

From the Deacon's Desk

Eucharistic Minister & Lector Meetings:

Just a reminder that I am having a make-up for both the Eucharistic Minister and Lector workshop we conducted a few weeks ago. If you've noticed, we have made some slight changes to our procedures for both ministers, and I need to review that with you all.

The Eucharistic Minister make-up is this Sunday in church after the 9:30 am Mass, and the Lector make-up is in church after the 9:30 am Mass on Sunday January 28.

Please make time in your schedules for these important informational meetings.

Art & Environment Committee Meeting:

The Art & Environment Committee is meeting after Mass on Sunday January 21 in the hall. We will be planning for both the Lenten and Easter Seasons.

Alpha Team Meeting:

On Monday, January 22 at 7:00 pm in the St. Vincent hall there is an Alpha Team planning meeting for anyone interested in helping with Alpha this year. I'm in need of small group facilitators and behind the scenes folks to get things ready. Lent is coming soon and we want to start running Alpha by the end of February.

If you enjoyed being a participant in last year's Alpha Program, please consider stepping forward to help run the program for others this year. More help the better!

Alpha is for meeting Jesus: (Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, Archbishop of Vienna Austria)

Have you thought much about your relationship with Jesus? What's in a relationship? Imagine a couple on a first date, where the young man lays down rules of dating—don't date anyone else, don't drive after dark and please wear your hair down. Hmm...wonder if there would be a second date! Yet perhaps several months and maybe a proposal later, the young man makes the same requests, and this time they are met with a much different response. The young lady is happy to comply because now there is an intimate love relationship.

The same is true of our relationship with Jesus and the Church. Some might come into the Church and only see ritual and rules. But when we have come to know Jesus, the things we used to view as rules are now things to do out of love. The love of a Person makes us think differently. Alpha is a wonderful way to introduce folks to that relationship with Jesus so we no longer see the rituals and rules but we see Jesus.

Can you love a pet cat you never had? Can you love salmon if you have never tasted it? The human mind is divided into intellect and will, and when we experience something new, our intellect acts first. It seeks to understand and know the object, experience, or person.

Sometimes we use the word *love* to express a judgment we have made, as when we say, "I love French fries," which means "I choose French fries because I enjoy how they taste. Similarly, if we meet a person whom our intellect judges as good, then our will chooses that person as a potential friend or one worth loving. Our will seeks what our intellect judges as good.

Knowledge comes before love. That's why we can't love a cat we never knew, or the taste of salmon we have never eaten. That is why there is no such thing as love at first sight. We can feel attraction at first sight, but we cannot love at first sight, because our intellect has to get to know someone well before our will can make that deep, intimate choice to love that person. To really come to love someone, then, requires that we come to know that person.

Alpha is an opportunity for us to get to know intimately who this Jesus is, and once our intellect experiences this God in Jesus first hand, then and only then can we fall in love with God. As Cardinal Schönborn so simply put, Alpha is for meeting (and falling in love) with Jesus!

Confirmation Update:

Bishop Cistone will be coming to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation with us on Wednesday, April 11, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. in our church. We will be joined by Nativity of the Lord Parish and St. Paul the Apostle Parish. Our rehearsal and retreat for Confirmation Families will occur a week or two before. Look for more information from Mary Moomey.