

From the Deacon's Desk

Catechetical Sunday:

Next weekend the whole Church will celebrate Catechetical Sunday on September 17 and will focus on the theme "Living as Missionary Disciples." Those who the Community has designated to serve as catechists will be called forth to be commissioned for their ministry. Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that each person plays, by virtue of Baptism, in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. Catechetical Sunday is an opportunity for all to recognize that God calls us and pursues us down the byways of our life, and that God is shining forth in all the events of our lives, both big moments and small ones.

The word catechesis means to "Echo God's Word" and a catechist is the voice of God being spoken right here and right now. God lives in the present moment, so a catechist isn't speaking a word from ages past, but they are speaking the very same word that God speaks NOW. That is what an "echo" is. To "Echo God's Word" is to give voice to the Word of God that is being spoken right here and right now. They speak a Word filled with power—power to inspire, power to transform, power to free, and power leading to conversion.

Often catechists themselves do not realize the majesty of their ministry. Yet the whole Church believes, at least in theory, that it is through catechetical words that God's Word reaches into the hearts and minds of adults, youth, and children, and calls them to lives of justice and love. Catechesis calls forth faith, and catechesis changes people's lives. It is not their own speech that causes transformation, but God's Word spoken through them.

Living the Eucharist: October 9 through November 13

After last year's Alpha Program, parishioners were asking what was next. As a way to pick up where Alpha left off, every year we will try to promote an Alpha 201 type of program and focus on something specifically Catholic for Catholics.

We will also do Alpha again beginning in Lent 2018 for those who did not participate in Alpha last year, and the Whole Community Catechesis program once a month is also a great way to continue on in your spiritual journey into adult Catholicism.

Living the Eucharist will occur on the following Mondays: October 9, October 16, October 23, October 30, November 6, and November 13. All sessions will begin with a pot luck at 6 pm (bring a dish to pass) and the presentation and group discussions will be from 6:30 until approximately 7:30/8:00 pm. The three primary presenters will be Fr. Fred, Joe Frankenfield, and Jerry Green. The topics are as follows: Topic 1 – Why Do We Gather for Sunday Eucharist? Topic 2 – Who's at the Table? Topic 3 – What Happens at Sunday Mass? Topic 4 – The Dynamic Role of the Holy Spirit. Topic 5 – How Do I Respond? Topic 6 – What Changes?

Living the Eucharist is a dynamic, parish-based program designed to help revitalize parish life and mission through a more profound experience of Sunday Mass. It helps the entire parish—adults, teens, and families—grow in their Catholic faith and live more fully as missionary disciples of Jesus.

We Catholics are always in need to renew our experience of the Sacrament of the Eucharist as a mystery to be **believed**, a mystery to be **celebrated**, and a mystery to be **lived**.

Living the Eucharist renews and heightens parishioner involvement in the Sunday Eucharist, helps parishioners connect the celebration of the Eucharist more closely with the mission of Jesus Christ and the Church, and inspires them to live more intentionally as missionary disciples of Jesus during the week.

Living the Eucharist will have a format similar to the Alpha program and have a meal, followed by a presentation and group discussion. **There are many goals in Living the Eucharist program:**

- Learn about the true meaning of the Mass.
- Better understand the rituals and symbols of the Eucharist.
- Discover new ways to make the Sunday Mass come alive during the week.
- Grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ together with your fellow parishioners.

Since we will once again provide free meals for both Alpha 2018 and Whole Community Catechesis, we are asking that those who want to participate in Living the Eucharist bring a dish to pass.

Children's Church:

The Church recognizes that young children have special needs when celebrating the Liturgy. Our parish offers Children's Liturgy of the Word (called Children's Church) during the 9:30 a.m. Mass, and for the most part, Carol Gall is the only person who leads the children's reflection. Carol has asked that there be other catechists to help her share this ministry. Rather than Carol do it every week, she'd like to do it twice a month, with one or two people being responsible for the other weeks.

During Children's Church, the kids leave the assembly to hear and pray the Gospel in age-appropriate ways. They then return to their families to continue the Liturgy of the Eucharist. If you'd like more information on what is required, please see Carol or Jerry.

October is Respect Life Month:

We are called to uphold the dignity of life from the moment of conception to natural death. This includes respect for the unborn, the disabled, the elderly, the prisoner, the poor, the post abortive and the vulnerable.

On Sunday, October 1 at 5:30 pm, Bishop Cistone will celebrate a Respect Life Mass at the Cathedral of Mary the Assumption. All are welcome.

The Bishop will also celebrate a special **Mass of Remembrance for the Unborn** ("Let the Little Children Come to Me") **with a candle lighting to honor all babies who have died in their mother's womb.** Parents and families grieving the loss of an unborn child, whether very recent or many years ago, are encouraged to attend. The Mass will be held at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Midland on October 19 at 7 pm.

Other events which promote Respect Life Month include the **Rachel's Vineyard Weekend Retreat** for those trying to heal from an abortion, November 10 through 12, 2017, and a **Physician Assisted Suicide Seminar** on October 25 from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Center for Ministry.

For more information on any of these events, please contact the parish office.