Practices and Approaches for Designing Faith Formation for Today's Adults

Archdiocese of Chicago
April 13, 2021

Our Focus for Today

- Some Principles to Undergird Adult Faith Formation
- Some General Practices/Methods
- Some Specific Practices/Methods for each of the Seasons of Adulthood

(1st) Three Types of Programming

- Gathered
- Online
- Blended

(2nd) **Shift from Teaching to Equipping**

Where do you experience/find God?

(3rd) Many Approaches

- Presentations
- Scripture Study
- Book groups
- Support groups
- Service
- Blended learning
- Retreats
- Courses
- Small faith-sharing groups
- Online activities
- Apps
- Independent Learning
- Mission Trips
- Sacramental Preparation and Mystagogy
- Parent-Grandparent Programs
- Milestone Experiences

(3rd) Many Methods and Activities

- Quiet/reflection
- Input
- Sharing and conversations
- Story-telling
- Music
- Art, drama, poetry, literature
- Images
- Prayer
- Activity
- Discussion, reflection and decision-making about what this is going to mean when I go home

(4th) Does one size fit all?

- A century ago:
  - mass production

- Today:
  - mass customization

What does this mean for AFF?

"one size fits all"

What does this mean for AFF?

"one size fits all"

"Corned beef and hash for everyone…
We don't care what you need,
this is what you get because this is
what we've got"

"A product for everyone
rarely
reaches anyone."

– Seth Godin
in *Small Is the New Big*

(5th) Seasons of Adulthood

Young Adults

20s-30s

Midlife Adults

40s-
mid 50s

Mature Adults

mid 50s-
mid 70s

Older Adults

75+

Life Issues

1. Physical & Cognitive Changes
2. Developmental Tasks
3. Family Life Cycle
4. Faith Development
5. Spiritual-Religious Identities
6. Generational Characteristics

Traditionalists
(Born before 1945)

- 12% of the workforce
- Value hard work
- Expect work to be done in the office and measured in hours
- Comfortable with traditional workplace hierarchy
- Value respect for authority

Baby Boomers
(1946-1964)

- Peaked at 79 million in 1999
- Individualistic and optimistic
- Value engagement
- Expect advancement and positive interaction
- Want to be respected and appreciated

Generation X
(1965-1980)

- Smaller than Baby Boomer and Millennial generations
- Pragmatic and skeptical
- Tend to be disengaged
- Want work-life balance
- Chafe under the rules

Millennials
(1981-1995)

- 75% of workforce by 2025
- Enthusiastic and self-confident
- Want to be recognized for achievements
- Value innovation
- First tech natives
- Struggle to work with people who don't seem as smart or socially conscious as they are

WIIFM?
What's In It For Me

Some General Approaches

Create a digital platform

Adult Faith Formation

The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation

A Network of Adult Faith Formation
Experiences, Programs, Activities, & Resources

Adult Faith Formation

1. Adult Living
2. Discovering Faith
3. Faith Enrichment
4. Scripture
5. Seasons of the Year
6. Service
7. Spiritual Life
8. Sunday Worship

Playlists of Content & Experiences

Adult Living

Find resources for being a Caregiver and an invitation for joining our Caregiver Support Group.

Discover faith forming activities for grandparents to do with their grandchildren.

Discover Faith

Discover Jesus and the Christian faith with two of our invitational experiences:

1. Basics of Christianity - explore the video series on your own; join a Basics small group experience
2. Explore the Christian Faith through the ten-session Alpha Course with a small group of inquirers

Faith Enrichment

Grow deeper in your Christian faith with one or more of our offerings:

1. A Yearlong Journey into the Christian faith - a 10 session program, monthly at church
2. Living the Spirit-Filled Life Course
3. Practice Makes a Christian - a small group study program
4. Practicing Our Faith - a self-study or group-study for growing in the practice of the Christian faith
5. Sacraments 101 - a video-based introduction or refresher on the Catholic sacraments

Scripture

The focus for each season of Scripture Enrichment is one Gospel - Matthew, Mark, or Luke. We are offering a variety of ways for you to study and read the Gospels:

1. Participate in the Gospel Presentation Series
2. Participate in a Small Group Gospel Bible Study
3. Explore the Gospel On-Your-Own
4. Take an Online Course
5. Develop a Gospel Study Plan using a Bible App
6. Discover Online Devotions and Bible Studies

Seasons

Deepen your understanding and celebration of the seasons of year at home during Advent-Christmas, and Lent.

Deepen your understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus as presented in the four Gospels in preparation for Holy Week.

1. Participate in a Four-Session Presentation Series at Church
2. Watch the Four Video Presentations on Your Own or with a Small Group
3. Participate in a Six-Week Small Group Scripture Study
4. Study the Death and Resurrection of Jesus of On-Your-Own

Service & Mission

The Focus for the year is *Poverty in our Community & Country*. Get involved with an action project and learn more about poverty.

Action:

1. Build a Home
2. Participate in "Serve the Community" Day
3. Support the Education of Children
4. Assemble Promise Packs for Refugees

Learn:

1. Explore the Christian practice of transforming the world
2. Explore poverty in the U.S.
3. Explore stories of poverty in the U.S.
4. See who's poor in the U.S.

Spiritual Life

Develop your spiritual life through a variety of spiritual enrichment experiences:

1. Participate in our five-session Spiritual Practices Course
2. Join a Book Study for Spring: *Falling Upward* by Richard Rohr
3. Explore Prayer Practices - experience a variety of ways to pray with these online resources
4. Take Time for Daily Devotion - select a daily prayer resources from the variety of online daily devotions
5. Take an Online Course or Make a Retreat with a Spiritual Master
6. Make an Online Retreat using the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises

Sunday Worship

Bring Sunday worship home with you and make it a seven-day experience:

1. Read the Daily Scriptures & Watch a Video Reflection
2. Watch a Video Reflection on the Sunday Readings
3. Reflect on the Sunday Readings with Lectio Divina
4. Learn More About the Sunday Scripture Readings
5. Live Sunday All Week @Home

Spiritual Enrichment

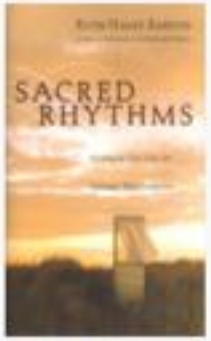
Spiritual Practices for Living

a five session weekly program at church - presented by five experts

1. Prayer Styles & Traditions
2. Fixed-Hour Prayer
3. Contemplation & Meditation
4. Spiritual Reading & Praying with Art and Music
5. Sabbath

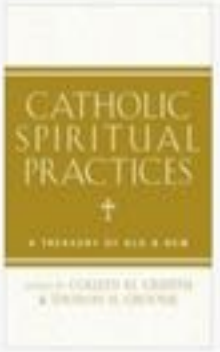
Register for the Program

Watch Each Presentation Online



Course Book - Select One

- *Catholic Spiritual Practices: A Treasury of Old & New.* Colleen M. Griffith and Thomas H. Groome, editors (Paraclete, 2012)
- *Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation.* Ruth Haley Barton. (InterVarsity Press, 2010)



Living the Spiritual Practices

resources for continuing growth

The following articles and activities provide helpful tools for deepening your understanding of the Spiritual Practices in our course, and in integrating them into your daily life. And be sure to check out the prayer activities on this web page.

The Practice of Forgiving.pdf
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The Practice of Praying.pdf
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The Practice of Discernment.pdf
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The Practice of Keeping Sabbath.pdf
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The Practice of Reading the Bible.pdf
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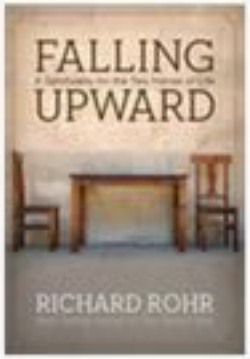
Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life

By Richard Rohr

book study groups

In *Falling Upward*, Fr. Richard Rohr seeks to help readers understand the tasks of the two halves of life and to show them that those who have fallen, failed, or "gone down" are the only ones who understand "up." Most of us tend to think of the second half of life as largely about getting old, dealing with health issues, and letting go of life, but the whole thesis of this book is exactly the opposite. What looks like falling down can largely be experienced as "falling upward." In fact, it is not a loss but somehow actually a gain, as we have all seen with elders who have come to their fullness. He explains why the second half of life can and should be full of spiritual richness, and offers a new view of how spiritual growth happens. This important book explores the counterintuitive message that we grow spiritually much more by doing wrong than by doing right.



Book Group at Church

Host Your Own Group

Book Group Online

Falling Upward Book Excerpt.pdf
Download File

Falling Upward Video Introduction

Explore a Prayer Practice

experience a prayer practice - just click on the title

Contemplative Prayer

Maybe you're not the memorized prayer type of person, nor do you like to be confined to a scripture reading or a devotional book. Not to worry, there are many ways to pray and this one only takes your presence and attention. For those who have plenty of excuses for not praying but genuinely want to know God's presence, contemplative prayer may be something to try.

Centering Prayer

Prayer is a very personal experience of being with God. Each person finds different meaningful ways to pray. Centering Prayer is a style of meditative prayer that many people find significant while others find the long silence boring. The only way you'll find out if it helps you connect with your deepest spiritual yearnings is to try it.

Guided Meditation

The Psalms are wonderful prayers that can be used to communicate to God our desires, and for God to communicate in return. Using the guidance of voice, relax your body and mind and open your soul in prayer.

Other 6

Ignatius of Loyola, the 16th-century founder of the Jesuits, devised an "examination of consciousness"—a prayerful review of the day intended to help people recognize where they were finding, or needing to find, God in their lives. **Other6** takes the essence of this centuries-old practice of the Examen and adapts it for today's Internet-driven world by posing two questions: Where have you found God today? and Where do you need to find God today?

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is Latin for "Holy Reading." It is a style of prayer in which you take a scripture passage and read it slowly, pondering the words and letting them sink into your soul leading to insight or action.

Liturgy of the Hours (Fixed Hour Prayer)

Praying the "Liturgy of the Hours" (also known as The Divine Office) is a long standing monastic tradition, but you don't have to be a monk to enter into the spirit of this form of prayer. Learn how a busy family person can adapt this practice of praying throughout

Take Time for Daily Devotion

find a daily devotion that works for you - just click on the title

3-Minute Retreat
Loyola Press's highly popular 3-Minute Retreat is available via newsletter and app for the iPhone® and iPod touch® and the iPad. Each day, a new retreat features soothing music, Scripture verses, and reflective thoughts and questions. Meaningful time with God is always just a touch away. (Download the App.)

Daily Meditation & Reflection from Henri Nouwen
Drawn from a wide range of Henri Nouwen's writing, these short meditations inspire and guide people's mind and heart. Each reflection takes less than a minute to read and yet can set the tone for the day. It is sent via email in the early morning. **Sign up on the website to receive *Bread for the Journey*.**

Daily Prayer: JesuitPrayer.org
Daily prayer is essential for nourishing our relationship with Christ. We become ever more mindful of God's presence in all facets of our lives. Through the daily Scripture, Reflection, and Prayer, JesuitPrayer.org helps people be fortified in God's faithfulness and his invitation to move through your day in a spirit of service to others. The prayer experience is provided every day of the week, with reflections rooted in Ignatian spirituality.

God Pauses
God Pause e-mail devotions are short, meaningful reflections on the following Sunday's lessons and gospel delivered directly to your e-mail box. By Sunday, you'll be ready for an extra meaningful worship experience.

Liturgy of the Hours - Divine Office App
Listen and pray the Liturgy of the Hours on the go. The Divine Office App is an opportunity for you to participate in the recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours, an ancient and meditative collection of psalms, hymns and scripture that represent the public prayer of the Christian community. Also available are three Lite apps: Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, and Night Prayer.

Sacred Space Daily Reflection
Sacred Space ordinarily follows the scripture sequence of the Revised Common Lectionary. Longer reflections on the daily scripture readings are presented for Sundays,

Take a Course with a Spiritual Guide

from SpiritualityandPractice.com

Wisdom for Living: The Parables of Jesus

By Thomas Keating, Contemplative Outreach

An exploration of the wise and revolutionary teachings of Jesus through the lens of the parables.

Ways to Pray from Around the World

By Maggie Oman Shannon

How to incorporate 12 creative spiritual practices from different cultures and religious traditions into your prayer life.

Centering Prayer

By Cynthia Bourgeault

Teachings about a no-frills form of meditation which reconnects directly to Christianity's hidden treasury of mystical wisdom.

Make a Retreat - Online

Creighton University Online Retreat

This is a retreat designed for people too busy to make a traditional retreat. People can experience a relationship with God coming alive in the midst of everyday life. A simple Guide each week places themes, reflections, questions and desires into the background of our busy lives. We learn to find greater focus and to let one week build upon another. Begin any time, but if a person begins the week of September 19th, the retreat fits with the Liturgical Year. People can make the retreat alone, with a spiritual director, or form a group to make the retreat together.

Focus on a specific theme

Welcome to a *Life Worth Living*

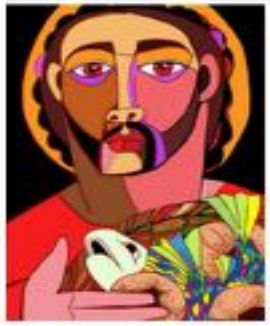
A Community-Wide Yearlong Faith Formation Experience

Gratitude

September

Description

LEARN MORE



Generosity

October

Description

LEARN MORE

Service

November

Description

LEARN MORE

Peace

December

Description

LEARN MORE

September - A Month of Gratitude

The spiritual practice of gratitude has been called a state of mind and a way of life. But we prefer to think of it as a grammar — an underlying structure that helps us construct and make sense out of our lives. The rules of this grammar cover all our activities. Its syntax reveals a system of relationships linking us to the divine and to every other part of the creation.

To learn the grammar of gratitude, practice saying "thank you" for happy and challenging experiences, for people, animals, things, art, memories, dreams. Count your blessings, and praise God. Utter blessings, and express your appreciation to everything and everyone you encounter. By blessing, we are blessed.

Learn

Want to be Happy? Be Grateful.

The one thing all humans have in common is that each of us wants to be happy, says Brother David Steindl-Rast, a monk and interfaith scholar. And happiness, he suggests, is born from gratitude. An inspiring lesson in slowing down, looking where you're going, and above all, being grateful. Go to TED to learn more and read the transcript.

For a podcast of Br. David's interview with Krista Tippet about Gratefulness go to:
On Being with Krista Tippet.

Gratitude: Living Life as Gift

Br. Curtis Almquist of the Society of St. John the Evangelist describes the gift of gratitude and how to practice gratitude. Go to the SSJE website to learn more.

Pray

Gratitude Prayer for the Month

Gracious God, in the busyness of my day, I sometimes forget to stop to thank You for all that is good in my life. My blessings are many and my heart is filled with gratefulness for the gift of living, for the ability to love and be loved, for the opportunity to see the everyday wonders of creation, for sheep and water, for a mind that thinks and a body that feels. I thank you, too, for those things in my life that are less than I would hope them to be. Things that seem challenging, unfair, or difficult. When my heart feels stretched and empty and pools of tears form in my weary eyes, still I rejoice that you are as near to me as my next breath and that in the midst of turbulence, I am growing and learning. In the silence of my soul, I thank you most of all for your unconditional and eternal love. Amen.

Psalms on Gratitude

Read and Reflect on the Psalm each week. (Just click on the title for the Psalm.)

Week 1 - Psalm 65 and Psalm 100
Week 2 - Psalm 103
Week 3 - Psalm 104
Week 4 - Psalm 107

Read, Listen, & Watch

Articles

- **Read "Two Words That Will Change Your Life" by Eric Ostmeier to learn how gratitude begets humility which begets God's grace.**

Book

This moving book stirs gratitude for the blessing of life and the everyday wonder and beauty of nature. It was inspired by the short film *Gratitude*, a viral-video sensation by acclaimed filmmaker Louie Schwartzberg recently featured on Oprah's *Super Soul Sunday*. The book and film pair one of today's most uplifting poems—the Internet phenomenon "A Good Day," written by revered spiritual leader Brother David Steindl-Rast—with stunning images by Schwartzberg. This inspirational package includes not just the book but a DVD with two short films by Schwartzberg (including *Gratitude*) and Brother David's own *A Good Day* video. The last page has a link to the "A Good Day" audio track, which you can use to create your own video or slide show on what you are grateful for.

- Purchase at Amazon.com.

Live

Basic, Daily Gratefulness Practice

If, each day, we could engage in a "basic daily gratefulness practice," it would be enough to positively impact our lives and the world around us. Just because a practice is simple does not mean it has simple results. Even though you might choose to try this practice in a more formal way at the same time each day, it can be done anytime, anywhere, and as often as you want. Go to Gratefulness.org for to experience the practice.

Gratitude through the Day

Gratitude, like any other spiritual practice, is something we *do*, not just something we *feel*. And it's something we need to practice. To practice gratitude, we don't need a special cushion on which to sit, nor a special lamp to light, nor a special icon on which to gaze, nor special incense to smell, nor special prayer beads to finger, nor a special prayer or mantra to recite. (None of that is in any way bad or inappropriate. It may well help. It is simply not enough.)

What is enough is here and now. The Psalmist reminds us, "This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps 118: 24). Gratitude consecrates our life and makes us real, because it makes us really available to the real presence of Christ, who is at work within us and around us – now. We hope you'll try out these four simple invitations and see how they change your day.

6 am - Pray Your Gratitude
Noon - Keep Your Eyes Open
6 pm - Express Your Gratitude
9 pm - Savor Your Life

Go to Gratitude through the Day online.

