that this office has not always been able to serve as responsively and lead as prophetically as I might have wished. You, the parish minister, deserve the very best we can offer you. I am comforted in knowing that we have striven to live up to this standard, even if there have been occasions when we have fallen short.

Measuring performance after a year can give one a reasonable picture of things, at least in the short-run. For long-term assessment, one would think that five years should be a reliable measure. Our office will be taking stock in these coming months of the progress we've made in these years, leading up to our every-other-year planning process this winter. But as I recall the challenges and achievements of this office in these five years, I feel a sense of *satisfaction and joy*.

*Satisfaction* that there have been a great many ways in which we have, together, carried well the responsibility to build ministry that effectively proclaims the Good News of Jesus to our people. We have, I believe, been good stewards of this most precious gift of Catholic faith. And *joy*, for my experience continues to be that there is no better way to spend one's life than in fulfilling one's vocation in collaboration with other members of Christ's Body and in fidelity to God's will.

*(Continued on Page 3)*



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As I dare to look to the future, I am challenged and heartened by the words of our new Ordinary, Bishop J. Peter Sartain, from his homily during the installation liturgy in June. Bishop Sartain invited us to give ourselves, unreservedly, to Christ... to spend ourselves completely for the mission of the Church. For our ministry, for our very life begins and ends with the person of Jesus.

How wonderfully clear, yet how tremendously challenging, this call! Bishop Sartain further reminded us that a gift beyond all measure is theirs who surrender to God. Jesus promises a deep and abiding peace to those who have the courage to subject their will to that of the Father's and find the grace to die to themselves.

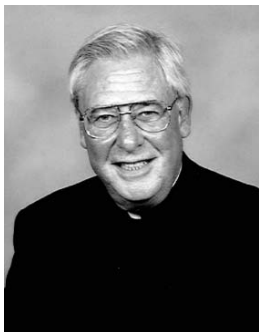
There is a bright new day for the universal Church and for this local Church awaiting us all! We are called to live in this hope, a hope rooted deeply in our confidence in the person and message of Jesus Christ. I ask each of you to join me in praying for and working toward this day. With the Holy Spirit among us, the daily miracles of faith and love in our parishes can become a groundswell that will begin to change the face of the Earth!

As one who was a newcomer to this diocese when I came here in the summer of 2001, when the world seemed bigger and life was a bit simpler, I want to say "Thanks!" Thanks for your commitment to building our ministries of formation and outreach in our diocese. So many are touched by your gifts so readily poured out! And personally, I thank you for the ways you accepted and have supported me in my efforts to answer God's call to guide our diocesan catechetical vision. Whether you know it or not, you are very dear to me.

I can't wait for tomorrow to begin, yet another graced day when, together, you and I and the staff of the REO and other diocesan agencies and all the staff of our parishes, filled with Christ's grace and peace, are privileged to give ourselves fully as living sacraments of Jesus for our world. Lots of incredibly important ministry lies ahead! Together, and under the guidance of our new bishop, let us renew ourselves for the mission!

May God bless you. May God *always* bless you in your continued journey of life, faith and ministry!

### **A Thank You, and Happily, Not a Good-Bye**



I have the honor of expressing a few sentiments about Bishop Joseph Imesch on this the occasion of his retirement as Bishop of Joliet. My thoughts are brief, for I know full well that many of you have known Bishop Imesch for far longer than I.

From my first meeting with him to the final conversation we had prior to the installation of Bishop Sartain, Bishop Imesch has been one of the most available and caring people I have ever known. In each encounter he would demonstrate a deep love for his people. He always expressed interest and concern for whatever topic I brought to him.

Bishop Imesch's work ethic has been an inspiration for all of us who have come to know him. He saw each day as yet another opportunity to serve Christ by serving all of us. He would attend most anything he could and would do so with a generous personal presence and a legendary good humor. (I don't think I've ever met a more naturally funny person.)

Perhaps there is one quality that exceeds humor as something that I have consistently seen in Bishop Imesch. It is deep humility, much the same as I had the grace to encounter in Cardinal Bernardin. Biographer Eugene Kennedy claimed that Bernardin possessed authority but was never possessed by his authority. The very same is true of Bishop Imesch.

