

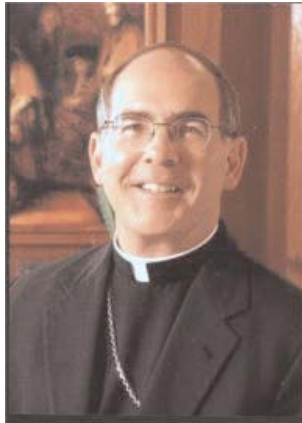


Leaven

The Newsletter of the
Religious Education Office



The Diocese of Joliet Welcomes a New Bishop!



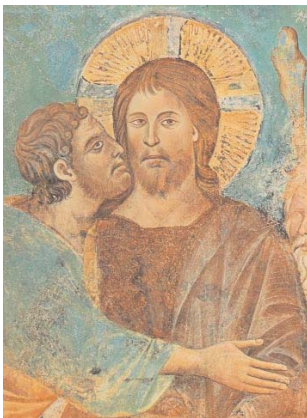
On the morning of May 16, 2006, the Apostolic Nuncio in Washington D.C. announced the appointment of Bishop J. Peter Sartain as the fourth Bishop of the Joliet Diocese. Bishop Sartain was born on June 6, 1952 in Memphis Tennessee. On July 15, 1978 he was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Memphis where he served in various administrative roles, including director of vocations, chancellor, high school chaplain and judge with the diocese's marriage tribunal. Bishop Sartain comes to Joliet from the Diocese of Little Rock, AR where he was appointed bishop in January 2000 by Pope John Paul II. As his episcopal motto, Bishop Sartain adopted a phrase from Psalm 27: "Of you, my heart has spoken."

"That simple phrase has resonated in my heart for many years," Sartain said. "And it seemed an apt way to summarize my sense of vocation. Simply put... it reminds me that my deepest yearning is for God and that my heart speaks spontaneously of Him."

Bishop Sartain's installation ceremony is set for June 27th.

A Word About that Pesky Gospel of Judas....

Joyce Donahue



As if *The DaVinci Code* confusion was not enough, recently we encountered news and television specials about the Gospel of Judas. The National Geographic Society, no doubt sensing that, in the wake of *Da Vinci Code*, Americans are hungry for anything that appears to dish the dirt on the Church, has chosen to sensationalize this recently discovered document through television, DVD, and associated web resources. As in the case of *DaVinci Code*, there is the real risk that popular culture can pre-empt catechesis about scripture.

The recent sensationalism about this Gnostic writing raises issues about the nature and truth of scripture, about the validity of the accepted canon of the Bible, and about whether once again, the Church is guilty of covering up the "truth". While most

scholars argue that this "gospel" tells us more about the Gnostics than about Jesus or Judas, television and the print media have sensationalized the issues.

Inserted into this issue is a pamphlet from Loyola Press by James P. Campbell, their staff theologian. Campbell, a well-known scripture scholar, provides a simple overview of the issues. If you would like additional copies, contact Loyola Press at the number on the back of the pamphlet.

You may also want to read the excellent brief article from Catholic News Service at www.catholicnews.com (search gospel of judas).

This month in the Formation Wheel...

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FORMATION
WHEEL section -
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**JUNE
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 -

June 22, 2006 - 12pm
SCPC, Romeoville

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,
Elmhurst; 10am

October 12, 2006
St. Francis, Bolingbrook;
10 am

December 14, 2006
Christmas Luncheon

Kankakee Cluster

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

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

November 9, 2006
St. Joseph, Manteno
1 - 3pm



Tom Quinlan
Director

A Time To Sow



One of the high moments of last month's NCCL Conference in Rosemont was Cardinal George's address to the entire body of attendees. Not only did I find his insights to be substantive, but also quite accessible. This made for a serious, but enjoyable and even inspiring presentation.

Cardinal George said, "We don't know Jesus outside of the context of the Church." On one level, this seems obvious. Christ and the Church are inexorably and intimately bound to one another. Paul's analogy of Christ as the head and we, the Church, as the body communicates this well. It is in and through the Church that today we encounter Christ. And yet, it occurred to me that from an evangelical Christian, or even more so, a post-modern perspective, one could claim to know Jesus without any affiliation to the Church.

In wrestling with this possibility, the Cardinal's assertion took on a further layer of meaning. The Christ of the Scriptures and history, the Christ of Christian tradition and theology, is the Christ handed down to us by the Church. Our understanding and experience of him did not form in a vacuum. Even for one who repudiates Church as an institution, the Jesus whom is embraced is made available to us *by* the Church. Put in this context, the all-too-familiar "I'm spiritual, not religious" claim seems somewhat ironic.