Focus on a specific theme

Discipleship: The Saints

August to Advent

- Intergenerational Event: *Saints By Our Side*
- Bible Study: Jonah & Ruth *(Six Weeks with the Bible)*
- Book Groups (English): *My Life with the Saints*
- Book Groups (Spanish and English): *Saints of the Americas/Santos Americanos*
- Group Discussion: Communion of Saints *(Catholic Update)*
- Youth Discussion: Teen Saints in Times Past *(Youth Update)*
- Morning of Reflection: Praying with the Saints
- Meeting Prayers: Saint's Prayer/Discipleship Reflection Question
- Film Discussion: *A Man for All Seasons*
- Field Trip: Tour of a church named after a Saint
- On website: *Saint of the Day* Podcasts through I-Tunes

Discipleship: Mary, Our Model

(January 1 – Pentecost)

- Intergenerational: Mary: The "Yes" That Changed the World
- Scripture Study: Being Disciples of Jesus *(Six Weeks with the Bible)*
- Book Group: *Mary's Journey* (Fr. Lou Cameli)
- Group Discussion: In Search of the Real Mary *(Catholic Update)*
- Youth Discussion: On Mary: Truths and Connections *(Youth Update)*
- Morning of Reflection: Mary's Journey of Discipleship
- Meeting Prayers: Marian Prayer/Discipleship Reflection Question
- Film Discussion: *The Nativity* (1952) to *The Nativity* (2006): Visions of Mary in Film
- Field Trip: Walk in a local garden or woods with Marian readings and reflection questions

Seasons of Adulthood

Young Adults

20s-30s

Midlife Adults

40s-
mid 50s

Mature Adults

mid 50s-
mid 70s

Older Adults

75+

Some over-arching principles

A few general approaches

Did they remind you of something you're doing?

Did they spark an idea of something you could do?

Seasons of Adulthood

Young Adults

20s-30s

Midlife Adults

40s-
mid 50s

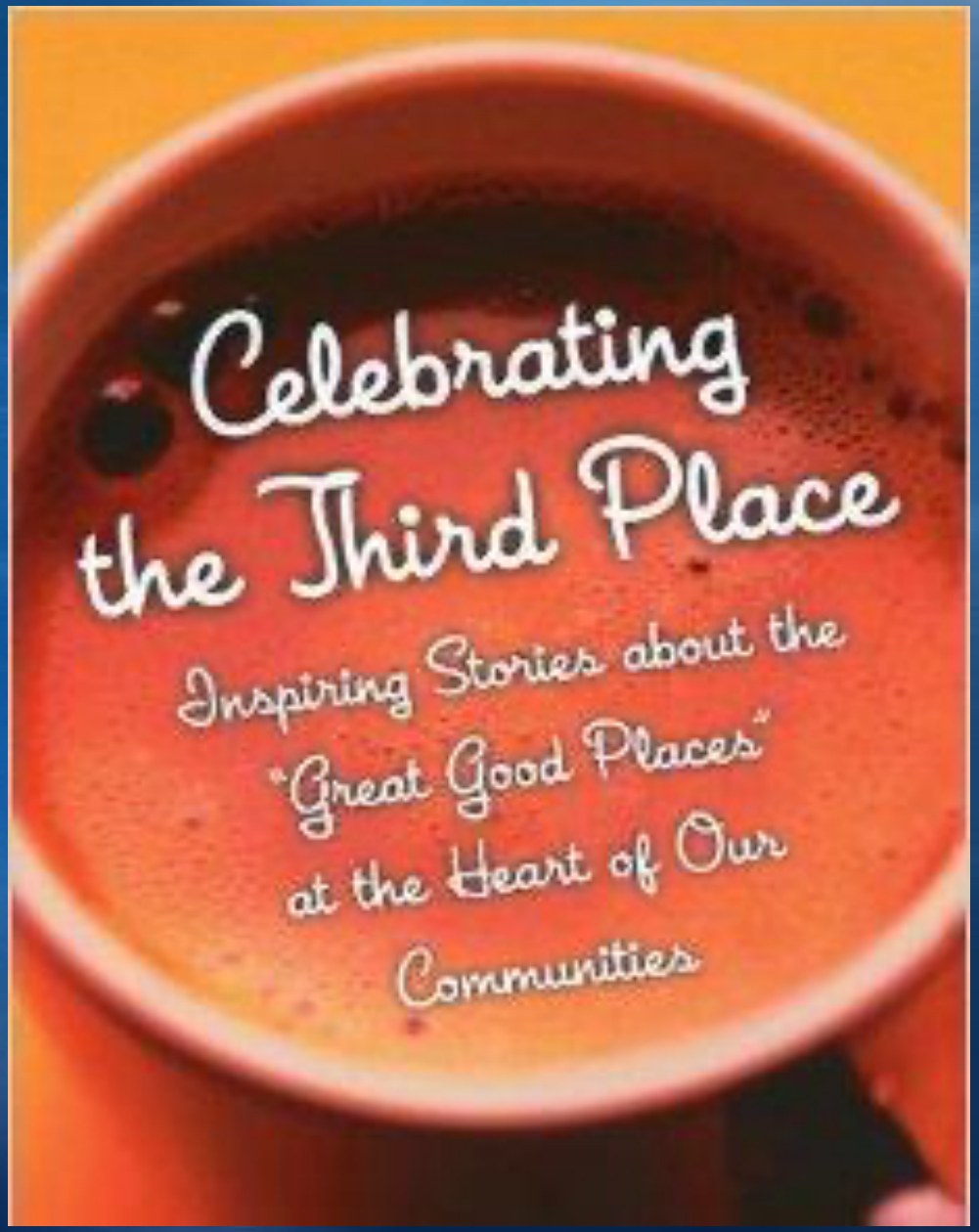
Mature Adults

mid 50s-
mid 70s

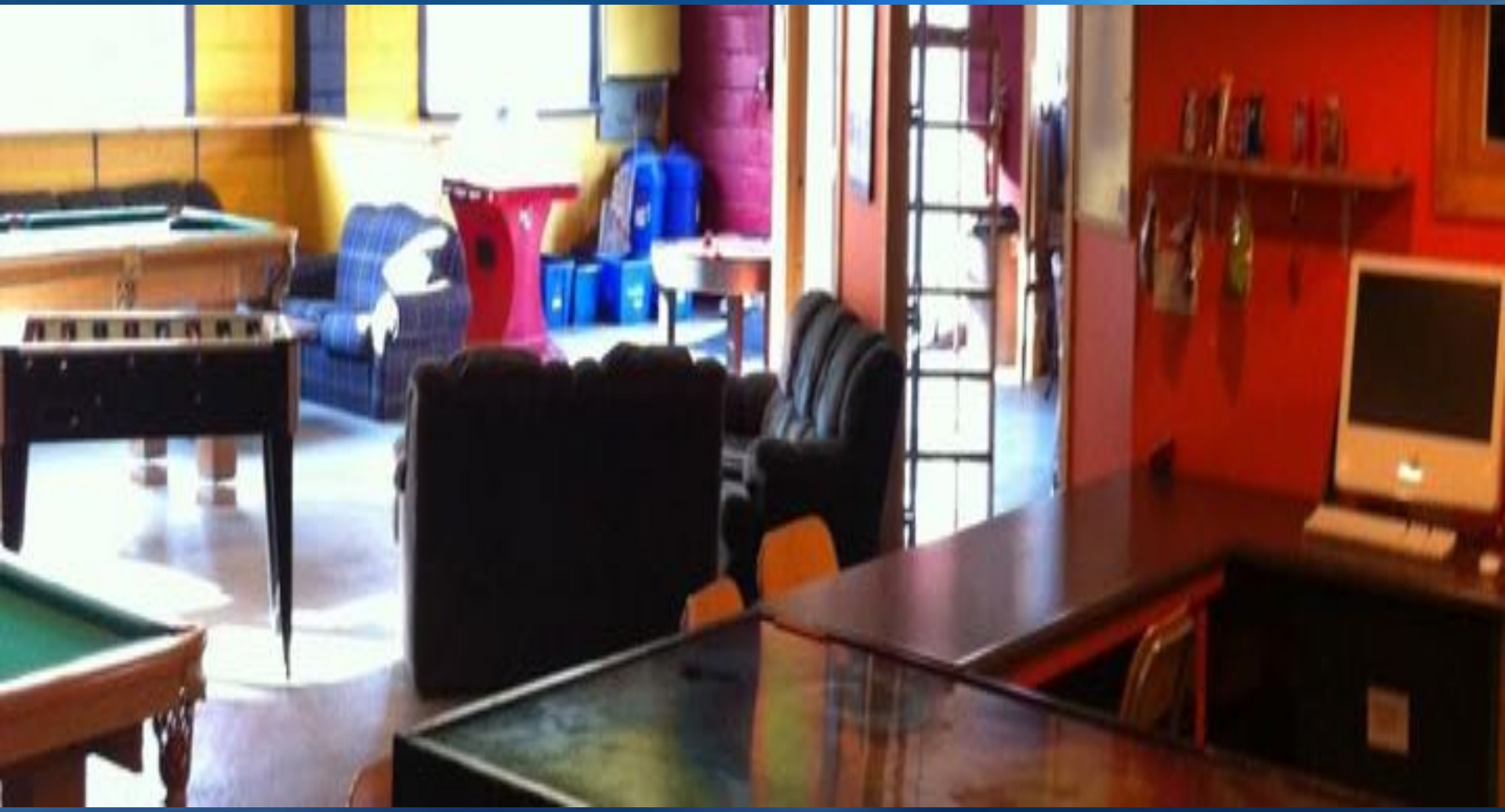
Older Adults

75+

Young Adults


Celebrating
the Third Place
Inspiring Stories about the
"Great Good Places"
at the Heart of Our
Communities

Ravenna Third Place
BOOKS
MON - THUR
8:00am - 10:00pm
FRI - SAT
8:00am - 10:00pm
SUNDAY
8:00am - 7:00pm



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Moderator
5

THEOLOGY ON TAP

THEOLOGY ON TAP
SUMMER 6 - PACK
6/9 BRIAN MILLER
The call to Missionary Discipleship
6/16 FR. DAN SHAUGHNESSY
Evangelizing your parish
6/23 BISHOP RICE
Engaging your culture
6/30 RACHEL ALLEN
Building intentional community
7/7 STACY CRETORS
Thirst for justice
7/14 JOHN LEYENDECKER
Love your neighbor
st louis
stl ya
young adults

God on Tap
About
Events
Blog
Locations
Contact Us
Conversations at the intersection of life and faith.
Learn More

Locations

It's really important to us at God on Tap to support local businesses. So, whenever possible we gather at small, locally owned, community-oriented establishments. We deeply value our relationships with the staff and regulars, we enjoy the new connections we discover, and we are very grateful to them for generously hosting us.

Gypsy Blu

Gypsy Blue is located at 34 E Butler Avenue in Ambler, not far from the SEPTA Commuter Rail station. There are a couple nearby parking lots nearby, including the Ambler municipal lot at Cavalier Drive, but there's also on-street parking.

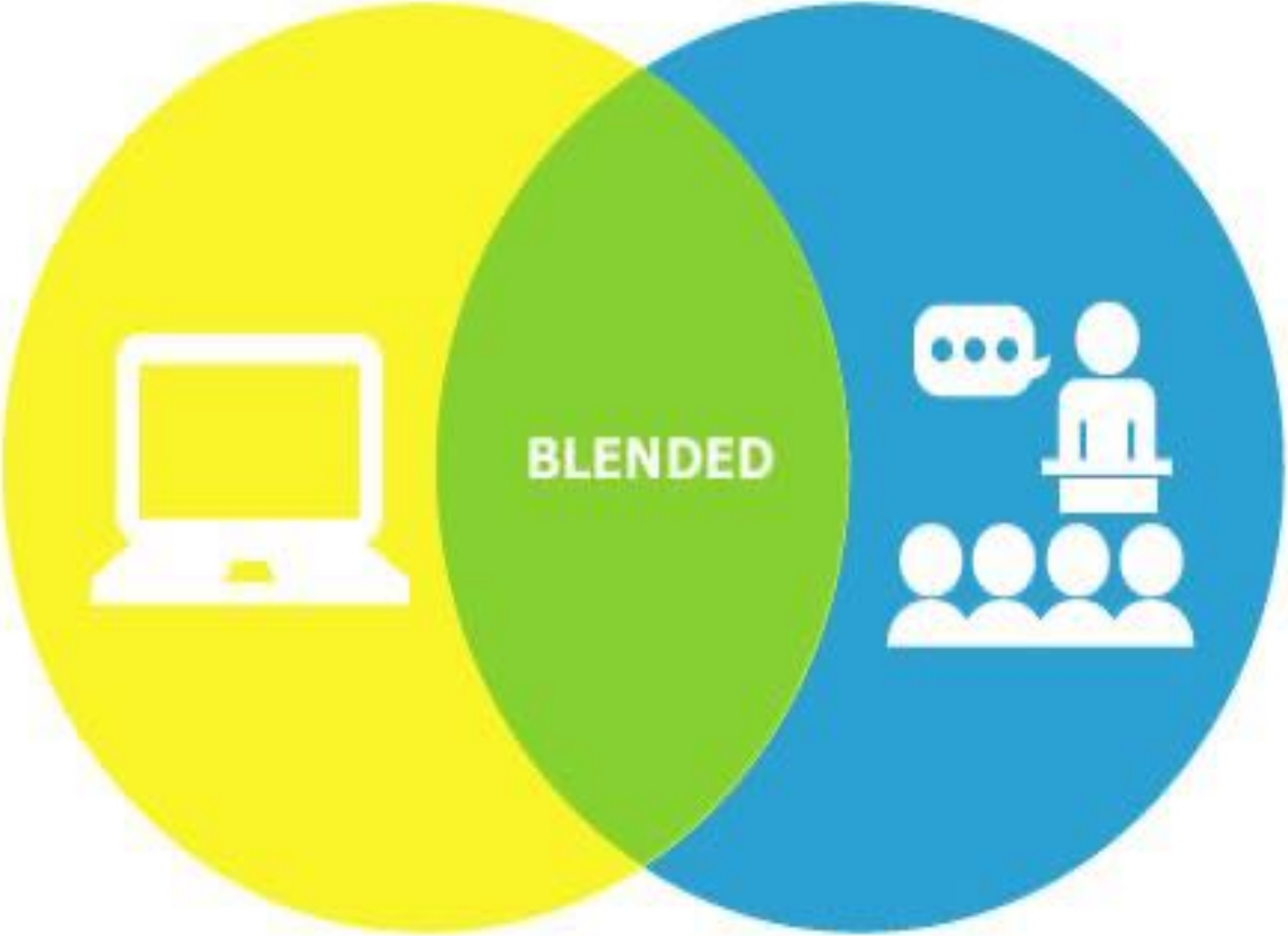
Weavers Way Co-op

Weaver's Way Coop is located at 217 East Butler Ave, Ambler. The Coop is a great new addition to Ambler with a great community feel.

Magerks, Ft. Washington

MaGerk's Pub and Grill is located in 582 South Bethlehem Pike in Ft. Washington, at the intersection of Bethlehem Pike and Skippack Pike. Our gatherings happen in the private bar at the back left of the building.

God on Tap Blog


BLENDED

HELLO
I AM...
Your
mentor

FILM STUDIES

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#38 - February 2014

A Best Practice: Movies at the Parish

A growing practice in many parishes is the opportunity to view and discuss current popular movies, relating them to everyday life, the life of our faith.

The January 25, 2013 issue of *The New York Times* contains an article/interview with Sr. Rose Pacatte, SFP, well-known for her movie reviews and practical ideas for engaging with today's media.

In discussing one of Sundance's foreign-language selections, *There Will Come a Day*, Sr. Rose addresses the question of which came first for the writer/director, Giorgio Diritti: the religious theme or the narrative line. "He doesn't start with the idea of writing a religious story. He starts with the idea that many people suffer. … This is the quandary Christian filmmakers have. They feel so committed to the lesson that they struggle to have the story come out. That's why you wind up with what I call these 'Sunday school movies.' I'm interested in movies for the rest of the week."

As we explore "movie times" in various parishes (in this issue) we'll discover the vast variety of movies used:

- deeply and well-made "Sunday school movies" and
- "movies for the rest of the week"

… all of which have the potential to touch our spirituality, to connect our faith with our everyday life.

Jeanne C. Branch, Director of Adult Faith Formation at St. John the Evangelist Parish, Waynesboro, VA, describes a summer offering in this parish of about 800 families.

Mass & a Movie is offered on alternating Saturday evenings, with a potluck supper after the 5 PM parish liturgy; the parish providing drinks, a themed dessert if appropriate to the movie, and all the popcorn you can eat.

The movies vary from

- animated ones such as *The Book of Kells* and *Wall-E* to
- foreign films such as *Departures* and *Letters to Fr. Jacob* and
- classics such as *Babette's Feast* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*

There is a general theme to each summer's films, such as "The Power of Faith" which featured:

- *The Way*
- *Letters to Fr. Jacob*
- *Rango*
- *Shall We Dance*
- *Babette's Feast*

Each summer the schedule includes some family films, some adult films, at least one well-known film, a documentary, and some lesser known films.

The film is viewed after the meal and fellowship. There is usually a host for each evening, and though Jeanne provides training for them, she acknowledges that some are more successful in facilitating discussions than others. Jeanne remarked: "I have tried focused discussion questions, and also more of the 'break open the movie' type questions. The range of discussions has varied from almost none to people needing encouragement to wrap things up.

Even when there has not been much deep discussion, people comment that they keep thinking during the week. I find that it makes it easier for people to connect their faith and beliefs to the surrounding culture when we view a familiar movie from a faith perspective.

The families with children generally want to leave right away, so I frequently have a take-home or car ride question for them to consider."