Long before my arrival, Bishop Imesch was a strong supporter of faith formation ministry. He continued to the very end to express appreciation for the tremendous ministry performed in his name by parish catechetical leaders and parishioner-ministers.

(Continued on Page 4)

## **YOUTH MINISTRY CLUSTERS**

### **Senior High Youth Ministry Cluster**

(Aurora, Bolingbrook, Lisle,  
Naperville, Oswego)

**August 31, 2006**

St. Margaret Mary,  
Naperville  
2:00 pm

**September 14, 2006**

St. Thomas the Apostle,  
Naperville  
2:00pm

### **Junior High Ministry Cluster**

(Aurora, Bolingbrook,  
Naperville)

**September 5, 2006**

St. Raphael, Naperville  
3:30pm - 5:00pm

**October 3, 2006**

St. Margaret Mary,  
Naperville  
3:30pm - 5:00pm

### **Joliet Cluster Youth Ministry**

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

**August 28, 2006**

St. Paul the Apostle,  
Joliet

### **South of the Border Cluster**

(Northern DuPage)

**\*All Meetings Begin at 10am**

**September 27, 2006**

St. Petronille, Glen Ellyn

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*("Bishop Thank You.." Continued from Page 3)*

And so, in the name of all who currently serve in outreach and faith formation ministry in the Diocese of Joliet...and in the name of all those who have previously served during his 27-year tenure as our bishop, I can only say with deep gratitude: *Thanks, many thanks, Joseph Leopold Imesch, so many years the Bishop of Joliet-in-Illinois! May God bless you and grant you joy in your retirement. And may God give you good health and strength so that for many years to come you may continue to fulfill your priestly vocation among your people!*

**Safe Environment Update**

Joyce Donahue

Once again, in the 2006-07 school year, parish faith formation programs and schools are to continue to conform to policies for safe environment. Here are some updated details:

- Catechists and those who work with minors are required to experience *Protecting God's Children* instruction prior to beginning their ministry. If this is absolutely impossible, catechetical leaders must receive written permission from Tom Quinlan before the catechist can work with young people. Please use the form located online at <http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/docs/PGCEExtensionRequest.doc>
- As of this writing, we still have no confirmation of reporting deadlines for instruction for children and youth. We believe it likely that programs will have until June 1 to complete instruction, but there has been no formal information provided to the diocese. Please plan to complete instruction in the fall.
- The norm for instruction for Grades K-5 in the Diocese of Joliet is still the *Talking About Touching* program as modified, but new instructional alternatives are now available at all grade levels, including 6-12. See the order form *inserted* into this issue for a list. A policy for use of those materials is also enclosed.
- Also new this year is the ability, every other year, to use a shorter "Review Lesson" recalling previous instruction in protection against sexual abuse. These lesson plans are available for download at the Safe Environment Instruction Resource Center at <http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/safeEnvironment.asp>
- Instruction on internet safety for children, youth and parents may now take place as part of safe environment programming, but only if it is clearly connected to previous instruction to prevent sexual abuse. A new brochure will be available from the diocese to assist parents.

An opportunity to review new instructional materials for children and youth will be offered on August 18th from 9am-11am at the St. Charles Borromeo Pastoral Center in Romeoville. Catechetical leaders new to the diocese will have an orientation to the diocese's safe environment policies and programs. Please contact Jennifer Lange at [jlange@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:jlange@dioceseofjoliet.org) or (815) 727-6411 to register.

**NEW! One-Stop "Shopping"**  
<http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/safeEnvironment.asp>

**For ALL Safe Environment  
Information & Resources,  
Policies, Forms,  
Lesson Plans and More!!!  
Bookmark This Page!**



## What Happened to the Junior High Youth Rally?



We are trying a different approach for the rally this coming year. Instead of one Rally for all three grades, we will have an individual evening for each grade level. The 8th grade evening will begin the year on Friday, October 13th with an "Amazing 'G'-Race". For the 7th grade evening, youths will gather on Friday, March 2nd for a "Survival" experience. We will conclude the year with the 6th grade evening on Friday, April 20th with a look into "American Idols". Each evening will begin with Registration and Dinner, followed

by activities and a speaker on the topic and there will be plenty of music and prayer. We are also looking at providing an activity during the trip to the event. Mark your calendars now for these three exciting events! Information for the 8th grade evening's "Amazing 'G'-Race" will be out with the next *Leaven* and through our web page at [www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/youthMinistry.asp](http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/youthMinistry.asp) by September 1st.