Perhaps someone of this mindset would, in fairness, at least be willing to acknowledge with gratitude the role the Church played in bringing Jesus not only to all nations, but to all generations. And perhaps this could help such a person grow to appreciate essential necessity of the Church in carrying forth his presence and truth down to today. Indeed, if it weren't for the Church, any interpretation of Jesus could be found more acceptable and credible than the previous, according to one's inclinations and cultural context. From the early Gnostic movements to *The DaVinci Code*, it is the Church who has protected and proclaimed the divine truth of Jesus Christ, who is known and present among us today.

Let me share one other gem excavated from Cardinal George's talk. In summarizing the challenge set before us in the *National Directory for Catechesis*, he named the two part mandate for us and, indeed, the entire Church:

1.) Inculturation of the Faith and 2.) Evangelization of the Culture

This really says so much, so succinctly! In short, the first challenge is to find ways for us to convey the faith in a way that makes sense to the people of *this* time and place...so that it speaks their language and has a chance to be transformative in their lives. The second challenge is to engage in dialogue, critique, and even, confrontation with the culture in which we minister, so that it may become ever more fertile soil in which Gospel values are respected and valued...so that the faith may flourish. I'm finding this encapsulation of our mission very valuable!

I am pleased to be able to share just a few thoughts from merely one presentation from the recent NCCL Conference. In doing so, it causes me to reflect on how fortunate we are as catechetical leaders to have access to opportunities to grow personally and professionally. Such opportunities are not hoops to be jumped through, but blessings to be embraced and shared. In this spirit, I wish you a summer filled not only with the pursuit of fun and relaxation (which is so essential!), but also some time for good spiritual and catechetical reading, formational development, and maybe a retreat experience.

Farewell To Friends and Co-Laborers in the Vineyard

Every ending comes with a certain degree of sadness. When relationships are filled with joy and respect and common mission, there is a sense of loss in an ending. But there is also satisfaction and gratitude for what has been shared and for what has been achieved.

I want to express my deep appreciation to Helen Johnson and Rosie Owens for their generous sharing of their gifts with the diocese. They gave of themselves out of their deep sense of faith and calling to be in service to the Church and the people of God. The diocesan Religious Education Office and faith formation ministry throughout the Diocese of Joliet is far better for having been blessed with their presence and their service.



As for Rosie, my only regret is that personal responsibilities outside her position in adult formation and evangelization forced her to leave a role that she made her own so very quickly. It is remarkable how much Rosie, in her passionate, determined, yet gentle way was able to accomplish in one year. It reminds me that one person can, indeed, make a difference and in even a short time! Thank you, Rosie. We will try to carry on the good work you have attended to in our diocese.

Helen served in various roles in the Religious Education Office for more than a decade. It is a record of commitment reflective of her love for the Church, her diocese and catechetical ministry. I know how fervently she has always believed in lay ministry and enjoyed being a part of strengthening its place in the Church. From her days establishing the godparent program in our diocese as a parish youth ministry director to her most recent role attending to catechetical leadership concerns, Helen has had a long and wonderful career in ministry. From day one of my time in Joliet, Helen was a reliable and professional presence that I could count on for support and perspective. For that I will always be grateful!



The "New" Outreach Initiative:

An Exciting addition to the Educational Grants available to parishes!

Margaret Pinas, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Darien

Earlier this year the Joliet Diocese Catholic Education Foundation announced a pilot grant program aimed at supporting evangelization and adult formation endeavors. The purpose of this new initiative was to provide "seed money" to help parishes reach out to a broader base of people by offering comprehensive programs aimed at serving parish renewal. The Outreach Initiative does not compete with the Religious Education Grant, already offered by the diocese, but gives special focus to evangelization and adult formation.

The response to this new grant was wonderful! The Education Foundation was right on target in offering this initiative to help catechetical leaders in our diocese explore new and creative ways to reach out to their adult population. Twenty-four proposals were submitted this grant season, including a wide range of plans utilizing programs and outreach ministry concepts already available nationally, as well as approaches designed by the parish itself. Scripture study, leadership training and catechist development, as well as online learning programs were among the ideas proposed to enliven parish life. Evangelization and outreach efforts targeting not only the un-churched, but also marginal Catholics were being explored by a few parishes.

Each proposal was considered using criteria outlined by the foundation. The board considered whether the program/ministry showed clear vision, demonstrated a realistic implementation plan and would be sustainable over time.

(Continued on Page 7)

YOUTH MINISTRY CLUSTERS

Senior High Youth Ministry Cluster

(Aurora, Bolingbrook, Lisle,
Naperville, Oswego)

2006 - 2007 Dates TBD

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)

June 5, 2006

St. Paul, Joliet
8:00 pm

South of the Border Cluster

(St. Mary, Mokena; St.
Jude, New Lenox; St.
Joseph, Manhattan; St.
Anthony, Frankfort)

*All Meetings Begin at 10am

August 30, 2006

Location TBD

September 27, 2006

Location TBD

October 25, 2006

Location TBD

November 15, 2006

Location TBD

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

Joyce Donahue
Catechetical Associate
*Child Catechesis &
Curriculum*
jdonahue@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



The Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation



E-LEARNING IS ALMOST HERE!