Jeanne also reflected upon attendance: "Some movies have a turn-out of 30-40; other times, it's only 18-20, but the neat thing is that it attracts some

VOLUNTEER
OPPORTUNITIES

VolunteerMatch.org

VOLUNTEERS · NONPROFITS · SIGN IN · REGISTER · Log In · Log In · SUPPORT

We bring good people & good causes together

Find a cause that lights you up. Get in touch with a nonprofit that needs you.

Join Us LEARN MORE

What do you care about in St Clair Shores, MI ?

SEARCH

I care about...

Advanced (Search by Country, Skills and More!)

or

BROWSE

Advocacy & Human Rights

Animals

Arts & Culture

Board Development

Potential Topics

- The Spirit in daily decision-making
- Crisis in adult life
- Single today: Opportunities and Challenges

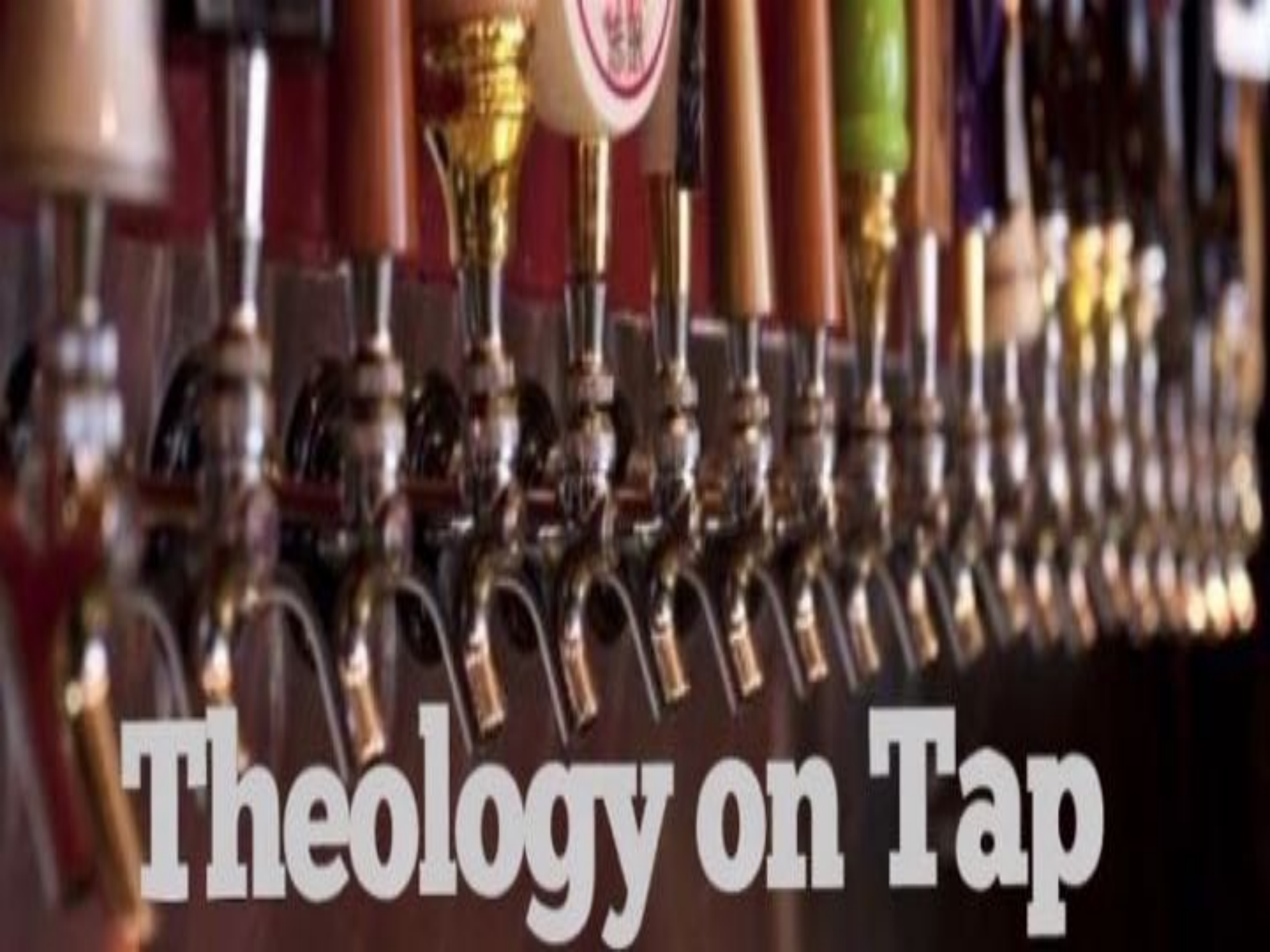
Potential Topics

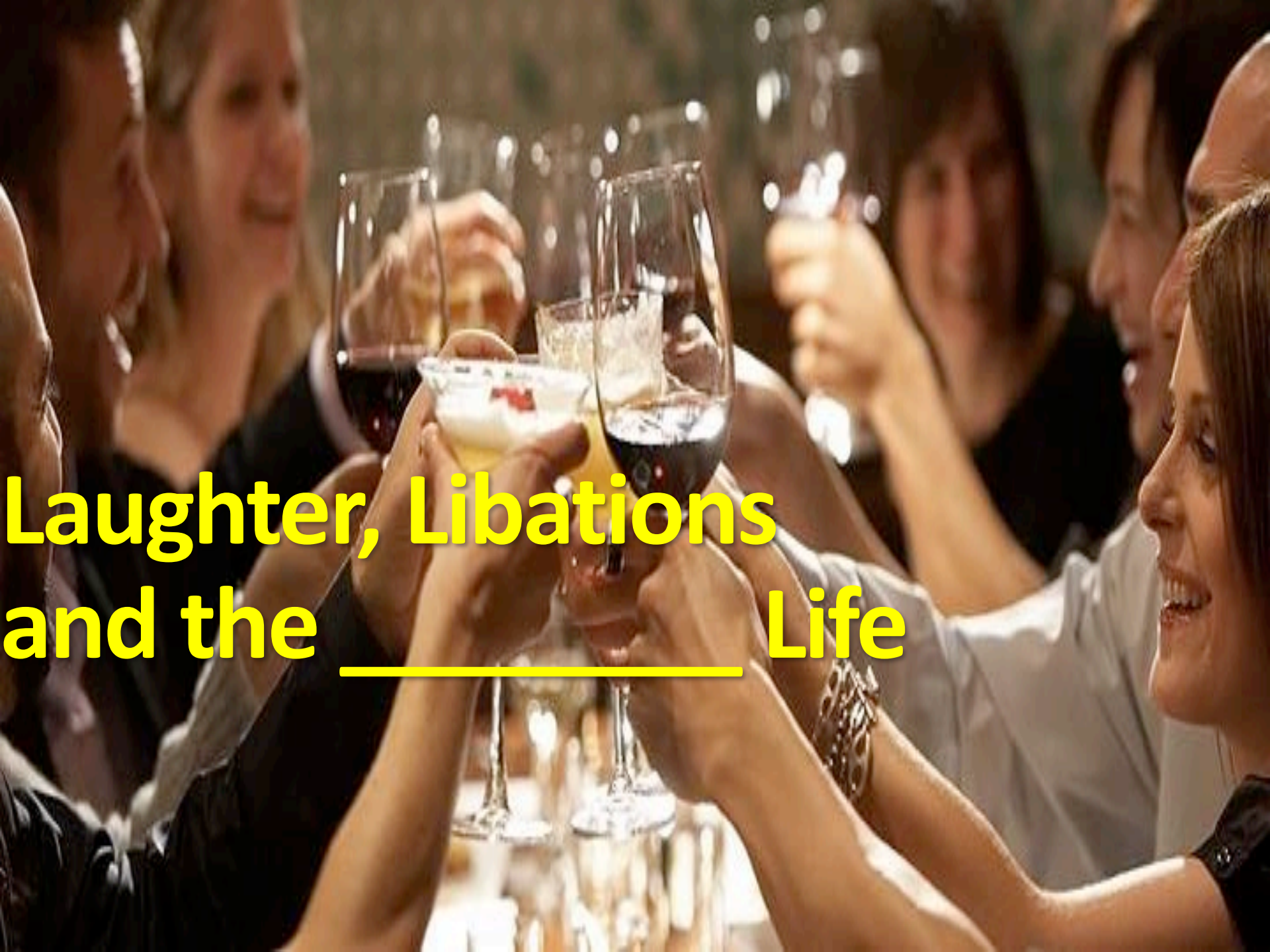
- Family prayer
- Juggling the Rhythms of Family Life
- Portraits in Leadership: Timeless Tales for Inspired Living

Potential Topics

- Christian Alternatives in Celebrating Holidays
- When Both Spouses Work
- Religion and Spirituality (rather than religion vs. spirituality)