## A Great Way to Develop Youth Ministry

The Center for Ministry Development's (CMD) National Certificate in Youth Ministry courses begin again on September 23-24 at Loyola University of Chicago. The National Certificate is eight weekend courses over two years. These courses can also be taken for graduate credit or may also be taken as individual workshop courses.



### LOYOLA UNIVERSITY/CHICAGO REGIONAL

September 23-24, 2006	Principles of Youth Ministry	Sean Lansing
October 28-29, 2006	Practices of Youth Ministry	Christine Semmel
January 27-28, 2007	Foundations of Ministry Leadership	Teresa Brown
March 31- April 1, 2007	Skills for Christian Leadership	Ann Marie Eckert

For more information contact Paul Mach in the Youth Ministry Office.

Our **Youth Minister's Gathering** will begin again on September 21st with a workshop format beginning at 10:00am until 2:00pm. Our presenter will be Tom East, Director of the Center for Ministry Development. Tom will also be presenting Wednesday night at 7:00-9:00pm in Joliet for those who have difficulties that don't allow them to come during the day. Location will be at parishes and will be out in the next *Leaven*.



## National Conference for Catholic Youth Ministry

A professional conference for Catholic Youth Ministers will take place in Las Vegas from November 30th to December 3rd. More information on the conference can be found at the youth ministry page of the REO website at: [www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/youthMinistry.asp](http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/youthMinistry.asp) or at the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry's (NFCYM) website at [www.nfcym.org](http://www.nfcym.org).

## N.W. DuPage *QUEST*...What it Means To Be Catholic...

announces four action-packed events for the '06-07 faith formation adult activity! *QUEST* is going to the movies throughout the year! The Series begins at Resurrection, Wayne in Marvin Hall on **Wednesdays**, July 12, 19, and 26th from 7pm-9pm.

For three weeks come to watch and listen! Peter Gilmour, professor at Loyola University, Chicago, Institute of Pastoral Studies, and noted author and feature writer for *U.S. Catholic Magazine* presents:

### JESUS REAL TO REEL!

Mr. Gilmour will investigate the celluloid stories of Jesus. He will present and discuss various film clips arising from the Gospels. Narrative theology will be emphasized. We anticipate three exciting events.

**AND...**October at St. Isidore & St. Walter brings us *The DaVinci Code: Sorting Fact from Fiction* and a slide lecture on the genius of Leonardo DaVinci. In February at St. John the Baptist, we will enter the realm of *Narnia* and also *Harry Potter*. The Potter evening includes children 10 years and older.

Suggested *QUEST* Donation: \$5 per person at the door. Refreshments are always served! Questions? Contact Barbara Miller at (630) 289-5400 ext. 208.

## REO CALENDAR

**July 16-19, 2006**

Theology on Tap  
(Week 2) 7pm  
Contact: Paul Mach

**July 21-23, 2006**

Youth Leadership Conference  
Lewis University, Romeoville  
Contact: Paul Mach

**July 23-26, 2006**

Theology on Tap  
(Week 3) 7pm  
Contact: Paul Mach

**July 30-Aug. 2, 2006**

Theology on Tap  
(Week 4) 7pm  
Contact: Paul Mach

**August 2, 2006**

Conversation with Tom  
Central DuPage-TBA, 10am  
Contact: Tom Quinlan

**August 4, 2006**

Orientation for New CL's  
Location & Time TBA  
Contact: Brian Topping

**August 4 - 6, 2006**

Young Adult Conference  
San Francisco, CA  
Contact: Paul Mach

**August 6, 2006**

Theology on Tap Mass  
with the Cardinal - Chicago  
Contact: Paul Mach

**August 7-11, 2006**

Institute for Lifelong Faith  
Formation  
St. Luke, Carol Stream  
Contact: Brian Topping

**August 8-9, 2006**

New Catholic School  
Teachers Cat. Initial Form.  
SCPC, Time TBA  
Contact: Joyce Donahue

**August 18, 2006**

New Curriculum Options  
for Safe Environment  
Training  
SCPC, 9am - 11am  
Contact: Joyce Donahue



## The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation



### E-LEARNING HAS ARRIVED!

**The first cycle of classes has begun** in our new online partnership with the University of Dayton! Starting on July 9, people from across the diocese are taking online courses in *Scripture, Church History, Catechesis, Catholic Beliefs*, as well as participating in a seminar on *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us* (the US Bishop's publication from 1999 on adult faith formation).