Registration has begun for classes starting July 9th

Our partnership with the University of Dayton is about to kick into high gear. Registration started **May 23rd** and continues until **July 5th**. You can register for one (or two if you are feeling the need for a real challenge!) of thirteen course offerings that were previewed in last month's *Leaven* insert.

How do I register?

Registration is easy, simply log on to www.vic.udayton.edu. Before you can register for the course, you will be asked to create a user profile. Make sure that you list your diocese as the Diocese of Joliet; otherwise you will not get the 50% discount on tuition for being part of a member diocese! Once you have created a profile, the site will step you through registration.

What can I register for?

The classes, which start July 9 (Cycle 5), include the following:

- ◆ Basic Ecclesiology
- ◆ Catholic Beliefs
- ◆ Catholic Social Teaching-2
- ◆ Sacraments
- ◆ Church History-2
- ◆ Evangelization
- ◆ Introduction to Catechesis
- ◆ Jesus
- ◆ On Bended Knee
- ◆ Our Hearts Were Burning
- ◆ Scripture (New Testament)
- ◆ Scripture (Old Testament)
- ◆ Overview of the *General Directory for Catechesis* and the *National Directory for Catechesis*

For a general description of the above-listed classes, refer to the green insert that you received with last month's *Leaven*, or contact us at the Religious Education Office.

This is a terrific opportunity for you to refresh your knowledge, gain more in-depth knowledge, or explore a topic that you don't know much about. And all on your own schedule and at your own convenience! If you have any questions or problems with registration, please contact us at the Religious Education Office: 815-727-6411, or contact Pat Dennison (pdennison@dioceseofjoliet.org).

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 and click the link for Media Center.



Theology on Tap

The following are the sites and dates for this summer's Theology on Tap (TOT) program for the Diocese of Joliet. Complete topics and speakers can be found on the REO website at www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/tot.asp.

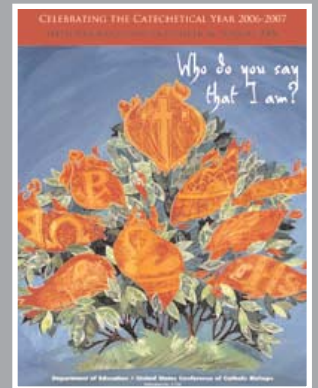
Some of the topics covered this year will include: Defending Our Faith, Understanding Love, Theology of the Body, Decoding the DaVinci Code. TOT 2006 will feature such speakers as: Jim Healy, Kevin O'Donnell, Steve Smith, Bill Johnson, Nancy McKnight, Joanne Kuttner, Fr. Thomas Loya, Andrea Gallo, and Cori Pieper. Encourage your young adults to attend!

More parishes may be added, so please continue to check the website. For more information about Theology on Tap in the Diocese of Joliet, please contact Paul Mach.



Catechetical Sunday

September 17, 2006



"Who Do You Say That I Am?"

Catechetical Sunday materials are now available from the REO. We are offering a wide range of materials at a discounted price.

Honor your catechetical staff by placing your order today. Hurry, last year the Catechetical Sunday Pins sold out quickly.

See the *insert* in this edition for ordering info.

Sunday July 9, 16, 23, 30

St. Joseph - Addison

Contact: Claudia Sundling-Strope
fireballsmk@aol.com
(630) 832-6894
330 E. Fullerton Ave.
Addison, IL 60101

Monday July 10, 17, 24, 31

Sts. Peter and Paul

Contact: Christine Kancewick
chriskance@yahoo.com
(630) 718-2154
36 N. Ellsworth
Naperville, IL 60540

St. Mary Immaculate

Contact: Peni Heffernan
stmarys_adult_formation@hotmail.com
(815) 436-2651 ext. 806
15629 Rt. 59
Plainfield, IL 60544

Tuesday July 11, 18, 25, Aug 1

St. Petronille

Contact: Adele Lessmeister
lessmeistera@stpetschurch.org
(630) 469-0404 ext. 2107
420 Glenwood Ave
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137

Tuesday July 11, 18, 25, Aug 1

Corpus Christi

Contact: Mark Herwaldt
ccym@sbcglobal.net
(630) 483-4226
1415 Lies Rd.
Carol Stream, IL 60188