Mid-Life Adults


Theology on Tap


Laughter, Libations
and the _____ Life

Theology Uncorked

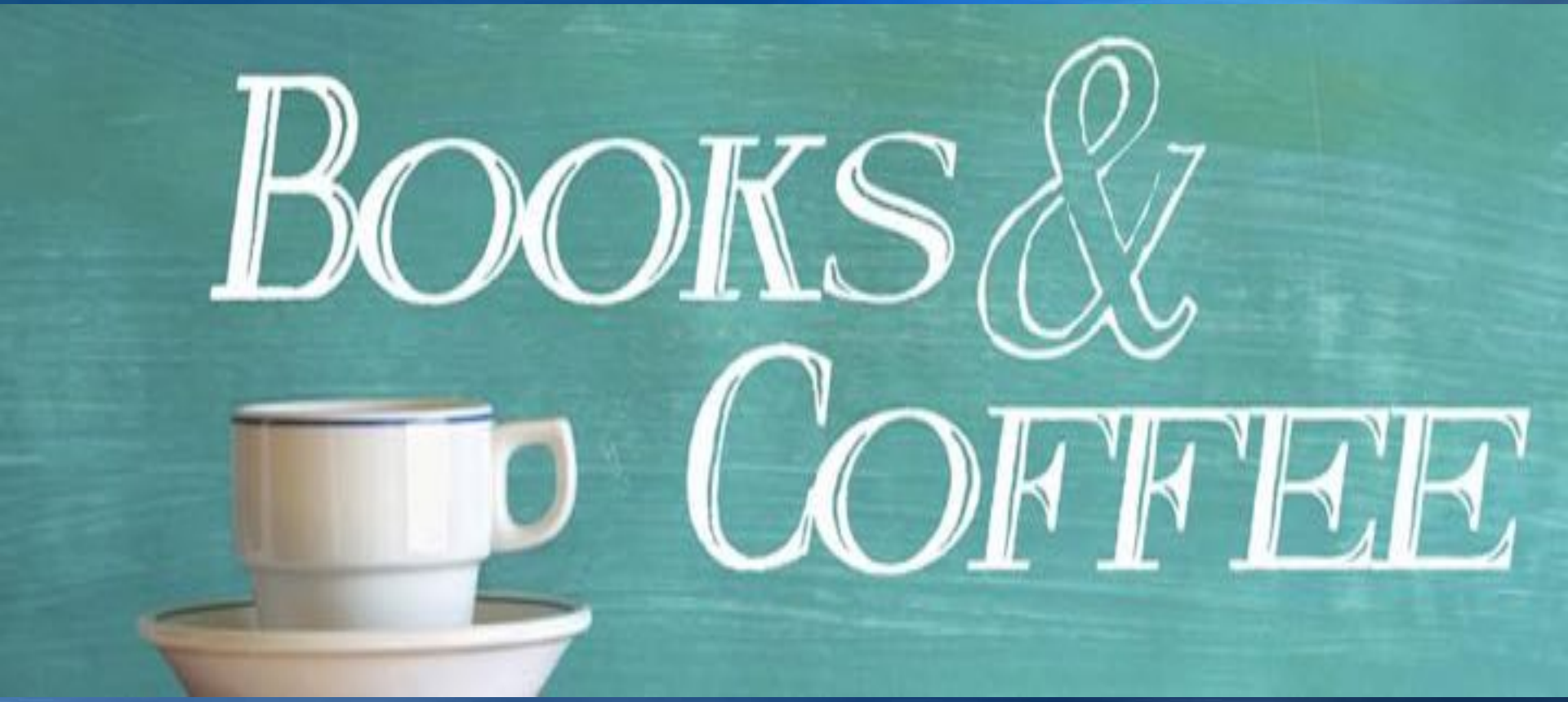
A New Program

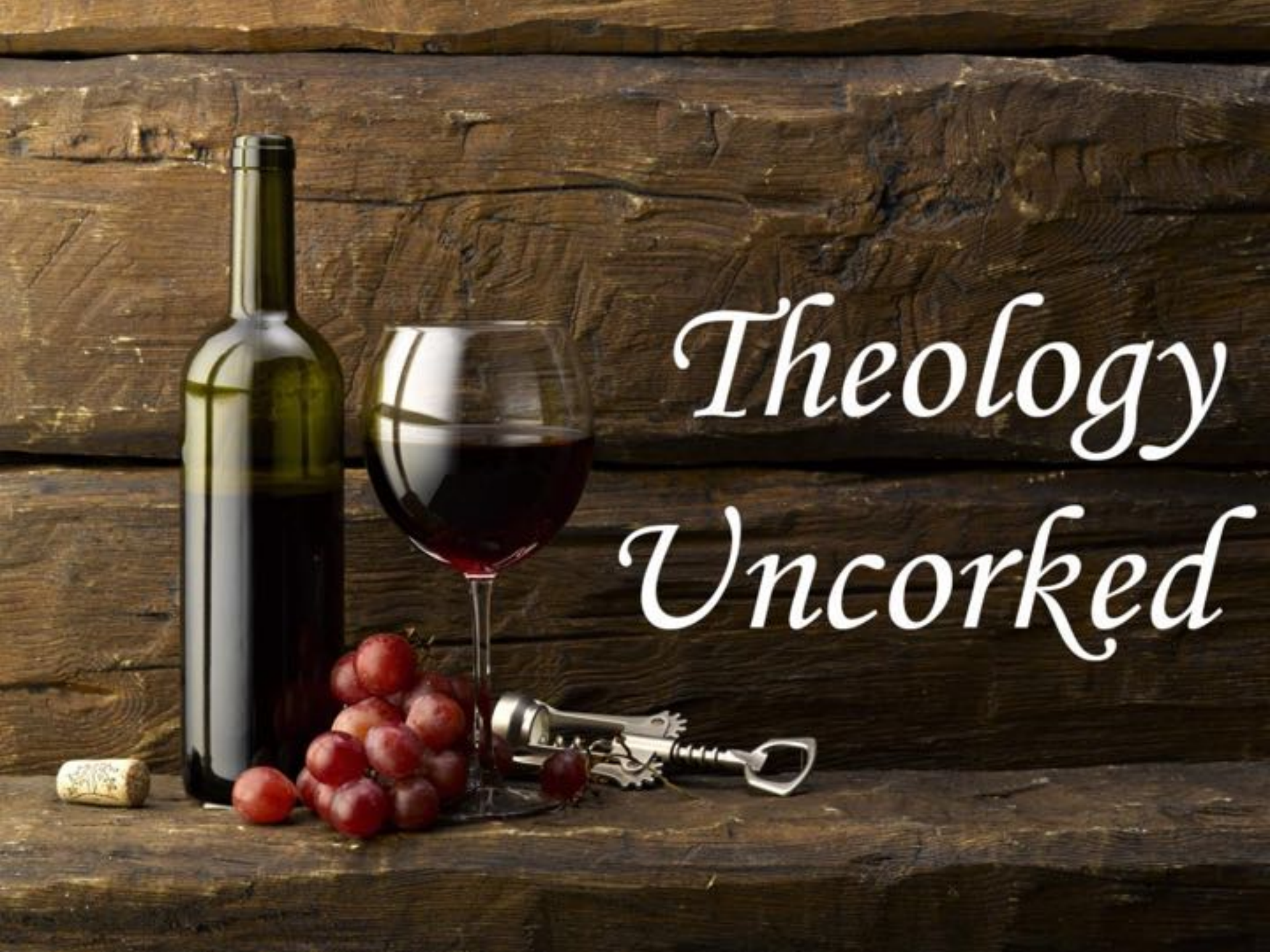
The Christ Our Hope cluster presents

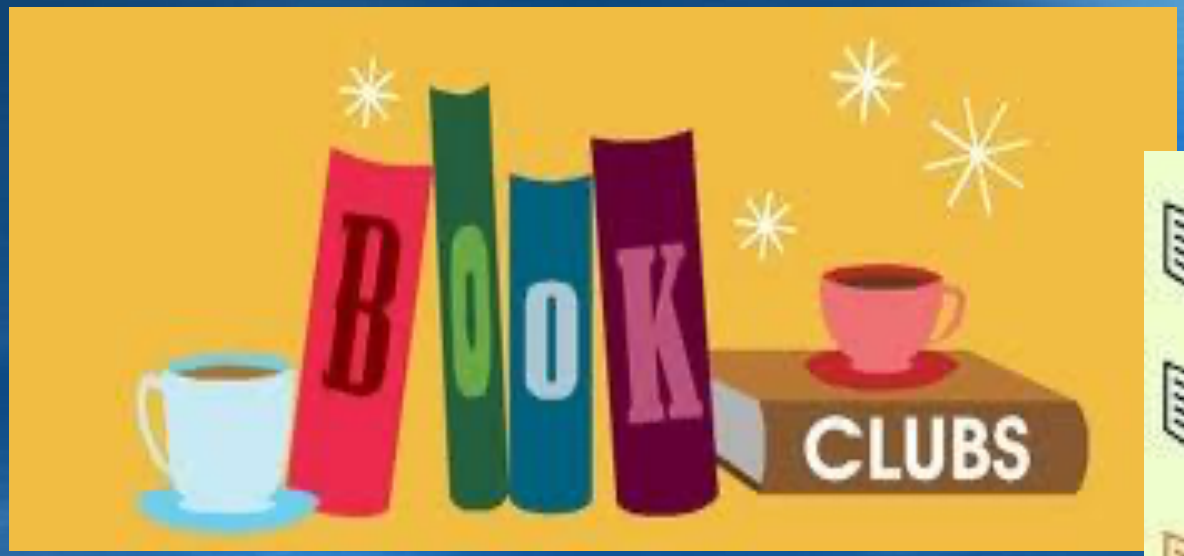
Wine and Wisdom

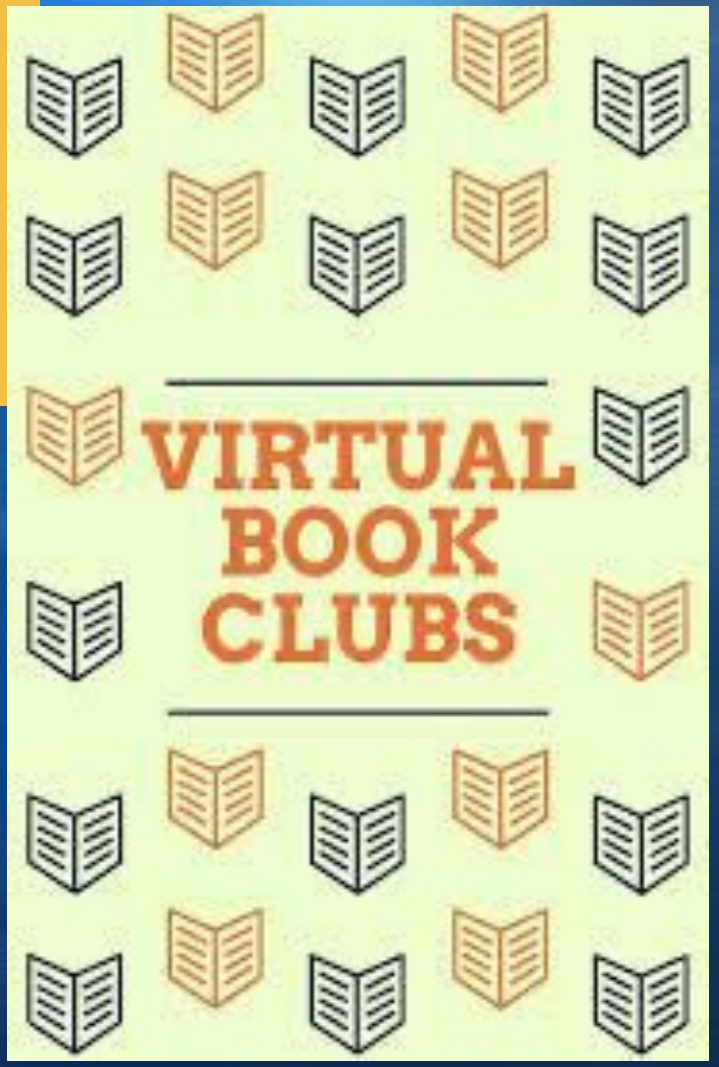
"Why do Catholics Do That?"

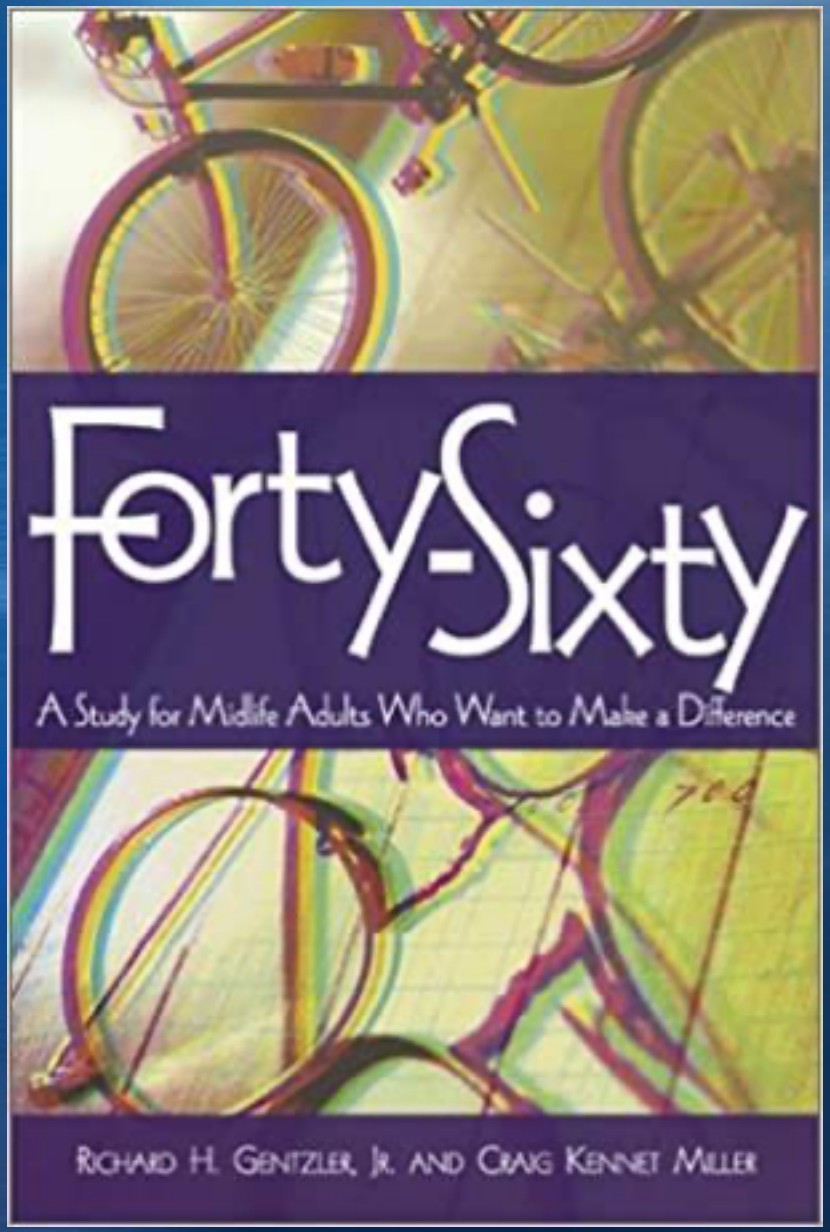
With Father Nick March


BOOKS &
COFFEE


Theology
Uncorked


BOOK
CLUBS


VIRTUAL
BOOK
CLUBS


Forty-Sixty
A Study for Midlife Adults Who Want to Make a Difference
Richard H. Gentzler, Jr. and Craig Kennet Miller

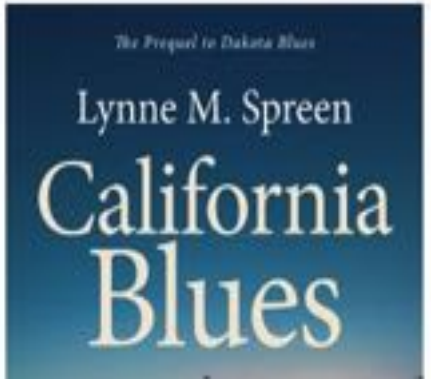
Midlife Fiction Novels

An idyllic spot just outside Rushville, Indiana

I'm always looking for novels about older adults. I want to know how they live, how they deal with second-half challenges, what spurs them on and keeps them fired up. Here's a partial list of what I've read. Click on the book image to go to the Amazon detail page. For the full list (over 50 titles) go to my Facebook Author Page, click Photos>Albums>Midlife Fiction. **Here's the link.**

Search this website

SEE KAREN GRACE'S LIFE BEFORE DAKOTA BLUES IN THIS PREQUEL NOVELLA



GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#14 - December 2011

A Best Practice: A Process for Gathering Parishioners for a Parish Book Study

Book clubs, as a form of adult faith formation, are popular in many parishes (as well as throughout our culture). The following unique best practice describes ***a process*** **which invited all parishioners to become engaged** in a book study this past Lent (2011).

Something to Consider as You Read…

- How might you use the following process in your parish?
- Which book(s) might your parish be ready to explore in this way?

> It does not matter
> how many books you have,
> but how good the books are ***which*** you have.
>
> -Lucius Annaeus Seneca

The Setting

The Catholic Community of St. Francis Xavier, Hunt Valley, MD, formerly a mass station for a neighboring large parish, was incorporated as a mission in 1992. In 1998, the community, a collection of 400 families, built and moved into a new permanent church home.

Prior to this move, the parishioners had been worshipping in the basement of an office building where they had all grown to understand and

RENEW small groups had been well received in the growing parish. Thus, when *Disciples in Mission* (a parish-wide experience of evangelization fostering spiritual renewal) was offered by the Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association (now Paulist Evangelization Ministries), the Catholic Community of St. Francis Xavier embraced it wholeheartedly. Over four hundred parishioners participated in small groups for three years.

Then the parish found itself in the midst of a pastoral change so the staff decided not to embark on *Why Catholic*, another small group opportunity, offered by RENEW, until the newly assigned pastor could have some input on his vision for the parish.

Through this transition and change, an opportunity for small group faith sharing never resurfaced.

In April 2010, Pat Allshouse, the Director of Faith Formation, assembled a group of parishioners, inviting them to brainstorm ways to jump start Adult Faith Formation at the parish.

This group met several times throughout the summer and into the fall. Shortly before Christmas, Pat was given a copy of a newly-published book. After reading it, she thought it might be worth looking into for the parish, so Pat:

- purchased copies of the book
- gave them to the team
- asked each person to read a specific chapter
- and be ready to discuss it at their January meeting

Check List for Mid Life Crisis...

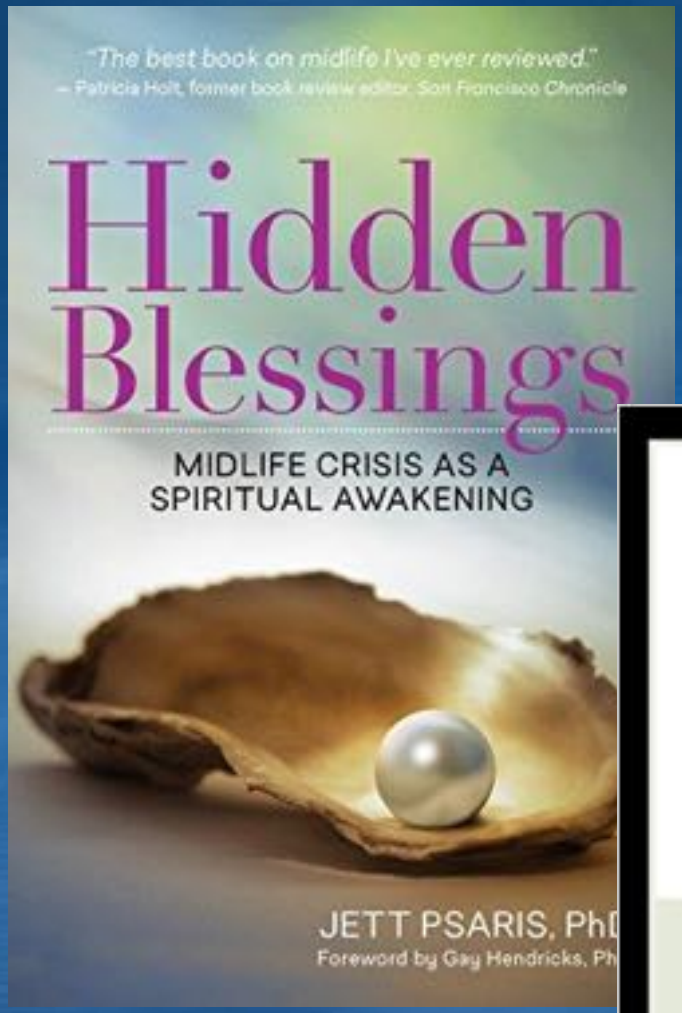
- Are you spending more time in the bath room, checking for white hair Yes No
- Are you thinking of doing a bungee jump? Yes No
- If you're a guy, are you thinking of getting a Harley Davidson ala Wild Hogs? Yes No
- Are you brushing & flossing your teeth more dilligently now? Yes No
- Are you spending more money on vitamins & supplements? Yes No
- Are you seriously thinking of getting a tattoo? Yes No

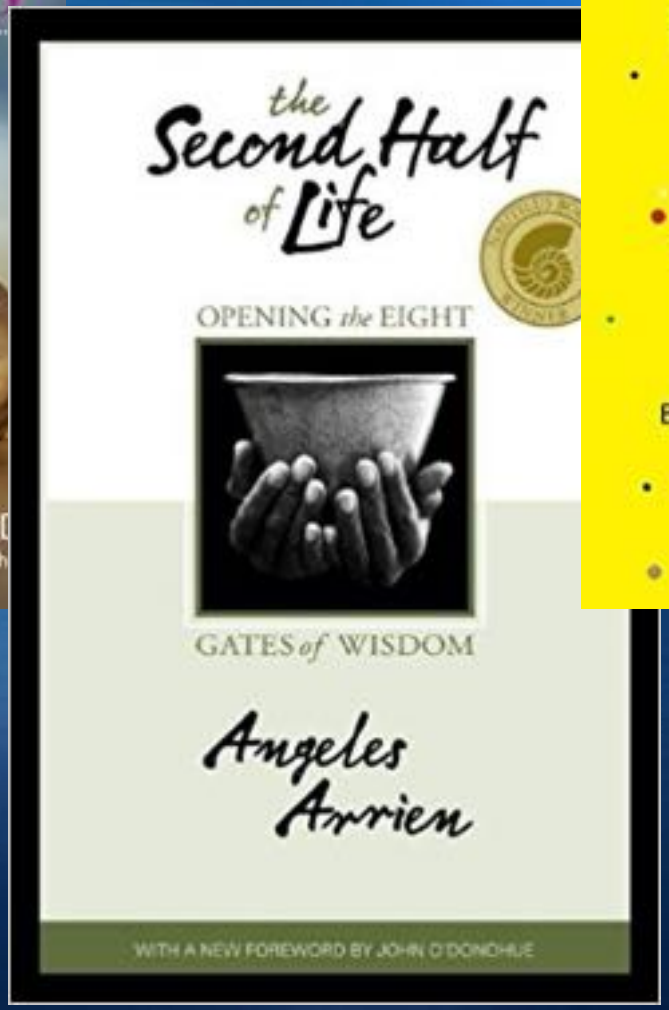
it's not a
midlife
crisis
it's an
OPPORTUNITY
How to be forty-
or fifty-something
without going off the rails

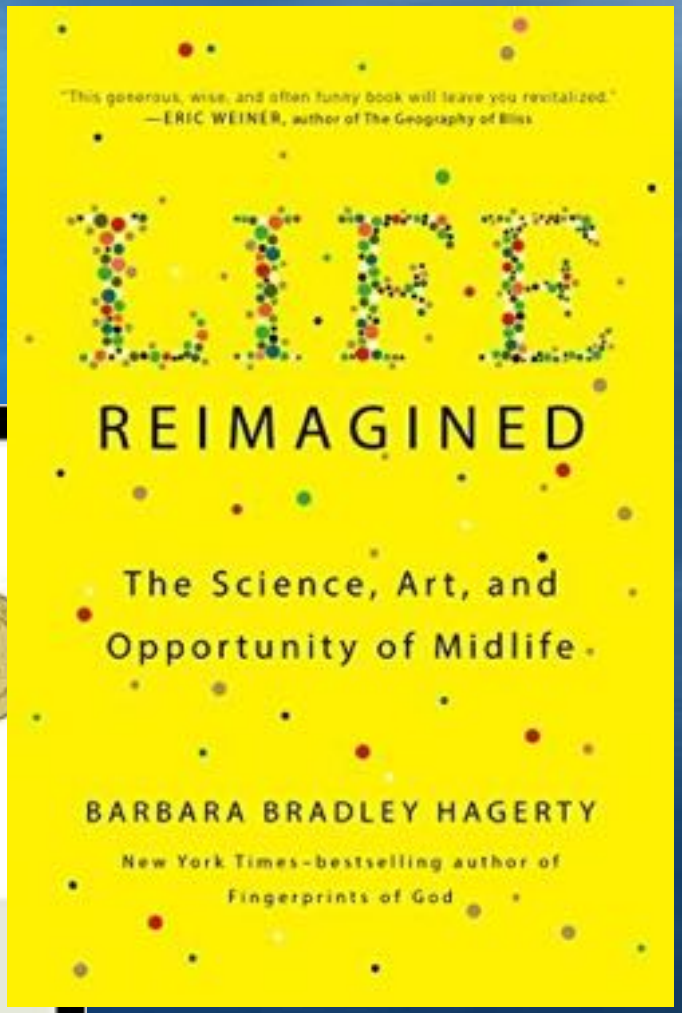
Crisis
opportunity
Crisis
Crisis

YOU'VE
GOT MAIL

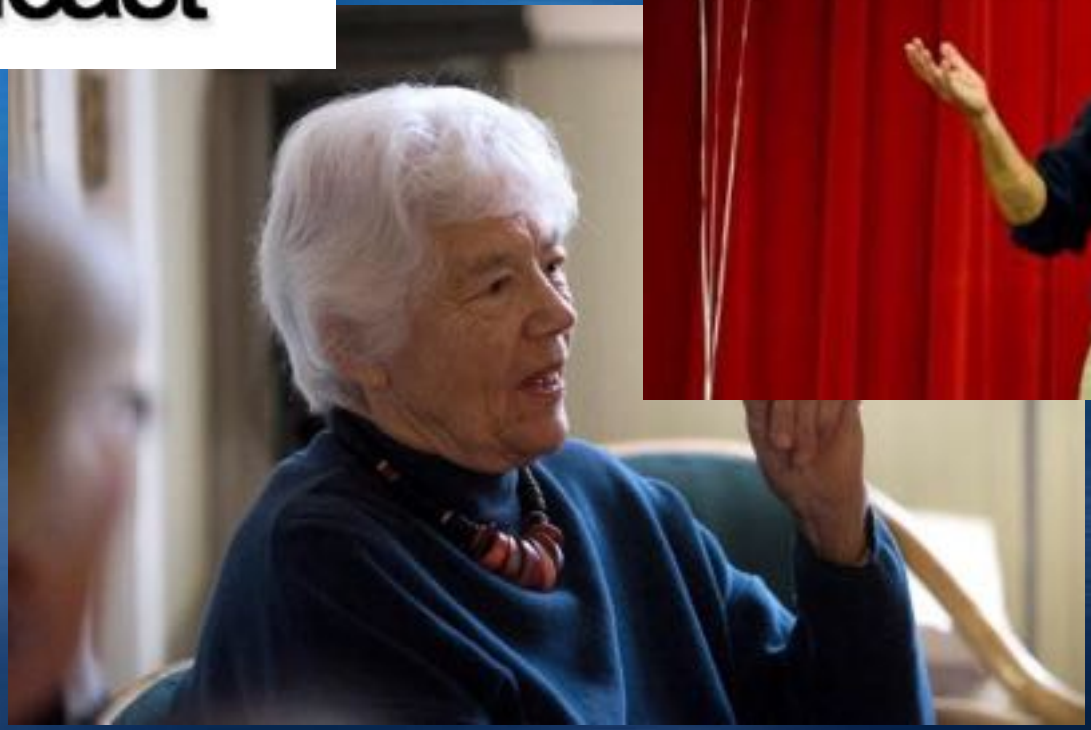
World Wide Web
http://www.
World Wide Web
http://www.
World Wide Web
http://www.