**Registration for the next cycle of classes begins on July 11.** Classes for Cycle 6 run from August 27 through September 30. Since this cycle is a little closer to the typical academic calendar, it just might be an opportunity for you to encourage a group of your teachers or interested adults to register for a course as a group and do a little studying together.

#### What can I register for?

Here is a listing of the classes that start on August 27:

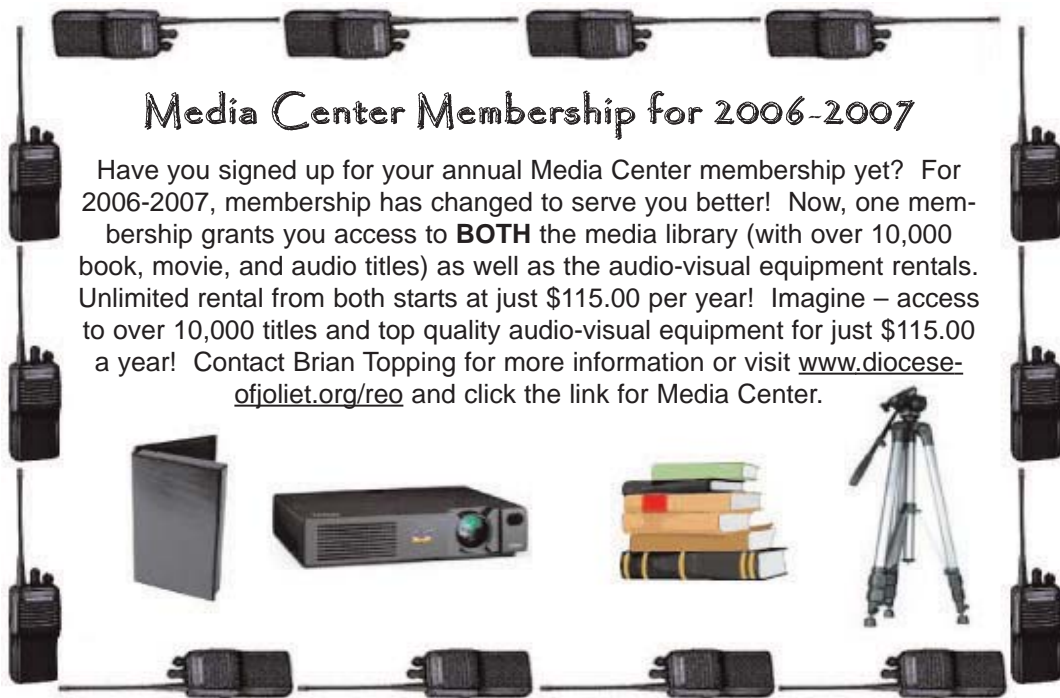
- ◆ Advanced Ecclesiology
- ◆ Church History I
- ◆ Catholic Beliefs
- ◆ Media, Faith and Values
- ◆ Digital Catechesis
- ◆ Survey of Catholic Doctrine
- ◆ Introduction to Catechesis
- ◆ Conscience
- ◆ Scripture--Introduction
- ◆ Church and Communication
- ◆ Introduction to Prayer
- ◆ Sacraments
- ◆ Overview of the *General Directory for Catechesis* and the *National Directory for Catechesis*

Not only are these courses useful background information for any adult in the parish, they also fulfill knowledge requirements for your catechists who are working on their certification. Let us know what we can do to help you promote this very valuable resource to your parish.

Be sure to read this section on a regular basis for more information about VLCFF. If you have any questions or would like information packets which include a listing of upcoming classes, please contact Pat Dennison at [pdennison@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:pdennison@dioceseofjoliet.org) or call 815-727-6411.