Wednesday July 12, 19, 26, Aug 2

St. Thomas the Apostle

Contact: Jim Melton
hopedawg1@stapostle.org
(630) 355-8980 ext. 123
1500 Brookdale
Naperville, IL 60563

St. Isidore Parish

Contacts: Andrea Gallo & Alex Gervacio
(630) 529-3045 – Andrea
(630) 469-6300 – Alex
427 W. Army Trail Road
Bloomington, IL 60108-1390

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel

Contact: Margaret Pinas
mt.carmelae@ourladyofmtcarmel.org
(630) 852-3303
8404 Cass Avenue
Darien, IL 60561

REO CALENDAR

July 9, 2006

Theology on Tap (Week 1)
Locations (see pg.3) 7pm
Contact: Paul Mach

July 16, 2006

Theology on Tap (Week 2)
Locations (see pg.3) 7pm
Contact: Paul Mach

July 21-23, 2006

Youth Leadership Conference
Lewis University, Romeoville
Contact: Paul Mach

July 23, 2006

Theology on Tap (Week 3)
Locations (see pg.3) 7pm
Contact: Paul Mach

July 30, 2006

Theology on Tap (Week 4)
Locations (see pg.3) 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
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

What's FREE, Easily Available Online, Bilingual and Can Help
Adults and Youth in Your Community Engage in Bible Study?



www.CatholicsRead.org – that's what!

A National Catholic book club, this site features Bible studies (Mark, Isaiah, and Revelation this year) and great supplemental resources. Sponsored by the Catholic Book Publishers Association, this initiative, with resources in English and Spanish, is in its second year. All over the country, people are participating; parishes are setting up local reading groups and helping people take advantage of this free resource for faith formation and evangelization.

Some ideas for parishes from the CBPA:

- Host a book club focusing on one of the Bible choices, and 3-4 of the resource books.
- Plan a multi-week program focusing on one of the titles and Scripture texts during a liturgical season.
- Encourage small faith communities to choose and study a resource book on each of the Scripture texts during the year.
- Let teen leaders set up a graffiti board for comments on their bible study, to share their learning with the parish.
- Invite the pastor to host a reading group so that reflections on the Scripture texts and resource books can be reflected in homily preparation.
- Purchase a variety of the recommended resource titles and read them or distribute them to shut-ins, the elderly or those in nursing homes in the area.
- Donate one book for each category to the parish library.
- Purchase a quantity of one of the lesser expensive resource titles and use it as an evangelization tool in the parish community. Take it door to door to meet the neighbors in the community.
- Continue the trend of people in a community all reading the same book by starting a parish reading program. Organize discussion groups.
- Make arrangements with a local bookseller to offer a discount to parishes in your area for placing orders for significant quantities of books featured on the web site.
- Work with your local bookstore or publishers to co-sponsor a talk and signing party for selected authors of books featured on CatholicsRead.org.

For more information, contact:

Terry Wessels, Executive Director, Catholic Book Publishers Association

8404 Jamesport Drive, Rockford IL, 61108

Phone: 815-332-3245 Fax: 815-332-3476

Email: cbpa3@aol.com

"I am delighted to serve as Episcopal Moderator for the Catholic Book Publishers Association. Although many other important sources of information and faith nourishment are now available, from CD-ROMs to the Internet, the Bible and other books remain indispensable for Catholics who seek to grow in their faith. The CBPA's CatholicsRead program is an innovative and exciting effort to bring this truth to the attention of Catholics who may have forgotten."

--Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Archdiocese of Cincinnati

("Outreach Initiative"..Continued from Page 3)

The awards will be announced later in June. The parishes receiving grants will begin to implement their programs and keep the grant committee informed as to the progress and effectiveness of their endeavor. This information should prove helpful for the entire diocese as we assess how we can best share the Good News of Jesus Christ.

If your parish did not submit a proposal this year, I would encourage you to consider it for next year. Proposals are usually submitted between February and April, but is never too early to begin assessing your needs and developing a plan. The staff in the Religious Education Office is available as a resource for ideas and support in proposal writing.

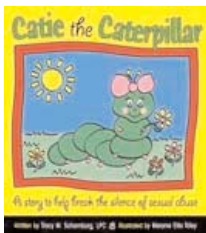
It is an exciting time in the Diocese of Joliet. We (catechetical leaders) are being encouraged to "think outside the box" and are being supported in trying new programs developed to renew and revitalize our parishes. Why not put The Outreach Initiative on your ministerial "to do" list...your parish will be glad you did!