"The best book on midlife I've ever reviewed."
– Patricia Holt, former book review editor, San Francisco Chronicle
Hidden Blessings
MIDLIFE CRISIS AS A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING
JETT PSARIS, PhD
Foreword by Gay Hendricks, Ph


the Second Half of Life
OPENING the EIGHT
GATES of WISDOM
Angeles Arrien
WITH A NEW FOREWORD BY JOHN O'DONOHUE


"This generous, wise, and often funny book will leave you revitalized."
—ERIC WEINER, author of The Geography of Bliss
LIFE
REIMAGINED
The Science, Art, and Opportunity of Midlife
BARBARA BRADLEY HAGERTY
New York Times–bestselling author of Fingerprints of God

Podcast



Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee

To uphold the dignity of every person and the solidarity of the human community

HOME

PROGRAMS
- CROP Hunger Walk
- Amazing Faiths Dinners
  - About AFDD
  - AFDD History
- Peace Issues
- Interfaith Relations
- Restorative Practices
- Congregation Action
- Alike & Different

EVENTS

ABOUT US
- Year-In-Review Reports
- Mission Statement
- Staff and Board
- Member Judicatories
- IFC Representatives
- In the Media
- Contact

GALLERY

AMAZING FAITHS DINNER DIALOGUES

Join the dialogue. Change your life. Transform the world.

People of all faiths and no faith, all spiritualities and philosophies gather in small groups to share a meal and participate in a moderated discussion using a proven model, evoking deep exchanges about lived experiences and the role of faith or spirituality in their lives. Through exploration and dialogue, participants learn about the beliefs and traditions of others within an atmosphere of resp and understanding, and are empowered to stand as witnesses for tolerance.

Since 2011, The Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee has piloted Amazing Faiths Dinner Dialogues with great success. From summer 2013 through spring 2014, a generous grant from the First Unitarian Society of Milwaukee enable the Interfaith Conference to expand the program. Read the About Page and History Page to learn more. You can also se the Amazing Faiths Facebook page for information in the Amazing Faiths community! Click here to Subscribe to our ema newsletter. And, click the following links for a brochure or flyer.

For more information, contact Jenni or Tom at AmazingFaiths@interfaithconference.org or 414-276-9050.

You're Invited!
Upcoming Amazing Faiths Dinner Dialogues

Tuesday, February 16th, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. on Milwaukee's East Side near UWM

Ethnic Food Fest

SWEL Timebank
Exchanging Gifts Through Time

2ND Annual Food Glorious Food Event:

CULTURAL FOOD FEST POTLUCK

Every person has something to give, and sometimes we all could use a little help.

Our Cultural Food Fest Potluck is about connecting people, families and communities, to share the wealth of our skills, diversity of our cultures and just some *GOOD FOOD!*

Come join us and bring your friends, a dish that reflects your heritage, or a special family recipe.

Sunday, Feb. 23rd from 4pm – 5:30pm

at the new Shoreline Water District Building
1519 NE 177th St., Shoreline

Fun | Yummy food | Learn timebank basics | Help Desk | Network | Build Community | Friendships | One -on- One | Q&A

www.sweltimebank.org

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

49 - January 2015

A Best Practice: An Ecumenical Conference and Art Exhibit

As we minister in adult faith formation, we become more and more aware that:

- there is strength in working together
- we model Jesus' call to unity when we collaborate ecumenically
- adults learn in varied ways
- the arts have been, throughout our entire history, a moving vehicle for people to understand and experience the spiritual journey
- we need to hear the voices of many cultures
- it helps to have the support (interest, publicity, financial, etc.) of various organizations within the larger community

We look here in this issue at a best practice which exemplifies these awareness and which certainly was an enormous undertaking. As you read (and discuss with others), ask yourself (yourselves):

- How could we do something similar?
- Who could we partner with to do something similar?
- In what other ways could we incorporate art in adult formation?
- What are the needs of the people in our parish, our region, our (arch)diocese?

and check the GEMS wonderings and suggestions at the end of this issue.

What was this endeavor?

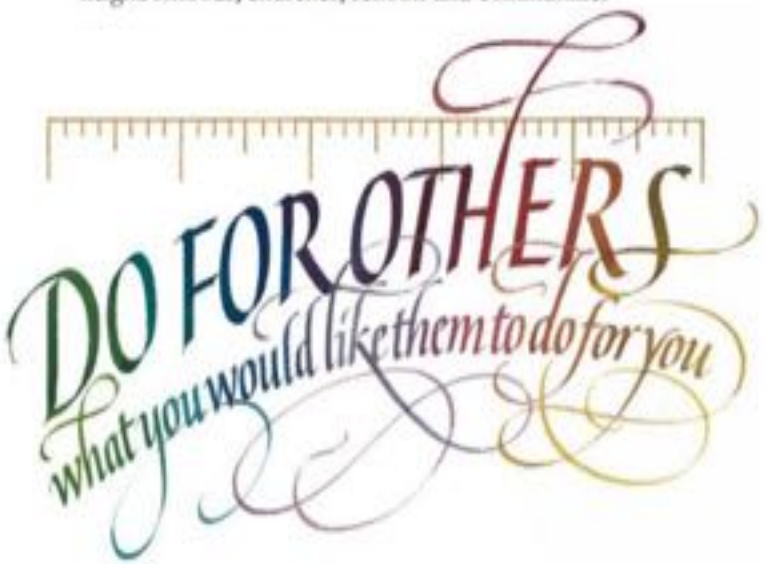
In April 2014, eight churches in downtown Grand Rapids, Michigan hosted a two-day conference and art exhibit:

Who is My Neighbor ~ Art as a Bridge to Each Other:
Exploring God's Biblical Call "To love your neighbor as yourself"
through art, theology and the voice of the artist

The conference and art exhibit featured two days of seminars and workshops and an eleven artist – three hundred piece exhibit held in the eight hosting churches.

Together participants explored:

- how art can become a bridge "to our neighbor"
- a creative catalyst for social change and spiritual renewal within our neighborhoods, churches, schools and communities



Timothy R. Botts

How did this begin?

The Catholic Information Center, a ministry of the Paulist Fathers serving the diocese of Grand Rapids presenting programs for Catholics and others seeking to learn more about Catholic belief, practice, and other faith issues,

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#82 - October 2017

A Best Practice: A Celebration with Art and Tea

This month's best practice combines various realities of our lives as faithful disciples:

- reflections on mercy
- recognition and appreciation of the arts to express and deepen faith
- support and empowerment of adults to express and share their faith
- gathering in community

The Beginning

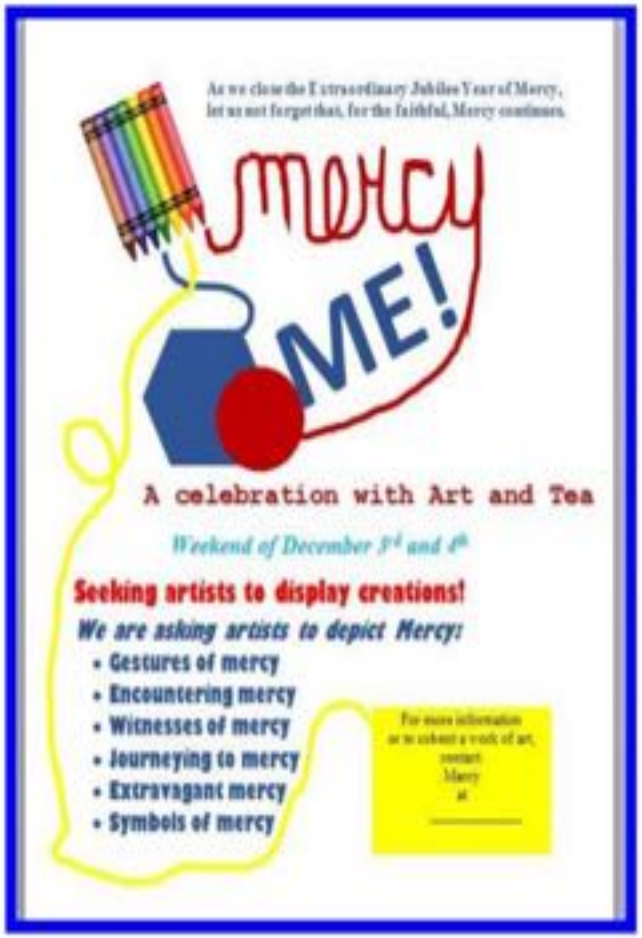
St. Francis deSales Parish, Salisbury, MD wanted to provide an experience which would connect faith with the arts. After much brainstorming, they decided to provide an art show and an afternoon tea with music and poetry.

Michele K. Harris, pastoral minister at St. Francis deSales, worked with a committee which gathered monthly for five months, creating various subcommittees and inviting volunteers to help with all the specific aspects of the event.

The Invitation

Since this "Celebration with Art and Tea" was planned at the closing of the church's Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy, "mercy" became the theme for the artwork.

Reflection, suggestions and guidelines were provided by the committee and staff through the various programs and groups within the parish as well as the Sunday bulletin and website. Children, youth and adults of the parish were invited to share their faith-filled reflections by submitting their artistic works which portrayed various aspects of "mercy" in daily life, in the life of the church and culture.



The Celebration of the Art

The invitation yielded a beautiful, intriguing and inspiring display with a variety of mediums as well as interesting content. The children had used

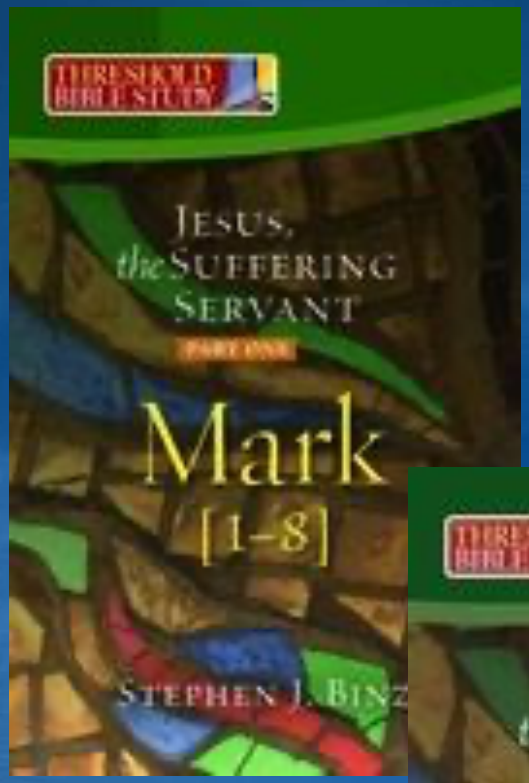
The committee worked to provide an "elegant" atmosphere so did not use any paper or plastic products. All participants of the tea were invited to bring their own tea cup.

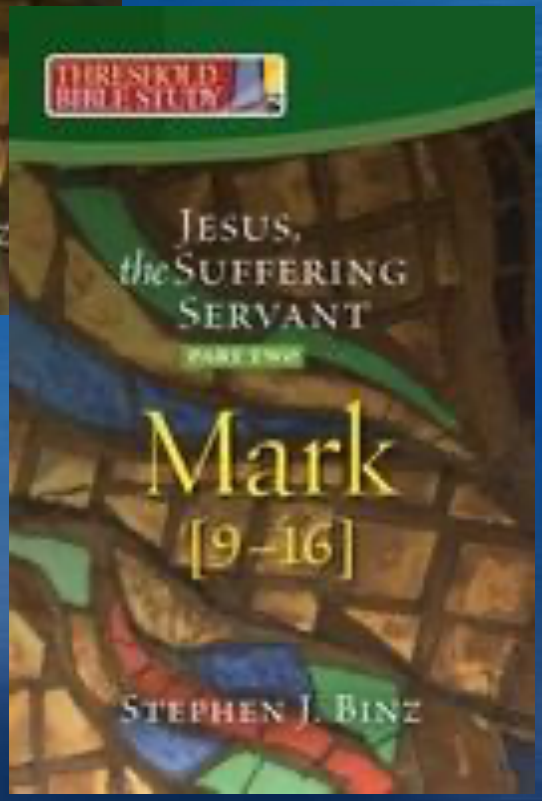
The tea began and closed with prayer. The musical entertainment – all providing their talent gratuitously – included soloists, violin, harp, guitar, piano

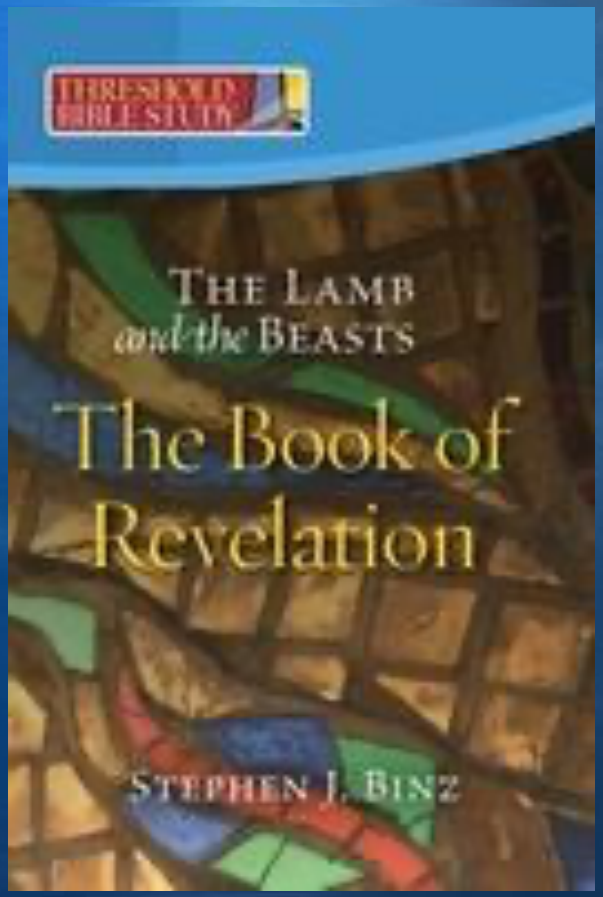
The Evaluations

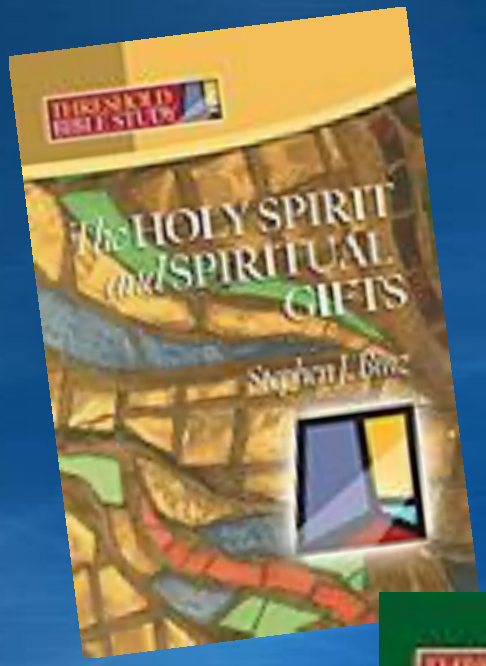
Over 50 percent of the participants indicated on their evaluation that the "best part of the tea" was:

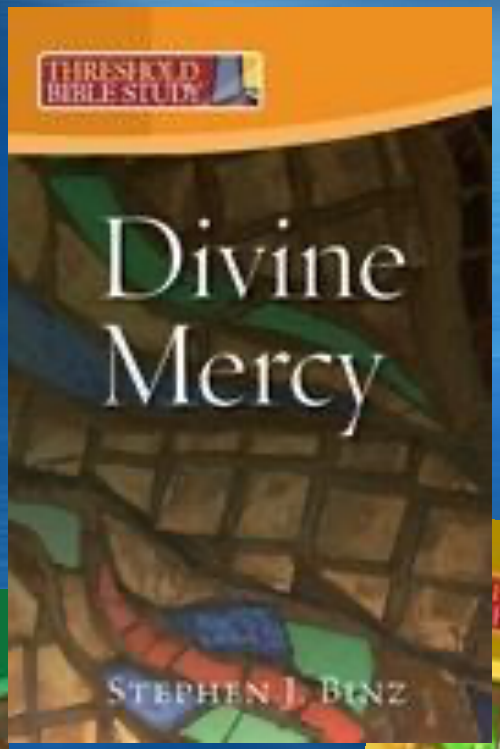
- Talking to and meeting with others
- The community spirit
- Hospitality
- The musical performers

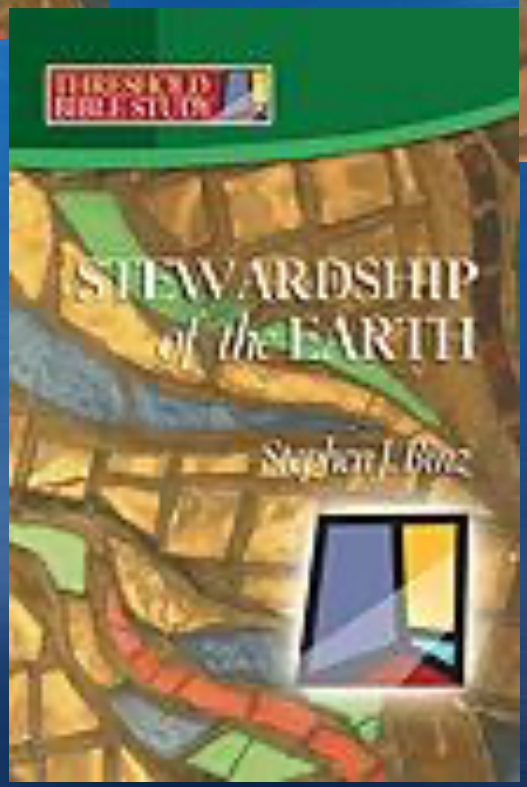

THRESHOLD BIBLE STUDY
JESUS, the SUFFERING SERVANT
PART ONE
Mark
[1–8]
STEPHEN J. BINZ

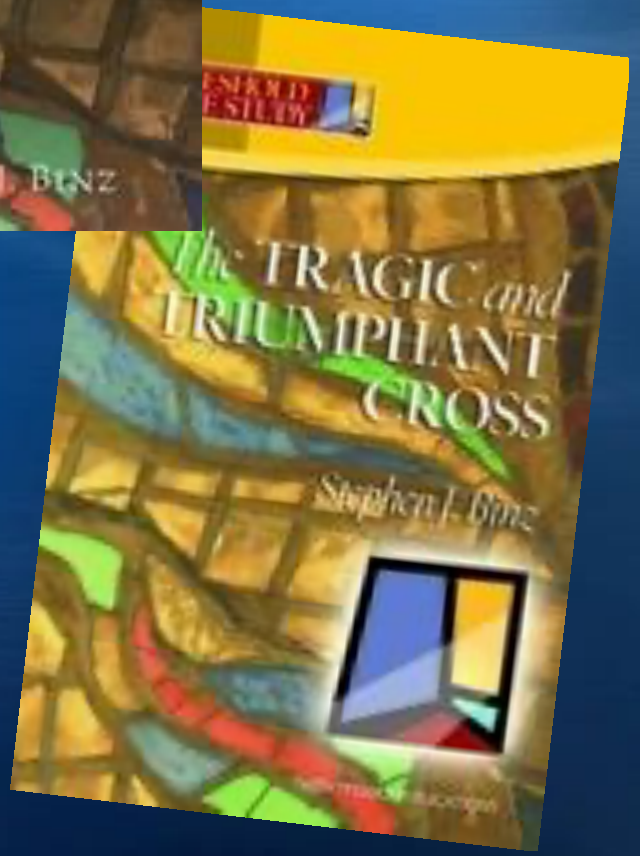

THRESHOLD BIBLE STUDY
JESUS, the SUFFERING SERVANT
PART TWO
Mark
[9–16]
STEPHEN J. BINZ


THRESHOLD BIBLE STUDY
THE LAMB and the BEASTS
The Book of Revelation
STEPHEN J. BINZ


THRESHOLD BIBLE STUDY
The HOLY SPIRIT and SPIRITUAL GIFTS
Stephen J. Binz


THRESHOLD BIBLE STUDY
Divine Mercy
STEPHEN J. BINZ


THRESHOLD BIBLE STUDY
STEWARDSHIP of the EARTH
Stephen J. Binz


The TRAGIC and TRIUMPHANT CROSS
Stephen J. Binz

Cloud of Witnesses

The stories of biblical women and men continue to speak to us and challenge us to stand as faithful witnesses in today's world. How do our own stories continue God's great work of salvation in the world?

Virtues for Disciples

As disciples, we are continually shaped by the teachings of Jesus and guided by the Spirit. Discover the valuable virtues that challenge us and provide the most fulfilling way to live.

Seasons of Our Lives

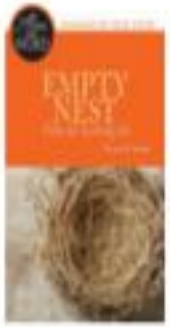
God's Word has lessons in store of each of us as we journey through various stages of living. Grow in your awareness of God's accompanying presence by reflecting on key Bible passages that move us to prayer and action.

Liturgical Seasons

The church's liturgical seasons invite us to enter into the great gift of God's Son in our world. Each season has its own flavor and invites us to enter into the life of Christ in fresh and profound ways.

Seasons of our Liv

Where are you in the journey that we call life? God's Word has lessons in store for each of us as we become aware of how our life is evolving and how God wishes t accompany us in every phase of living. Spend time reflecting on a few key passages of Scripture that will focus our awareness, prayer and action as we move throug life's seasons



978-0-8146-3666-4

Empty Nest, Time for Letting Go

Thomas D. Sauline

When parents find themselves alone after their children move out of the house-or when anyone's loved one moves out of the home-they may experience a very real sense of loneliness, lack of purpose, and even grief. These prayerful reflections on the Joseph story, the incarnation, and the last discourse of Jesus offer comfort and challenge to anyone with an empty nest. The word of God has the power to help empty nesters change, let go, and love anew.

View More

Paperback
Price: $7.95

ADD TO CART

eBook
Price: $6.99

ADD TO CART

978-0-8146-4503-4

Dashed Hopes

When Our Best-Laid Plans Fall Apart

Laura Kelly Fanucci

Where do we turn when our hopes are dashed, when we look at best-laid plans and see only shattered dreams? With fresh perspectives on Jeremiah's plans for "a future of hope," Jesus' agony in the garden, and Isaiah's promise of "a way in the wilderness," Laura Kelly Fanucci offers hope for those wondering what comes next when life feels broken.

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CAREERS

CONNECTING
Faith & Work

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#1 - September 2010

Introduction: Premier Issue
Best Practice: The *Sunday/Monday Connection*

Welcome to the premier issue of **GEMS** – an energizing, motivating and thought-provoking newsletter for all those who believe in, are excited about, and/or are ministering in adult faith formation in varied ways today.

These newsletters are brought to you by a small group of people who have been involved in ministry, especially adult faith formation ministry, for years. The convener/facilitator of this group and principal author of the newsletters, Janet Schaeffler, OP, has been deeply involved in adult faith formation since 1971 as a coordinator in parishes and as an archdiocesan director of adult faith formation, as well as author, national presenter, facilitator, consultant and one of the authors of the Leader's Guide of *Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us.* The members of the committee are long-standing pastoral ministers and experts in adult faith formation in parishes, universities, and business.

Subsequent issues will cover one topic/theme; this first edition is two-fold:

- an introduction to "just what is this?" as well as
- delving immediately into a fascinating best practice

Introduction

GEMS wouldn't exist without you, each and every one of whom are facilitating, enabling, empowering others – walking with each and every one of our adult Catholics on their faith journey. You have shared – will be continuing to share –

- your effective practices
- your successes
- your challenges
- your dreams and visions

through our "adult faith formation best practices survey."

The sharing of **your experiences**, then, will be spread far and wide – through **GEMS**: *Great Endeavors Mined and Shared.*

The focus of **GEMS** is, therefore, **practical** – a discovery of what is actually happening, as well as, the vision of what is hoped for by the ministers who are immersed in the real world of adult faith formation.

We will explore:

- themes flowing from the topics on the survey (e.g. hospitality, publicity, content for adult faith formation, technology, etc.)
- on-going research; advice from experts and practitioners; and resources concerning the themes explored
- actual adult faith formation best practices

Originally, the best practices survey began as a national survey; it has now become international. (Arch)dioceses in other countries have shared it with their parishes.

The survey - the sharing and mining of the great endeavors - is **on-going**! If you have not yet completed a best practices survey (it takes only a few minutes of your time!), we invite you to do so.

> Successful people are dreamers who have found
> a dream too exciting,
> too important to remain in the realm of fantasy.
> Day by day, hour by hour,
> they toil in service of their dream
> until they can see it
> with their eyes and touch it with their hands.
> - Earl Nightingale

Share your experiences, your pearls of wisdom, your sparkling vision. It will add to the practicality and beauty of **GEMS** for each of us. For a copy of the survey contact Janet Schaeffler, OP at jansch@juno.com.

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#50 – February 2015

A Best Practice: It Happens at Home

Faith growth happens everywhere! We know that; it's not just at opportunities, gatherings, worship, etc. that are scheduled at the parish (important as those are).

Much happens in the daily life of the households of the parish, probably much that we are not aware of. People – of all ages and types – are serious and creative about ways to continue to grow in faith.

They are also looking for new ways, ways for themselves, and ways to connect to other people in prayer. They look to their parishes for guidance, ideas, and new practices.

The best practice described here does just that!

St. George Unplugged

For the past several years, St. George Parish in Worcester, MA has encouraged and enabled "St. George Unplugged: A Community Prayer Hour at Home" on the Wednesday of Holy Week. All parishioners are invited to set aside the hour of 7:00 – 8:00 PM for prayer at home on that evening.

The brochure that is created for all parishioners says:

"An 'Unplugged Hour'

As part of our parish community's annual preparation for the great feast of Easter we invite each household in our parish to set aside one hour of quiet reflection and prayer at home from 7 to 8 PM on Wednesday of Holy Week. Imagine how wonderful it could be for all of our 1400 households to join together in prayer at this same time!"

Within this invitation, parishioners are reminded that, even though they are not physically together, they are united with each other, praying together, as they participate at the same time.

> For where two or three are gathered together
> in my name,
> there am I in the midst of them.
>
> - Matthew 18: 20

Preparing for Prayer

Each household was encouraged to prepare a Sacred Space:

- Dim the lights.
- Turn off or "unplug" the TV.
- Shut down the computer.
- Turn off the radio, all phones, CD players, computers, iPads and iPods.
- Arrange a comfortable place to sit. Weather permitting: outside might be an option.
- Add what you will need: perhaps a Bible or prayer journal, pencil or paper.

Beginning of the Prayer Hour

The prayer-aid invites everyone at 7 PM to begin with the following prayer, with the awareness that many others in the parish are praying this prayer at the same time:

God of Wonder

STATIONS OF THE CROSS
START

WE ADORE YOU, O
CHRIST, AND WE PRAISE YOU

On Good Friday, April 10, 2020, please follow the way of the cross through your neighborhood. Below you can download several variations of ways to pray the Way of the Cross. There are coloring sheets for children to use at each station.

Printable Prayer Materials for Children

- Word Among Us Stations for Children
- Stations of the Cross for Kids Booklet
- Loyola Press Stations for Children
- Come Lord Jesus - Stations for Middle & High School
- Church of St. Ignatius Loyola - Stations for Children and Families
- St. Mary's Press - Stations for Teens

Prayer Materials for Adults

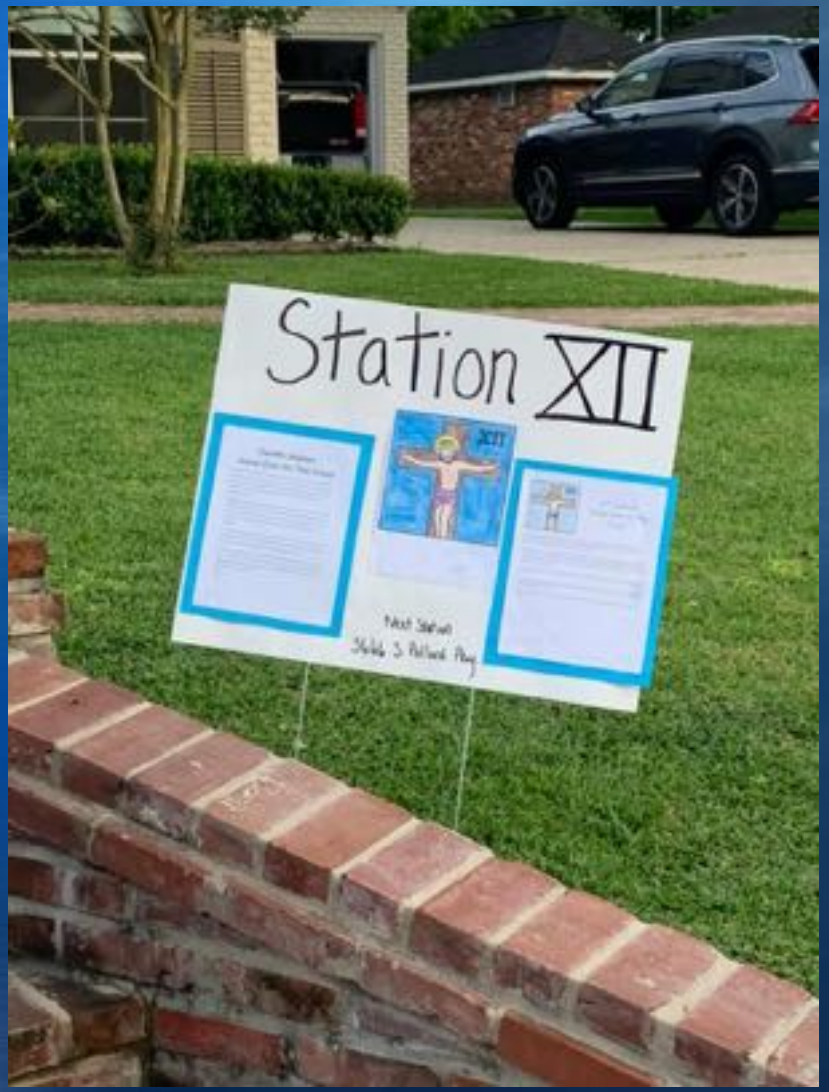
- Station to Station, by Gary Jansen
- USCCB Scriptural Stations of the Cross
- EWTN Stations of the Cross
- Creighton University - Stations of the Cross
- Creighton University - Stations with Mary
- Stations of the Cross - St. Francis of Assisi
- Audio Reflection with Mundelein Seminarians
- Audio Reflection: Abiding Together Podcast

THE 1st
STATION
JESUS IS
CONDEMNED
TO DEATH

THIRD STATION
Jesus falls the first time

Station 5
Simon of Cyrene
HELPS JESUS
Carry the Cross
Please Take
A Coloring Sheet

6789
Stations of the Cross
Jesus falls a third time


Station XII

Potential Topics

- Crisis points in marriage
- Single parent parenting skills
- My kids Aren't Growing Up Like I Did. Help!

Potential Topics

- Being the church in the world
- Biblical reflections: Find Yourself in the Stories of the Bible
- Safety in a cyberspace age

Potential Topics

- Media literacy: Knowing how the Media Influences (hoodwinks) us
- Traits of a healthy spirituality
- 9 to 5: spirituality of work

Mature Adults

Adventurous

Remember!

RCH of CHRIST
www.crievehall.org

Significant

transitions
life
time
transition
another
new
many
help
even
changes
residence
common
situation
person
close
face
house
people
Losing
allow
change
one
routines
relationship
life-changing
years
Transitions
successfully
quite
manage
part
bring
Give
shifts
position
support
job
deal
Becoming
breaks
challenging
without
others
Life
shift
expect
Major
Also
relatively
accustomed
whatever
often
fact
wed
times
co-workers
ability
obvious
spontaneously
something
first
possible
rest
Continue
Consider
managing
ahead
see
awesome
differently
got
upcoming
year
Knowing
experience
aware
exception
give
grief
events
Taking
cope
adult
helpful
permanently
filled
Experiencing
may
just
parent
turbulence
Leaving
much
trigger
causing
takes
ways
Moving
Manage
Space
death
baby
familiar
Recognize
Getting
Deciding
taking
provide
stress
passes
sadness
existence
feelings
event
married
example
Examine
happy
recharge
lifestyle
whenever
areas
comfort
Obtaining
period
Changing
Taken
Therefore

MILESTONES MINISTRY

What is a Milestone?

A milestone is a meaningful, memorable moment in the lives of individuals and communities.

What is Milestones Ministry?

Milestones Ministry provides a faith milestone as a marker along life's journey that says, "This is something important, and God is here, too." It is a faith formation practice for both home and congregation that helps all generations recognize God's presence in everyday life. Milestones Ministry offers the following benefits:

- Helps households and congregations nurture the Christian faith through life's milestones, such as baptism, weddings, confirmation, beginning

Milestones Ministry Commitment

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#83 - November 2017

A Best Practice: Milestones Ministry

All of us know the foundational principle – and want to implement practices - that respond to the reality that faith formation (for all ages) does not happen only in a "classroom" or lecture/4 week workshop format.