## Media Center Membership for 2006-2007

Have you signed up for your annual Media Center membership yet? For 2006-2007, membership has changed to serve you better! Now, one membership grants you access to **BOTH** the media library (with over 10,000 book, movie, and audio titles) as well as the audio-visual equipment rentals. Unlimited rental from both starts at just \$115.00 per year! Imagine – access to over 10,000 titles and top quality audio-visual equipment for just \$115.00 a year! Contact Brian Topping for more information or visit [www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo](http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo) and click the link for Media Center.



## JustFAITH: Evangelizing People Into Action

Joyce Donahue

Recently I met with the JustFAITH Committee of the diocesan Peace and Social Justice Ministry and was pleasantly surprised by the depth of lived faith that this program, in the diocese for three years, has been quietly fostering among its participants. People at the table and on videotape testified to a depth of conversion comparable to that engendered by the RCIA process. I was, frankly, impressed.

To date, the parish-based program boasts 110 graduates in the diocese. As a weekly 8-month-long process, it is not for the faint-hearted, but those who have are changed people: more active in their faith, more outspoken, and definitely more committed.

JustFAITH stresses the difference between charity and justice: one puts a band-aid on the problem; the other confronts the system which creates the problem. As disciples of Christ, we are called to do both, but most people choose charity, because it is more accessible. JustFAITH makes use of speakers, reading assignments, videos and more to help people learn they can have a real effect on the system. This program can benefit catechists, teachers, RCIA team members, Small Christian Communities, and other adults, young adults and teens. It can be applied toward diocesan catechist certification requirements.

Second-grade catechist, RCIA team member and JustFAITH graduate Lynne Sparks of Mokena is enthusiastic: "JustFAITH ... changes your life... It opens your eyes... [It] has brought a whole new dimension to my teaching of both second grade students and the candidates and catechumens I mentor."

Joyce Ruhaak, of the diocesan Peace and Social Justice Ministry elaborates: "JustFAITH provides opportunities to be in solidarity with the poor, vulnerable, marginalized, and oppressed, and to work with them to change policies and structures for their improved quality of life. It challenges us to live and practice our Catholic faith every day.

"I personally invite each of you and those you guide and mentor to participate in the program this fall," Ruhaak continues. "Open to God and to God's people, we are transformed and transforming. Living, loving, and serving as Jesus did, we experience small Christian community as still very alive and well! "

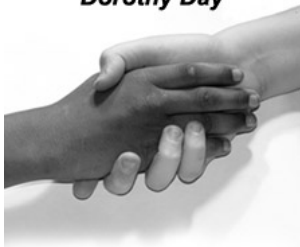
A version of JustFAITH for teens, called JusticeWalking is being considered as a pilot program by youth ministers in several parishes in our diocese. For information, contact Paul Mach at REO.

For more information on having a JustFAITH presentation at your parish, or on starting a group, contact Joyce Ruhaak (815) 834-4028, or joyceru@dioceseofjoliet.org. An original to reproduce the JustFAITH brochure can be found online at <http://www.paxjoliet.org/just-faith/JustFaithBrochure3.pdf>

(images from the JustFAITH website [www.justfaith.org](http://www.justfaith.org))

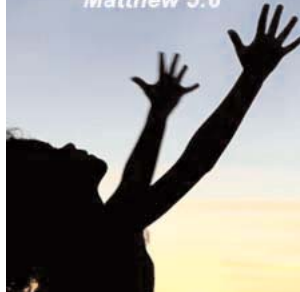
**Your Love for God is only as great as the love you have for the person you love the least.**

**Dorothy Day**



**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled**

**Matthew 5:6**

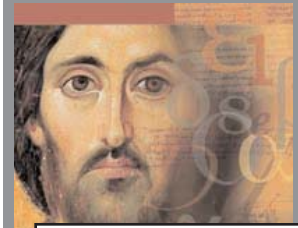


**But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame and the blind. And you will be blessed because they cannot repay you...**

**Luke 14: 13-14**



## Jesus Decoded Responds to DaVinci Code



**NOW AVAILABLE!**

**JESUS DECODED**  
*Catholic Belief versus Modern Fictions*

This 60-minute DVD presentation from the USCCB is a high-quality professionally-produced resource that is both engaging and informative. In a style and format similar to specials from the History Channel or PBS, this thoroughly Catholic video confronts directly the claims made in *The DaVinci Code* regarding the person and life of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, the process of acceptance of scriptures into the Bible, conspiracy theory and more.