New Options for Safe Environment Curriculum

Joyce Donahue

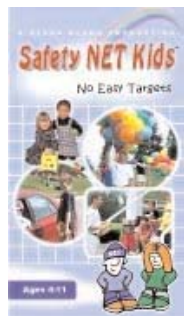
In our continuing effort to make suitable and effective materials available for Safe Environment instruction of children and youth, members of the REO and CSO staff have been reviewing videos and storybooks that can be used at various grade levels. This is desirable for those programs that do not wish to repeat a resource that students experienced last year. Currently, we are working on lesson plans and still evaluating a few more choices, but we can let you know about some of the options. Please plan to attend one of the Safe Environment Curriculum review events, either on June 8 or August 18, to get a chance to see these and other resource options.

Here is some of what we have discerned as being suitable, and therefore "approved" for use:



Storybooks:

- Pre-K and K: *It's My Body*, Lory Freeman, Parenting Press.
Grades 1 & 2: *Catie the Caterpillar*, Tracy M. Schamburg, LPC, Liguori Publications.
Grades 1-8: *No More Secrets for Me*, Oralee Wachter, Little, Brown and Company



Videos:

- Grades 1-4: *I am the Boss of My Body*, United Learning
Grades K-5: *Safety N.E.T. Kids: No Easy Targets*, Safety Net Kids, Glenn Olson
Grades 3-6: *When Should You Tell?* Sunburst Visual Media
Grades 3-8: *Break the Silence: Kids Against Child Abuse* (07:39-21:21 only) AIMS Multimedia
Grades 7-12: *Break the Silence: Preventing the Sexual Abuse of Minors*, Catholic Diocese of Orange

It is also anticipated there will be some resources for older students on internet predators. A revised lesson plan for Katie's Secret, attending to a few issues that arose in using it last year, will be posted on the REO web site very soon.

As always in our diocese, we review and approve curriculum items for use, but allow parish and school programs to make choices, based on what fits the needs of their community. Questions on this process may be directed to Joyce Donahue, Paul Mach (REO) or Pamela Gean (CSO).

OLD TESTAMENT CONTINUED: EXILE & RESTORATION

Presented by Sr. Macrine
Scott, OSF

Retired Director of the
Catholic Biblical School of
the Archdiocese of Denver

June 19 -29th
9:30am - 11:30am or
7:00pm - 9:00pm

St. Raphael Parish
1215 Modaff Road
Naperville, IL

Contact:

Sr. Anne Hyzy
(630) 355-4545 x138

Cost: \$275 by May 30th
or \$300 after May 30th
(Registration is currently
underway)

A two-week intensive workshop, Introduction to Prophets in Israel is a unit of the nationally known Denver Catholic Biblical School Program. Course concentration will be on prophets who exercised this ministry prior to the exile in 587 BC including Northern Kingdom prophets Amos & Hosea and Southern Kingdom prophets Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Nahum, and Jeremiah.

For more information on this event and other diocesan parish events please visit our webpage www.diocese-ofjoliet.org/reo/parish-events.asp.



Registration for YLC 2006 is well under way. To register online go to the REO website at

www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo and click on "YLC 2006 Registration Information" or go directly to www.sauvtrax.com.

Please remember that registration is not complete until the REO has received all completed forms.

For assistance with online registration please do not hesitate to call Paul Mach or Jen Lange with any questions. We can walk you through most problems.

Registration deadline is **June 23rd** at the cost of \$175.00. After that date the cost increases to \$185 until **July 7th**. A \$30 administrative fee will be added for any changes made after July 7th.

Are Your Parish Religious Education Programs for Minors As Safe As They Can Be?

Joyce Donahue

I don't know about you, but since I had the Protecting God's Children training in 2003, I am certainly more aware when I am in a facility where children and youth are engaged in catechetical activities. I find myself thinking about who has access to the building during sessions, or what places the children can go to that puts them out of direct sight of a supervising adult, etc. Certainly the PGC guidelines are good ones, and we should follow them. However, certain specific program issues exist beyond the general guidelines.

We also have diocesan policies, located in the Procedural Guidelines section of *Faith Formation in the Diocese of Joliet*, especially in sections II, B, d and e. (pages 8-9). Here at the REO, we typically get asked what is needed in certain situations. Here is a sample of some of what we have heard:

Question: *If someone is visiting a classroom on a one-time basis, a speaker, for example, does the parish have to get that person background checked?*

Answer: Normally, no. The Chancery has interpreted background checks only to be needed for people who will be exposed to children in a regular or recurring manner, or who will have an opportunity to be alone with children in the course of their ministry. Actually, the more important question to ask is how is this visitor being given access within the facility? Is there ever any chance that the person will come into direct contact with children or youth without another adult present? No visitors to catechetical sessions should ever be allowed unsupervised contact with children or youth. They should be escorted to and from the entrance and never left alone with kids in a room. A background check, after all, only reveals people who have been charged with an offense.