Formation and growth in the faith can happen all the time, especially in the 24/7 of everyday life.

More and more research tells us, too, that people are most open to learning and most affected by their faith in the transition times of life, the joyous celebrations and the complicated challenges.

Another way to name these meaningful moments is through the lens of milestones. When we pause and think about our lives we realize that they have been – and are – filled with many milestones:

Birthdays	A new job
Anniversaries	Cancer diagnosis
New homes	Grandparenthood
Graduations	Paying off a car
Pregnancy	Retirement
Miscarriage	Snowbirds traveling south
Blended family	The end of medical treatment
Loss of a pet	Anniversaries of death

… and the list could go on and on.

Within our faith community, we also celebrate milestones continually:

Baptism	First Eucharist
First Reconciliation	Confirmation
Marriage	Illness and Death

… and the list could go on and on.

Why couldn't they be… why shouldn't they be … for us who believe – and have experienced - that God is intimately with us in our everyday life, our joys and sorrows, our hopes and dreams, our challenges and delights?

In addition to the Sacraments we celebrate with our parish family, sacramental (holy/sacred/God-with-us) moments happen all the time in our daily lives

> "A faith milestone is a marker along life's journey that says, 'This is something important and God is here, too.' It is a faith formation practice for both home and congregation that helps all generations recognize God's presence in everyday life."
>
> *- Dr. David W. Anderson,*
> Co-Director at Milestones Ministry

What is Milestones Ministry?

Milestones Ministry provides guidance for celebrating milestones within the church and within the lives of individuals and families. A simple five-part structure is suggested; these five stages give the event the opportunity to take deeper root in our on-going faith growth.

Name it:

- Identify meaningful and memorable moments in people's lives
- Enable people to name the holy in life, recognize milestones along

Name it: **GRIEVING**

Equip it: Psalm 34:18; Joshua 1:9; Matthew 5:4; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Revelation 21:4; Conversations: Sharing of memories of deceased family member/friend

Bless it: Bless the grief out loud, feel it. Name the blessings received from this person and the ways you blessed her/him.

Gift it: A year calendar: on each month mark the death date.

Reinforce it: Each month on the death date, do something specific to remember: join with others to share memories; reach out to someone who is newly grieving, etc.

Name it: **EMPTY NEST TRANSITION**

Equip it: Proverbs 22:6; Proverbs 4:25-27; Psalm 127:3; Philippians 4:6-7; John 14:27; Conversation: What will be different? What are my memories, my worries, my joyful anticipations?

Bless it: Blessing for parents for the grace of letting go, the grace of new beginnings

Gift it: A journal

Reinforce it: Monthly gatherings at the parish with other empty-nesters (new ones and those who have survived it)

CHICAGO

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#64 - April 2016

Best Practices: Support for Grandparents

Some interesting facts about grandparents of today:

- Grandparents are younger than most people think. The average age of a U.S. grandparent is 48, and more than half are Baby Boomers.
- Some people who were raised by their grandparents: Maya Angelou, Carol Burnett, Bill Clinton, Willie Nelson, Jack Nicholson, Barack Obama and Oprah Winfrey.
- About 3 out of 4 grandparents think being one "is the single most important and satisfying thing in their life." And 9 in 10 "enjoy talking about their grandkids to just about everyone."
- Grandparents are in the workforce. 60% have a full-time or part-time job; 23% have started their own business.
- Grandparents like to spend time with their grandkids. 60% live close to their grandchildren. 46% wish they could live even closer. 70% see their grandchildren at least once a week. 66% travel with their grandchildren. 81% have their grandchildren for part or all of their summer vacation.

Sources:

- *http://www.grandparents.com/food-and-leisure/did-you-know/fun-facts-grandparents-day*
- *http://www.grandparents.com/food-and-leisure/did-you-know/surprising-facts-about-grandparents*

- The average American will be a grandparent for half of his or her adult life. The average age of becoming a grandparent is 48, according to AARP's 2002 Grandparents Study
- One tenth of American children live with a grandparent. This U.S. Census Bureau figure includes both grandchildren being raised by grandparents and multi-generational households (those with grandparents, parents and children). Most of these households include at least two grandchildren, and many include more.
- Grandmothers outnumber grandfathers, but that could change. Because women live longer than men, grandmothers outnumber grandfathers about 124 to 100, according to Census Bureau figures quoted in the MetLife Study. That is expected to drop significantly by 2020, however, and the numbers could continue to even out.
- About 15% of grandparents care for grandchildren while the parents work. This figure, from the AARP report, includes grandparents who are eager to provide child care and those who help out mainly because of the expense of conventional day care. Some grandparents are the sole child care providers; in other cases, they are part of a network of child care options.

> Nobody can do for little children
> what grandparents do.
> Grandparents sort of sprinkle stardust
> over the lives of little children.
> *- Alex Haley*

Today's realities – in every area of our lives – bring many and various needs. A few of the many experiences of today's grandparents include:

- Desiring to share the vitality of life and the gift of faith with their grandchildren
- Raising their grandchildren
- Wanting to unite in prayer for their families and the needs of the world
- Staying connected when their children/grandchildren live at a distance
- Experiencing the death of a grandchild

CHILDREN, YOUTH &
FAMILY RESOURCES

HOME PARENTS SERVING OTHERS

Is your nest empty?

Don't flounder, FLOURISH during this time of transition!

Emerging Eagles - Upcoming Events

SEPTEMBER

LEARN: "Find your Faith" a discussion centered on growing your faith without kids. Isaiah 43:19 "I am about to do a new thing!"

Moderated by Pastor Tyler - September 5, 7 p.m. at Word of Peace

SERVE: Cross Food Shelf - September 15, 1-3 p.m. 12915 Weinand Circle Rogers, MN

CELEBRATE: Fall Grape Stomping Festival - Chateau St. Croix Vineyard, September 30, 12 noon - 5 p.m.

Cost:$30 per person, 998 Highway 87, St. Croix Falls, WI

OCTOBER

LEARN: "The new normal" discovering ways to celebrate your faith and new life, the gift of time and what to do with it. Ecclesiastes 3:1 "There is a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens." Moderated by Pastor Kristin. October 5th at 7 p.m. at Word of Peace.

SERVE: Feed My Starving Children October 15, 1-3 p.m.

CELEBRATE: Gather at Christin Meadow's home (21000 Marie Avenue, Rogers) to put together care packages for our kids away from home! Bring and appetizer and 10 small care package items to share. October 30, 1-3 p.m.

NOVEMBER

LEARN: "Thanksgiving" Discovering what matters most, and what we are truly thankful for. Psalm 136:1 "O Give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, and his mercy endures forever!" Moderated by Pastor Keith. November 5th at 7 p.m. at Word of Peace.

SERVE: Bundles of Love, November 15,1-3 p.m.

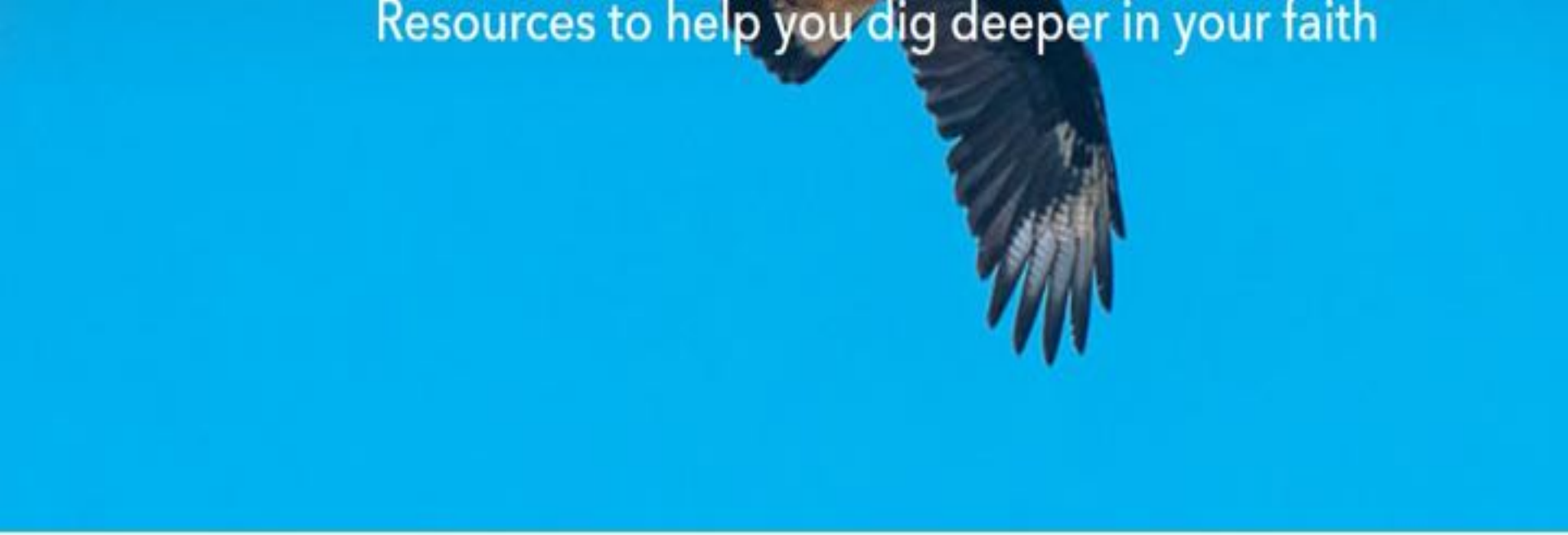
CELEBRATE: Visit CHOW, the new chophouse in Elk River! RSVP to dsexton@wordofpeace.org so we can make a reservation. 14043 Business Center Dr NW, Elk River. November 30, 7 p.m.

DECEMBER

LEARN: "While We Wait" Discovering renewed meaning in Advent, digging down to a more spiritual journey, without the mayhem of activities. Isaiah 40: 5 "And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken." Moderated by Pastor Rick. December 5th at 7 p.m. at Word of Peace.

SERVE: The Big Give - Tree of Warmth. Each couple brings a new hat, mittens or scarf to donate. We will enjoy hot chocolate and Christmas carols as we wrap these items (plus the many items our congregation has donated) for local families in need. December 15,1-3 p.m.

CELEBRATE: Hear the Minnesota Orchestra in a casual Christmas concert - A Christmas Oratorio. This casual concert offers a chance to sample local craft beers and meet the musicians on stage following the 45 minute performance. December 19, 7 p.m. Tickets $25



Daily Examen - the five-step Daily Examen that St. Ignatius practiced.

1. Become aware of God's presence.
2. Review the day with gratitude.
3. Pay attention to your emotions.
4. Choose one feature of the day and pray from it.
5. Look toward tomorrow.

Daily Devotion

- Rick Warren
- Pray as you Go

Articles

- How to Thrive in an Empty Nest - from the New York Times
- The Eternal Struggle of the Empty Nest - from the New York Times
- Coping with an Empty Nest - from the Mayo Clinic

Parenting Blogs

- 5 Verses to Ease the Loneliness of an Empty Nest
- Empty Next Blessed
- Grown and Flown

Empty Nest Specific Devotions

- Empty nest devotion
- A Mom's Guide to the Empty Nest
- Finding Hope in an Empty Nest
- Renew Your Empty Next Marriage
- After the Children Have Grown

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#105 - September 2019

A Best Practice: Reaching Out to Empty-Nesters

Some realities about adult faith formation today:

- Adults have different life tasks at various seasons of adulthood.
- All parts of life – all transitions – are sacred.
- Adults respond to formative opportunities when they are related to their everyday life and needs.
- Often learning opportunities are better responded to when they focus on a group with similar interests rather than "one-size-fits-all."

Convinced of these realities, and becoming aware of the growing number of empty-nesters in her church, Dawn Saxton from Word of Peace Lutheran Church, Rogers, MN invited a group of parents who were empty-nesters for the first time to explore their needs and how their faith community could respond.

Challenges and Opportunities

The group began by naming for themselves the challenges and opportunities that were embedded in this endeavor:

- Statistics – and their church's reality – show that there is decreasing engagement in the church among midlife adults (Gen X). Many empty-nesters fall within this statistic.

- Empty-nesters are on a journey to a new phase of life – a journey that is very different from the previous 20 or so years. Because of that, they have questions, hopes, uncertainties, fears, and at times difficulties. Therefore, many welcome new learnings and support.

- Many adults – at this time in their lives – are reflecting anew on how their lives are making a difference in their world; their desire to contribute in meaningful ways is strong.

> "Women are more likely than men to be affected; often, when the nest is emptying, mothers are going through other significant life events as well, such as menopause or caring for elderly parents.
>
> Yet this doesn't mean that men are completely immune to Empty Nest Syndrome. Men can experience similar feelings of loss regarding the departure of their children."
>
> *-Psychology Today*
> *https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/conditions/empty-nest-syndrome*

How Mid-Life Adults Learn

In addition to talking about their newly-experienced feelings and experiences, the group researched how mid-life adults prefer to learn. Some of their findings included the realities that mid-life adults:

- Experience diverse ways of learning; many prefer to learn by doing rather than just reading and listening; they are experiential learners, preferring lots of direct-experience activities

- Like to engage in shorter, episodic learning experiences (micro-learning) rather than committing to longer several-session opportunities

Volunteers
Volunteers

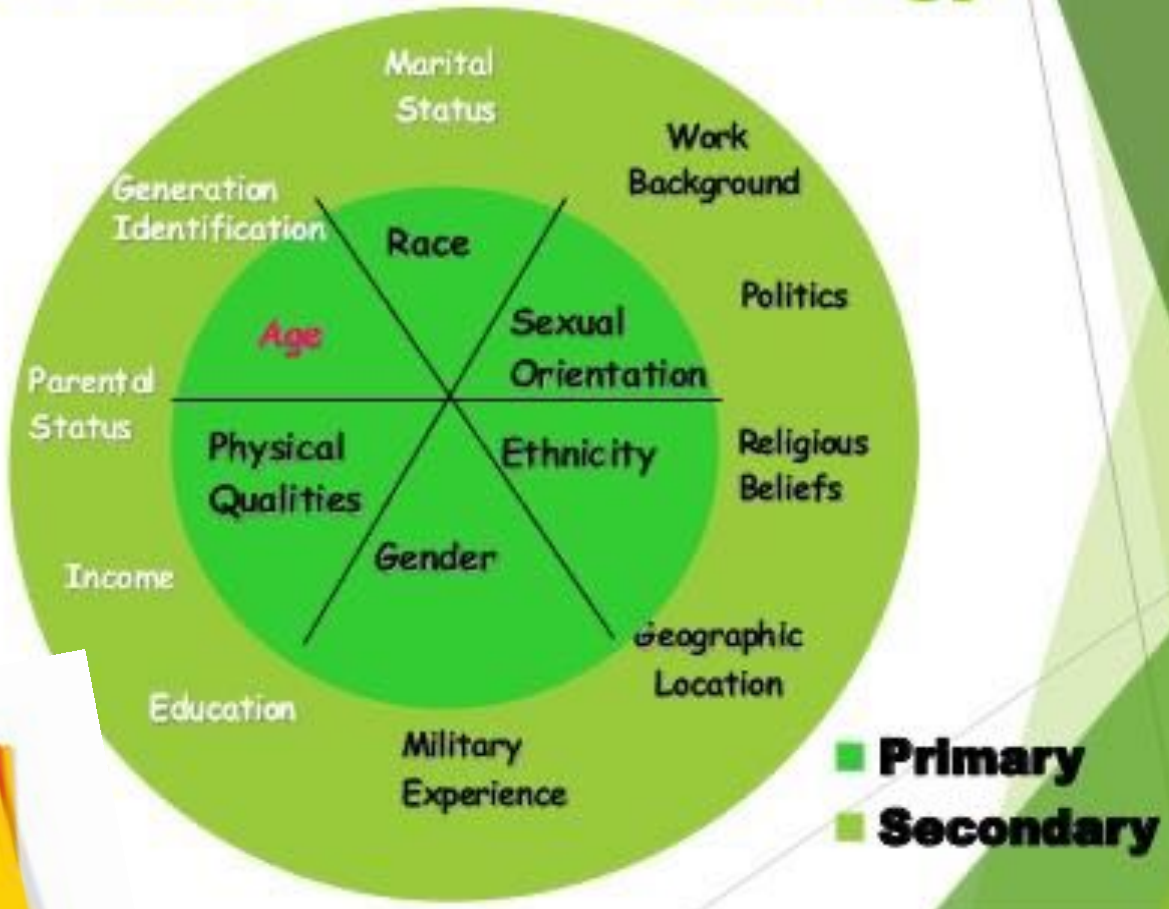
BeFriender Ministry

Habitat for Humanity®

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Multi-dimensional

Dimensions of Diversity – Boomers are More Than Chronology



The rise of the SILVER SURFERS

What over 50s do on the internet

- 71% online banking
- 40% use Skype
- 71% online shopping
- 35% social media

84% of over 50s that say technology makes it easier for them to stay in touch with friends and family

75% of over 50s that regularly use the internet

The stereotype of the technophobic older Australian has been shattered. Even though internet usage drops off among over 65s, 60% of those aged 65 are still logging on!

88% say that it is important to keep up with technological advances and changes

Internet usage in over 50s

Source:
Life Begins at 50 report
Apia's research is based on an independent telephone survey conducted by Newspoll of 2060 Australians aged 50 years and over across all states and territories in 2011.

They've been embracing new technology their entire lives and they're not going to stop now!