Evidence is presented by scripture and Church history scholars, an art historian, and others, both male and female. Attractive, believable and authoritative, *Jesus Decoded* is something every Catholic teen and adult should see.

You can still order *Jesus Decoded* for your parish at the **discounted REO price of only \$16.95 each!**

Contact Jennifer Lange at [jlange@dioceseofjoliet.org](mailto:jlange@dioceseofjoliet.org) or 815-727-6411 for your copy today.

## Connecting with the REO for Contract Renewal



Thank you to all of you who have been sending copies of your contract renewal materials to the REO. We do truly appreciate the opportunity to assist you by keeping this record. In addition, it helps us understand current job descriptions and compensation packages for those serving in catechetical ministry.

There is still time to send yours in, so if you have not yet done so, please mail a copy of the following materials for 2006-07 to the REO:

- Job description
- Program goals
- Personal Formation and Professional Growth Plan
- Contract and Norms/Benefits (including a copy of the benefits if they are different than those outlined in *Faith Formation in the Diocese of Joliet*)

Thank you, and may the Lord bless your work in ministry!



**Your Attention, Please!**  
**An important  
Leadership Days  
announcement  
follows...**

## **The Pastor/Staff Workshop and Luncheon is coming!** **October 20, 2006** **Featuring: Dan Mulhall of the USCCB**



Talk to your pastor and the rest of your staff and join us for this exciting day that will explore the implications of the *National Directory for Catechesis* for our parishes and ministries. Dan Mulhall of the USCCB, who was present for the writing of the *NDC*, will guide us in understanding what the *NDC* calls us to do and dialoguing about how to do it. A continental breakfast and a delicious buffet lunch will be provided.

Please see the invitation included as an *insert* in this issue of *Leaven*. Or, go to <http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo> and click on the link for Leadership Days.



# Formation Wheel

## PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY

Brian Topping



This is the “finish line” section of the series, “Planning a Successful Ministry!” Strategic Planning can feel like a grueling race at times, when the finish line seems so far away. Just like planning for an important race begins long before a runner steps on the track, strategic planning attempts to account for the many variables in the ministry equation before the plan is implemented. The last two steps in strategic planning are Implementing the Strategic Plan and Evaluating the Strategic Plan. Implementing the strategic plan is like running the race, and evaluating the strategic plan is like looking back at the race to see what worked well and what could have been improved upon. So, read on – the finish line is in sight!

**Step #7 in Strategic Planning – implement the Strategic Plan!** The last article in this series examined how to set up an action plan. At its heart, strategic plans are really just a series of action plans. However, before an organization begins the work of doing the action plans, one critical task must be done: “COMMUNICATE THE STRATEGIC PLAN!”

Before the plan is implemented, it should be communicated to every person who will have a role in the implementation or who stands to be affected by the implementation. The level of communication may vary depending on who the person is and how the plan will impact them. Someone who shares responsibility to accomplishing an action plan will likely need to know the goal(s) of the strategic plan, what the action plan they are responsible for entails, and how accomplishing the action plan helps to achieve the overall strategic plan. They may also want to know information about who the action plan will affect, what resources they have to accomplish the action plan, and the timeframe in which the action plan must be accomplished.

A good example of this is a hospital undergoing expansion of its facilities and services. Upper level leadership develops the strategic plan. All departments are informed of the expansion plan, and those directly impacted by it are given a series of action plans to complete in support of the overall plan. One action plan might be that the same-day surgery offices and waiting room has to change locations temporarily during the expansion of the physical facilities. People visiting the hospital are communicated with in terms of signs and employees directing them to the new or temporary locations of the departments they are trying to reach. Many times, hospitals will target their communications to get guests or patients to feel good about the expansion. For example, Edward hospital in Naperville refers to their expansion as “Growth Zones, to serve you better.” Their signs are brightly colored, with exciting lettering and images. The end result is that when the hospital begins implementing the strategic plan by working the action plans, everyone knows what is going on.