Question: *Diocesan policy suggests strongly that a second adult should always be present during sessions with children and youth. My catechist/children's choir director/youth volunteer (or whatever) is offended by the suggestion and doesn't want another adult around. How do I deal with that?*

Answer: You may well wonder what that person has to hide! Actually, you can have another adult present in any program situation in a variety of ways that don't interfere with the leader's perceived ability to interact with the children. Station someone at a rear position in a room, or off to the side, out of the leader's natural sight line. Have them sit in the hallway, outside a door or around a corner and listen – it is not strictly necessary to make the leader feel "watched". Supervision can take place in more natural and subtle ways. No adult who works with children or youth should be in a closed room without windows or an open door to an area where another adult or adults may observe what is going on.

Question: *Some of our graduated seniors who are now 18 still want to be a part of our parish youth program as participants, but not as leaders. What are the safe environment requirements for these young adults as they participate in programs with minors?*

Answer: During the summer following their senior year in high school, an 18-year-old may attend youth programs as a participant without having to go through Protecting God's Children or a criminal background check. Once September rolls around, however, that young adult needs to conform to diocesan safe environment policy before he or she is allowed to participate at any level.

Question: *Is it really necessary to lock and monitor all exterior entrances to my school or church building when children or youth are present?*

Answer: Are you really sure "it will never happen" in your community? Do you want to be responsible if it does?

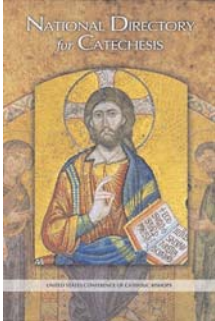
For more information on program safety, visit the VIRTUS web page at www.VIRTUS.org, or call Joyce Donahue, Brian Topping or Paul Mach at the REO at 815-727-6411.

The NDC and Catechesis for Life in Christ

Joyce Donahue

In presenting how faith formation in the United States should be developed to support the third pillar of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the *National Directory for Catechesis* (Chapter 6) recognizes some challenges particular to our secular culture: for example, devaluation of the human individual (p. 160) and ethical relativism (162), both of which present challenges to the rights to life and human dignity. This should not be particularly surprising to any of us.

We are called by the Gospel to be countercultural in an American culture that espouses values not in consonance with the teachings of Jesus. Therefore, the *NDC* suggests, based on the imperatives of the Beatitudes, dioceses and parishes need to provide catechesis on:



- 1.) the right to life
- 2.) the nature of human freedom
- 3.) love for the poor and weak
- 4.) the need for Christian faith to form public policy
- 5.) the need for concern and action on the behalf of the poor, weak, disabled, and sick
- 6.) the need to make moral decisions in light of the Gospel
- 7.) the need to place power, wealth, utility and productivity secondary to moral values.

Do you notice anything about that list? We share basically only three things in common with the so-called "Religious Right" so highly placed in our nation's government: - numbers 1, 4, and 6. The other items on this list challenge the American culture of capitalistic consumerism. If we provide catechesis that provides a balanced and holistic context for all the imperatives of Christian morality, we can help our people express an authentic Catholic Christian voice in the American marketplace. To help in this, we have to help people understand all the pieces to the picture of life in Christ: grace, sin, community and more.

When dealing with the Commandments, the *NDC* gets interesting and extremely specific to the challenges of our culture, from the difficulty of re-catechizing our culture about the nature of Sunday as a day of rest, to helping parents understand the need for their children to be catechized about human sexuality within the context of Christian morality. There are many interesting twists embedded in Chapter 6. For example, under the 8th commandment, where the writers of the *NDC* recognize the difficulty of teaching people to tell the truth in a society where "truth is considered relative and influenced by the bias of the mass media" (181).

In short, the writers of the *NDC* have read the signs of the times for us. It is up to local catechetical leaders to take what is said in the *NDC* and focus it on their particular communities, to illuminate for the people they catechize the ways in which local, regional and national culture makes it difficult to participate fully in the life Christ intended for us.

Members of the High School Peace Builders from St. Jude in New Lenox spent their Spring Break living, socializing, serving, and playing at Su Casa Catholic Worker House



in Chicago. Su Casa is home to Latino families that are transitioning back to independent living (some come from domestic abuse, financial hardship, etc.). The youths cleaned the playground and inside rooms, painted walls, organized the thrift closet and art room, tutored and played with children, and stepped out of their comfort zone to build friendships with the residents - even though some did not speak much English. They took time each day to pray and share their experiences, challenges and faith.

Hurricane Katrina Mission Trips



Would you like to plan a mission trip to aid victims of Hurricane Katrina?

Groups are being sent to Bay St. Louis, Mississippi at Our Lady of the Gulf Parish.

A coordinator there will set you up with sites to work on as well as assist you with housing.

The trip expenses incurred are airfare to Mississippi, van/car rental to and from the airport to the site, and meals such as breakfast and lunch. The coordinators will help you with dinners.

