

From the Deacon's Desk

CSA:

Our Catholic Services Appeal will begin this weekend. You should have received a packet from the diocese in the mail. If you didn't receive one, there are pledge envelopes at each entry. At each Mass this weekend we will listen to a brief talk by a member of the Finance Council.

Funds collected from the C.S.A. provide for many valuable ministries and programs. Who benefits from the C.S.A.? Let me share just a few examples. The C.S.A. subsidizes the education of future priests, deacons, and lay ministers for the Church through Seminaries and the Center for Ministry. The C.S.A. helps the needy and provides for outreach and evangelization. The C.S.A. aids Catholic education, R.C.I.A., and youth ministries. The C.S.A. funds diocesan offices that serve as a resource for the parishes. If you or a loved one have ever gotten a marriage annulment, the costs were covered by the C.S.A.

The Catholic Services Appeal does so much, and the diocese provides ministries and programs that are beyond the means of parishes. I have been asked if C.S.A. dollars go toward lawyer and legal fees in clergy criminal investigations, and the answer is NO. Anyone, clergy or otherwise, who is charged with a crime is responsible for their own legal costs.

Every dollar that we raise above the target returns to our parish and we can use them to develop our future evangelization, whole community catechesis and youth ministry programs. Please be generous to the Catholic Services Appeal this year. Your annual pledge or gift is a blessing to the diocese, its parishes, and its people!

Alpha this Monday Topics:

- Does God Heal Today and what does this healing look like?
- What about the Church and how do we bring the Good News into our daily lives for others?

2018 Graduates:

All of those in the Parish who are graduating from high school or college this year are invited to join for a special Baccalaureate Mass on Sunday June 10th. Please call the office or talk to Mary Moomey and let us know who you are, so we can send you a special invitation and recognize you in our parish bulletin.

Whole Community Catechesis:

This Sunday is our last Whole Community Catechesis session for the school year. Our topic for discussion will be Eucharist & Sending Forth. As we gather each Sunday as a Eucharistic people, we are called to be a grateful people, and we are sent from Eucharist each Sunday with a mission. Our mission is the same as the mission of Jesus: To build the kingdom of God with our daily words and actions. We will discuss practical ideas of how to accomplish that in our ordinary lives.

Years ago we thought that church membership and discipleship simply had to do with our private, individual relationships with God. Today we realize that our call to be disciples has to do with God and us individually, and then **EVERYONE ELSE WE MEET!** The word that you and I will be hearing for the rest of our lives is “Evangelization.” Evangelization means moving from being *maintenance* parishes (just doing the same old thing for those who walk through our doors and come to us), to *mission* parishes, which means finding ways to invite non-believers and non-Catholics to join us. Statistically, about 70% of Catholics do not practice their Catholic faith on a regular basis. Can you imagine what we could accomplish in Jesus’ name if we somehow brought in those marginalized Catholics from the fringes of our society and culture?

The Catholic Church has been called the “Sleeping Giant” of evangelization, and that means if each and every one of us would take seriously the need to spread our faith, we could set the world on fire with the Good News of Jesus Christ, just like the first Christians did. It’s no longer just the work of the priests, sisters, and bishops. Part of the problem is the new culture we find ourselves in. Whereas in years gone by, the culture helped spread the basics of Jewish-Christian faith, simply by how the culture operated. The culture supported religious values in the neighborhoods, on TV, through extended families, and even in public schools. Today the Church is left on its own. For whatever reasons, many Catholics or would-be believers have even compartmentalized God, or see God as nonexistent or irrelevant to everyday life.

We have always done a wonderful job at welcoming people who walk through the doors of our churches, but what about the people who don’t come to us? What about those who don’t walk through our doors, and how will they ever get to know Jesus if we don’t go out to meet them? Instead, we wait for them to come to us? Jesus and the early Christians *went out into the world* to “save people.” How are we doing that? Someone once said, Catholic Evangelization isn’t about bringing people into our churches, but it’s about getting Catholic’s *out of church into the world* with the message of the Good News. Join us this Sunday as we talk about possible ways to be disciples and evangelize.