Thus implementing the strategic plan consists of two important tasks – communicating the plan, and beginning to work the action plans. The goal is that the individual action plans, once completed, will accomplish the overall strategic plan.

**Step #8 in Strategic Planning – Evaluate the Strategic Plan.** Evaluation of the strategic plan actually begins as the plan is being implemented. That is normal. As action plans are worked on, unforeseen things come up and adjustments need to be made to keep the plan on track. The evaluation referred to in step 8 is done once the strategic plan is thought to have been accomplished. Evaluation includes evaluating the strategic planning process, the actual plan that resulted, and the implementation. Doing an evaluation like this will help the organization learn what worked well, what did not work well, and what might be considered in the future. Preparing for future planning is the desired end result of this step. Once the evaluations have been completed, it is important to compile an evaluation report that summarizes the key findings.

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Along with the report, include a copy of the strategic plan that the report summarizes, as well as information about which people were responsible for which aspects of the strategic plan. This provides future planners with all the information they might need to understand what happened previously and who to contact with any questions.



### **Important Reminder**

Strategic Planning is critical to any successful ministry. Since strategic planning takes into account the many variables in the ministry context, it stands a better chance of success than planning that only evaluates a few variables. This assumes that the strategic planning is done properly.

This series, "Planning a Successful Ministry" outlined the steps in a proper strategic planning process. If no one in your organization feels comfortable facilitating such a process, do not lose hope! There are many resources out there to assist organizations with strategic planning, from consulting firms, to books, to websites, etc. Please call us if we can help put you in touch with these resources.

Most importantly, though, plan to plan! You will be amazed with the results you accomplish.

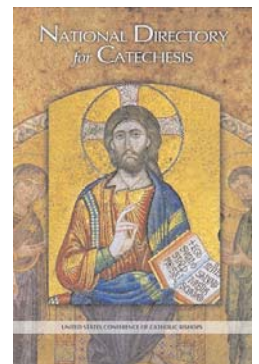
## CATECHIZING THE PEOPLE OF GOD - CUSTOMIZATION IS THE NAME OF THE GAME

Joyce Donahue

When catechizing the people of God, the *National Directory for Catechesis* stresses the importance of understanding the individual pace of faith development, readiness, needs and circumstances. (#48-50, pp. 187-210)

Faith formation of adults, for instance, "needs to be addressed to adults at different stages in the development of their faith." (p. 187) By inference, since the *NDC* reminds us that adult faith formation is the "organizing principle" for all catechesis, this should be true at every age level. Catechetical offerings should be varied according to the needs and circumstances of those to be catechized.

The methodology of catechesis should also be age-appropriate, with the catechesis of adults, the elderly, young adults, youth, younger children and older children employing varying methodologies that reflect the experience and needs of each group. (See pp. 187-206). Some of the principles in that section are well-established in previous documents. Some, for example the material about the elderly and on young adults, could be "news" to catechetical leaders.



Two important underlying principles would seem to follow:

- 1.) All catechetical leaders need to be trained to recognize signs of faith development so that they can determine catechetical offerings.
- 2.) Any catechetical plan, choice of text or program, or adaptation thereof should be based on the needs of those to be catechized, not on the promotion of a publisher the preferences of the catechetical leader, or any other factor that does not relate directly to those being catechized, their culture, faith development and the needs of their faith community.

### **Special Needs**

Affirming previous documents on catechesis for persons with disabilities, the *NDC* stresses that "persons with disabilities should be integrated into ordinary catechetical programs as much as possible, "and that it is "most effective when it is carried out within the general pastoral care of the community" (p. 207). Interestingly, the *NDC* suggests that persons with disabilities themselves, along with those who care for them, be the driving force in curriculum adaptation and personalization. In addition, there is a reminder that cost must never be a controlling factor when providing such catechesis.

### **Special Situations**

Lastly, in this section, the *NDC* reminds us that one size does not fit all in faith formation. The circumstances of professional people, military personnel, and college students (those who keep non-traditional work hours or travel), the married (with or without children), the divorced and the remarried, the widowed and the homosexual, for example, may require parish catechetical leaders to respond differently and perhaps more flexibly in customizing their ways of providing catechesis to best serve the needs of those being catechized.