Only high-school Juniors or older are eligible to make the trip.

For more information please email Candy Rice at candyrice@smmp.com



Formation Wheel

VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT PART IV

(Taken from, *Recruiting and Training Volunteer Catechists*, Teresa Smith, Loyola Press and NCCL 1998, reprinted with permission)

Hospitality and Appreciation

To keep volunteer catechists in ministry is truly an art in itself. It requires mountains of time and a heart full of love. At its core, ministry is about relationships. When it comes to the volunteers, this finds expression in hospitality and appreciation.

As a catechetical leader you need not only to model appreciation but encourage others to do the same. Hospitality and appreciation are contagious once they are set in motion among volunteers because volunteers are people who care. They understand the importance of community and support for one another.



Remember in previous issues of *Formation Wheel*, we talked about a volunteer recruitment team; how about having this team be responsible for supporting the volunteers all year long, as well as identifying new volunteers. It could be a sub-committee of the team. Volunteers need and deserve a consistent reminder of their value to the ministry, to the Church. It is well known that the most satisfied volunteers and those who stay in service the longest are those who are recognized for what they do, are thanked often, and are supported by their leaders. In fact it has been noted that if affirmation is not provided there is a high turnover of volunteers from year to year.

Hospitality does not come naturally to all people. Hospitality is the gift of being able to make people feel that their presence with us is important and to accomplish that we create a place where they are comfortable and cared for.

At any gathering the most essential element, next to the actual presence of the people, is hospitality. Ranking higher than the agenda, the food or the speaker, hospitality will speak loudest to those present. By hospitality we mean that wonderful process where those present know they are wanted, needed, and welcomed; and their presence is truly appreciated. We think of Mother Teresa and the hospitality she was able to extend to others no matter where she encountered them, whether the gutters of Calcutta or the White House in America. She spoke frequently of bringing the presence of Christ to the people she met. This too is our call.



Here are a few suggestions for providing hospitality in a ministry setting. As people arrive at a meeting or event, make sure that each person is greeted individually and by name. Be sure to give them your name, and thank them for coming. A sign in sheet can be useful, since it gives people something to do when they arrive. (You can refer to it later to refresh your memory for names) Use name tags, and blame it on your own need. Although people sometimes protest wearing name tags, in the long run these little things are helpful in acquainting the group with each other. Good leading questions include how long have you been in the area and do they know anyone else here. Avoid immediately asking people where they live, what they do for work, or their marital status. Many people feel awkward about reporting personal information. Women can be uncomfortable if you are eager to know where they live and their marital status. Men may think you are fishing for their annual income if you ask about their job. It is best to let the newcomer share this information when they are ready and comfortable. When introducing two people to each other, look for an "icebreaker" to get the conversation flowing. For example: "Jim, this is Matt; he just moved here from downstate."

Hospitality during an activity means that we make a point of calling people by their name. We move among the group and spend a little time with everyone, even if it is in conversations of three or four people at a time. Make eye contact and be pleasant. Hospitality extends toward the guest and doesn't mean we now have an audience to whom we can vent or burden with our problems. We want to involve everyone in the process by watching out for the shy ones and the controlling ones who can distract us from our purpose of graciousness.

(Continued on Page 2)



(Continued from Page 1)

Hospitality at the end of an activity means that we thank people for their presence and their time. We say goodbye by name and assure people that we look forward to seeing them again. Put off cleaning up until everyone has gone, and spend time with those who wish to stay and chat. However, be clear about what time you need to leave and accept help if it is offered to you. Be generous with thank you and affirmations.

Hospitality the day after an activity includes sending a note of thanks to anyone who provided something for the gathering like refreshments, or unlocked the door ahead of time. Make a phone call to your key people.

Refreshments are the glue of volunteer ministry! The presence of food symbolizes nurturing to all of us, and its absence may represent a hint of neglect. Keep it simple. Rotate this aspect of hospitality so everyone will have a chance to nurture the group.

There are hundreds of ways to show hospitality and appreciation to people. One parish has the tradition of having a rose delivered to each new volunteer on the first day of their service in ministry. The note would read something like, "Blessings to you on your first...We're glad you are with us!" It doesn't matter what you choose to do – what matters is that you do something.

Here is a list of some things you might add to your list of ways to give recognition to volunteers:

- ◆ Maintain a coffee bar ◆ Send holiday and birthday cards ◆ Nominate volunteers for awards in the community
 - ◆ Smile ◆ Send newsworthy information to the local press ◆ Praise volunteers to their friends
 - ◆ Promote a volunteer of the month ◆ Say "We missed you" if someone has been absent
 - ◆ Plan a social outing (theatre, sports event, picnic, etc) ◆ Say thank you often
- ◆ Send a thanks card to the volunteer's family ◆ Accommodate personal needs and problems

Burnout

Probably each of us in ministry has had at least one bout with this unpleasant experience of feeling exhausted, overworked, unsupported, and maybe even exploited. Burnout is not just reserved for volunteers. It can also come with paid professional work. More and more we are realizing burnout is not so much a result of fatigue or repetition but it is what happens to us when we are not supported in the tasks we are undertaking. Especially where we are looking for some affirmation about our skills, knowledge or general worth; without support and appreciation it is easy to feel angry, resentful and very tired.

The cure for burnout is not necessarily rest and a break, although this seems to be the most obvious solution. The effective treatment is more likely being told we matter, that our work is appreciated and have someone offer us their help.

Conclusion

We must be careful not to interpret the care and nurturing of volunteers as the main focus of ministry. It is not the focus of catechetical ministry. What we need to know well, though, is that in order for volunteers to remain enthusiastic and a viable part of the catechetical ministry, sufficient time, resources, and attention need to be planned into our ministry initiatives from the start. Otherwise, too much time will be spent dealing with crabby and burned out volunteers.

In closing, remember to celebrate and pray in thanksgiving for all your volunteers and other successes.

In your opinion, what is the strongest feature of your volunteer ministry? Hospitality? Appreciation? Recognition? What makes you choose the one you did? In your opinion, which area of your volunteer ministry needs the most re-evaluation and reworking? Why?

There Is A Heaven For Volunteers

**Many will be shocked to find
When the day of judgment nears,
There's a special place in heaven
Set aside for volunteers:
Furnished with big recliners,
Satin couches and footstools.
Where there's no committee chairperson,
No group leaders, no car pools;
No eager team that needs a coach,
No bazaar and no bake sale.
There will be nothing to staple,
Not one thing to fold or mail.
Telephone lists will be outlawed,
But a finger snap will bring
Cool drinks and gourmet dinners
And rare treats for a queen or a king.
Who'll serve those privileged few
And work for all they're worth?
Why – all those who reaped the benefits
And not once volunteered on Earth!**

- Author Unknown



PLANNING A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY

Brian D. Topping



And . . . Action! Now that strategic planning has assessed your current ministry, identified your purpose, clarified your organizational mission and values, and examined the internal and external environments in which you minister, it is time for action! But we have to plan for that...

Step #5 in Strategic Planning – set strategic goals. So, you have a bunch of information. What do you do with it? Before you can plan to take action, it is important to know what you want to take action about. Strategic goals are broad goals that require other, smaller steps to be taken in order for them to be achieved. They also support the essential purpose, mission, and vision of the organization or the ministry. In a ministry application, an example of a strategic goal might be to create and empower a retreat team. Examples of how you do that follow below. Keep in mind that the average ministry may work on a few different strategic goals at a time. But be careful not to try to do too much at once! Reading the example in step six may help before you identify your strategic goals.

One last word of advice on strategic goals: set a timeframe for your strategic goal that is realistic and takes into account current trends. What is the “shelf life” of your strategic goal, once accomplished? Will it last forever, or need to be redone again in some form or another? For example, planning a trip to international World Youth Day might be a strategic goal. But, it will need to be redone every two to three years as the event repeats itself.

Step #6 in Strategic Planning - action planning. Action plans describe how the organization or ministry’s mission and vision will be lived out in a practical way. Starting with each strategic goal, they outline the steps involved in reaching that strategic goal. Here are the steps to action planning:

- ▷ List each strategic goal separately.
- ▷ List in sequential order the steps that will need to happen for that strategic goal to be met. Each of those steps is known as an objective.
- ▷ For each objective, indicate who is responsible for making it happen, what their role will be, and what resources will be required in order to accomplish the objective.
- ▷ Once your action plan is written for a specific strategic goal, communicate that plan with those involved in making it happen. Make sure they understand what their role is in the overall action plan.
- ▷ An example of action planning follows, with the strategic goal and objectives identified, plus the first objective planned out in action steps.

Strategic Goal: Create and empower a retreat team

- Objective: Identify roles needing to be fulfilled
 - o Name tasks of team related to retreat; (date due); person responsible)
 - o Divide those duties into like categories; (date due); (person responsible)
 - o Break categories into smaller, more manageable roles; (date due); (person responsible)
 - o Assign skills ideal to each role; (date due); (person responsible)
- Objective: Identify people with the skills necessary to fulfill those roles
- Objective: Invite those people to participate on the retreat team
- Objective: Train new retreat team members
- Objective: Communicate this action plan to those supporting or leading the retreat
- Objective: Plan the retreat
- Objective: Give the retreat
- Objective: Evaluate the retreat experience



The next issue of Leaven will examine the last two steps of the strategic planning process.