97% of silver surfers have used email in the past year

Rewarding experience

Apia

Videos For Your Soul

HOME | PAST VIDEO PLAYLISTS | SUBMIT

Receive by email daily

Subscribe

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#70 - October 2016

A Best Practice: Video Content from the Internet for Adult Faith Formation

As Jake Taylor (an online content marketing specialist) mentions http://www.littlejackmarketing.com/blog/2015/04/this-is-how-much-online-content-is-created-every-minute/ "…by the time you're done reading over the list, a minute has passed and you might as well start the list from the top again. That's the relentless power of content on the Internet. This process repeats 1,440 times a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year."

This infographic could spark several different topics/themes for conversation! For us, in this issue, it reminds us of how much time people today spend on the internet.

- Are we there for today's Catholic adult?
- How do we use the content that is available to us digitally?

This issue will begin to explore one aspect of the second question. Many people spend a great deal of time on the web. They can be inundated with digital content (print, audio, video). Exploring print and audio content on the internet might take pages and pages. For this issue, let us take a beginning look at video content. What are some possible

- **sources of video content** for our adult faith formation?
- **ways and methods of using video content** within various adult faith formation settings?

Some Ways and Methods

First, let's explore some **ways and methods of using video content** for and within today's adult faith formation:

- Every week (or month) place a different link in your bulletin/website; encourage parishioners to utilize these sites as they continue to "learn on their own"
- After watching together a "presentation," invite the gathered adults to a conversation which applies the content/messages to their life
- During Advent or Lent suggest several sites for personal and/or family use (You may want to revisit GEMS #60.)
- Clip a segment of a presentation and broadcast it through social media as a "message for today"

Looking at Jesus on the cross
09/20/15
Read Pope Francis Reflections

September 20, 2015
09/20/15
Read Daily Reading and Prayer

Commitment to charity
09/14/15
Read Faith In Action

Four ways your family can reflect God to the world
09/14/15
Read Family Living

Some of us find God at church on Sunday, but finding God the other six days of the week can be a puzzle. Other6 is a community dedicated to helping each other experience God at all times, in all things.

Where did you find God today?

140 characters

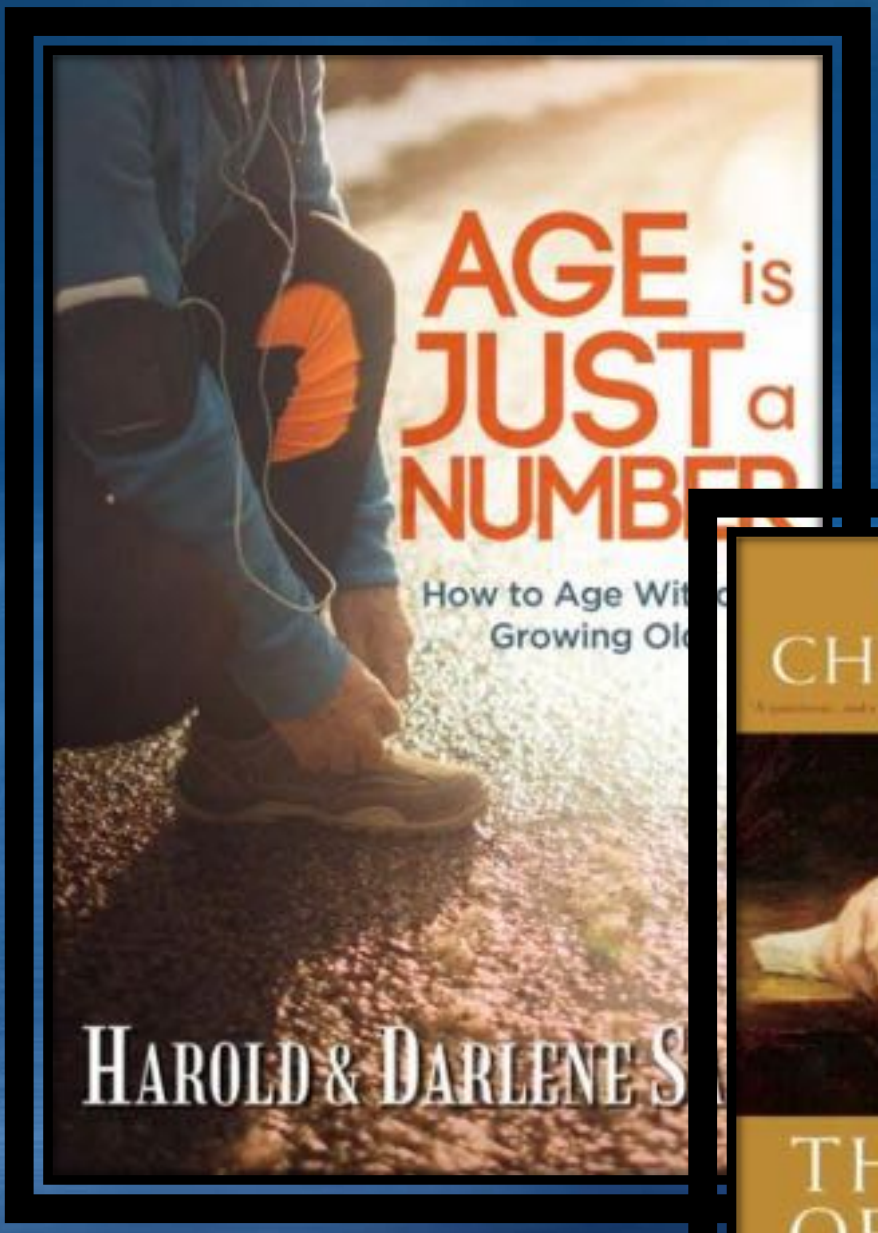
POST IT!

Where do you need to find God today?

140 characters

POST IT!

Reflections


AGE is
JUST a
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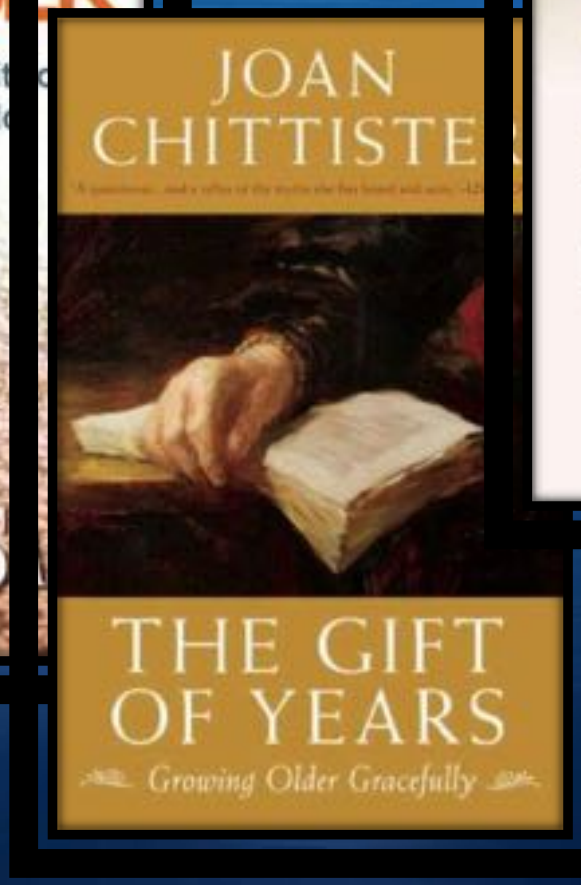
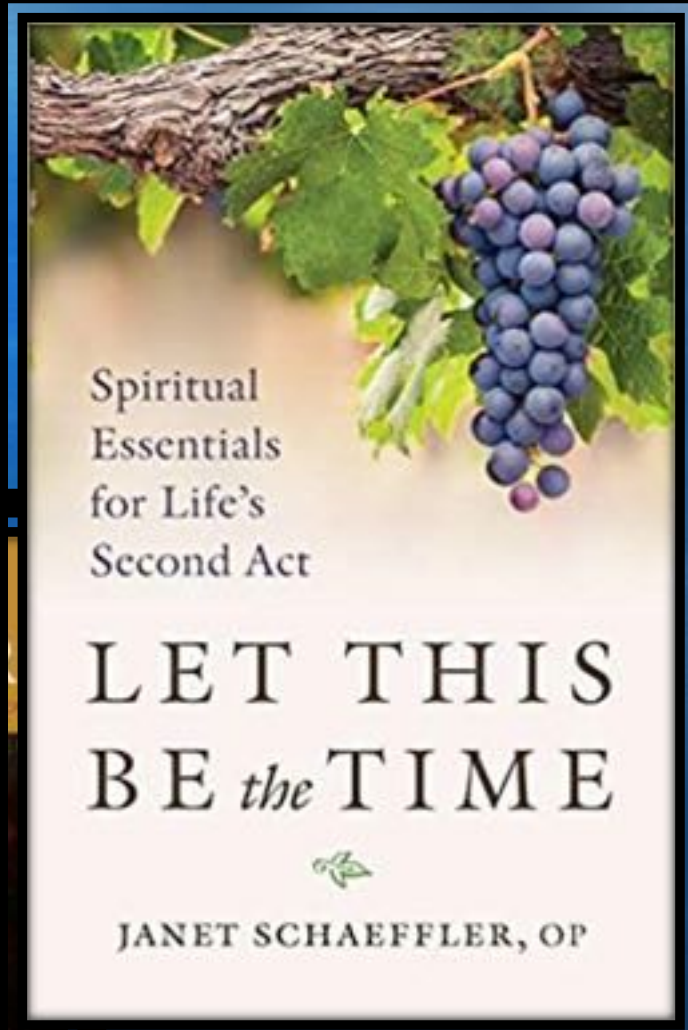
Growing Old
HAROLD & DARLENE S


JOAN
CHITTISTE
THE GIFT
OF YEARS
Growing Older Gracefully


Spiritual
Essentials
for Life's
Second Act
LET THIS
BE the TIME
JANET SCHAEFFLER, OP

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#75 - March 2017

A Best Practice: Ministry with Maturing Adults (Part I)

We have begun to realize that we have a "new generation" within our world and church who is in need of a unique and dedicated approach to on-going faith development and support through all the challenges and transitions they experience: those that come with the second half of life.

> Between 2010 and 2050,
> the United States is projected to experience
> rapid growth in its older population.
> In 2050, the number of Americans aged 65
> and older is projected be 88.5 million
> more than double its population of 40.2 million
> in 2010.
>
> *- U.S. Department of Commerce,*
> *Economics and Statistics Administration,*
> *U.S. Census Bureau*
> *http://www.eos.ncl.ac.uk/Aging_Statistics/future_growth/DOC/p25-1138.pdf*

Pope Francis identified the growing needs of those in the second half of life, recognizing that the church has a responsibility to respond to these growing needs. Pope Francis reminded us that there is a true vocation and mission set aside for older people, who have a lot more free time at their disposal now than before. "It's still not time to 'rest on one's oars' " and just coast along, he said. Being older is certainly different, and so when it comes to finding one's new purpose in the world, seniors need to sort of "make it up" as they go along "because our societies are not ready, spiritually and morally, to give this period of life its full worth." Even "Christian spirituality has been taken a bit by surprise, and it involves sketching out a spirituality of older persons," he said. (Weekly general audience, March 11, 2015)

Many Responses

Fortunately today, parishes, dioceses and committed ministers are responding to the needs of all generations within the church, including the growing population of maturing adults.

Dr. Richard Johnson, Ph.D, a pioneer in the field of spiritual gerontology, has researched the topic extensively and concluded that, as we age, our spiritual pace quickens and we seek real opportunities to further develop our spiritual growth.

Dr. Johnson advocates for a dedicated focus on maturing adults within our parishes:

"Every successful parish ministry to maturing adults (and any other program for that matter) needs a person who is in charge, a person whose responsibility is to serve as the catalytic agent, primary visionary, and energy source for the program. In short, we need a director.

Certainly it is common for a parish to have a youth minister, an individual appropriately educated and equipped to organize, lead and shepherd a vibrant program for the young people in the parish. I see the ministry of **parish ministry for maturing adults as a similarly important position in the parish**; it requires an individual who is educated and equipped to shepherd a vibrant program for maturing adults."

(Richard P. Johnson in Parish Ministry for Maturing Adults: Principles, Plans & Bold Proposals)

A director for ministry to maturing adults within the parish: how needed!

> ... in the North, the growth industry of the
> future is likely to be ministry to elders. What youth
> ministry was to the John Paul years, elder ministry
> will be to the twenty-first century.
>
> - John L. Allen, *The Future Church*, page 162

Potential Topics

- Simplifying life
- Self Care
- Sharing faith with grandchildren and caring for grandchildren

Potential Topics

- Managing life transitions
- Living as an empty-nest family
- Marriage relationships in the mature years

Potential Topics

- The joys of grandparenting
- Christian perspectives on everyday medical dilemmas
- Growing older without fear

Potential Topics

- Managing Life Issues
- Becoming a caregiver
- Spirituality of the aging years

Older Adults

SENIORS | STANFORD UNIVERSITY

People over 80 who use technology feel healthier

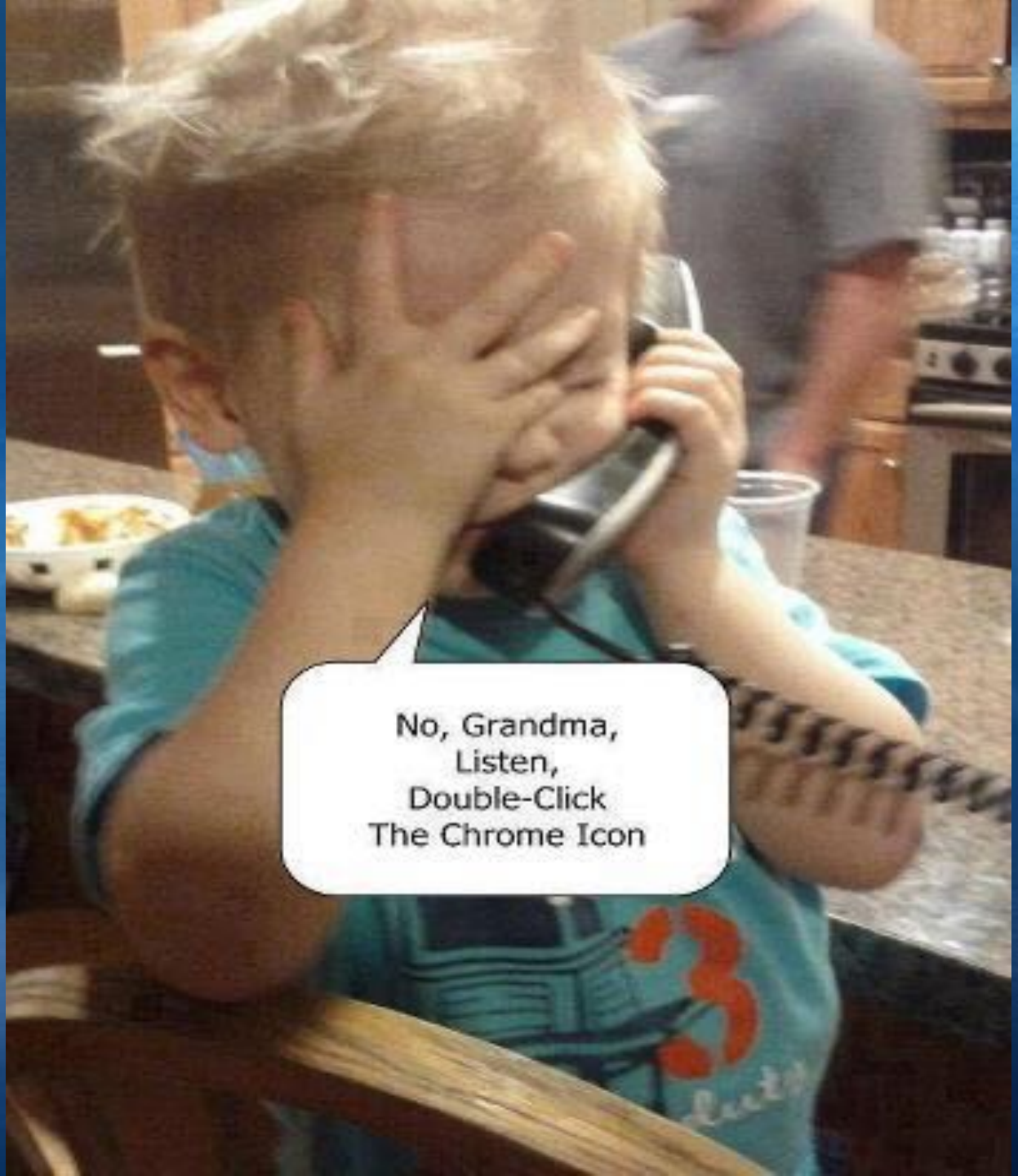
Posted by Alex Shashkevich-Stanford | November 29th, 2016

Share Article

You are free to share this article under the Attribution 4.0 International license.

Follow Futurity

Adults over 80 who use technology, like cellphones and computers, to stay connected report higher levels of both mental and physical well-being.


No, Grandma,
Listen,
Double-Click
The Chrome Icon

Our Lady of Lourdes

#40dayscount

Lent 2014

Week 1

Parish Lenten Experiences

March 7 – Lenten Soup Supper – 6:30pm

March 7 – Stations of the Cross – 7:30pm

Busy this Lent?

Join us online for the Busy Person's Retreat

Reflecting on scripture and the writings of Fr. Ronald Rolheiser

Making Time...
A Retreat for Busy People

Want to know more?
Email: kayharter@sfpr.org

Readings

Genesis 2: 7-9, 3:1-7
Psalm 51: 3-4, 5-6, 12-14, 17
Romans : 12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

Reflection Question:

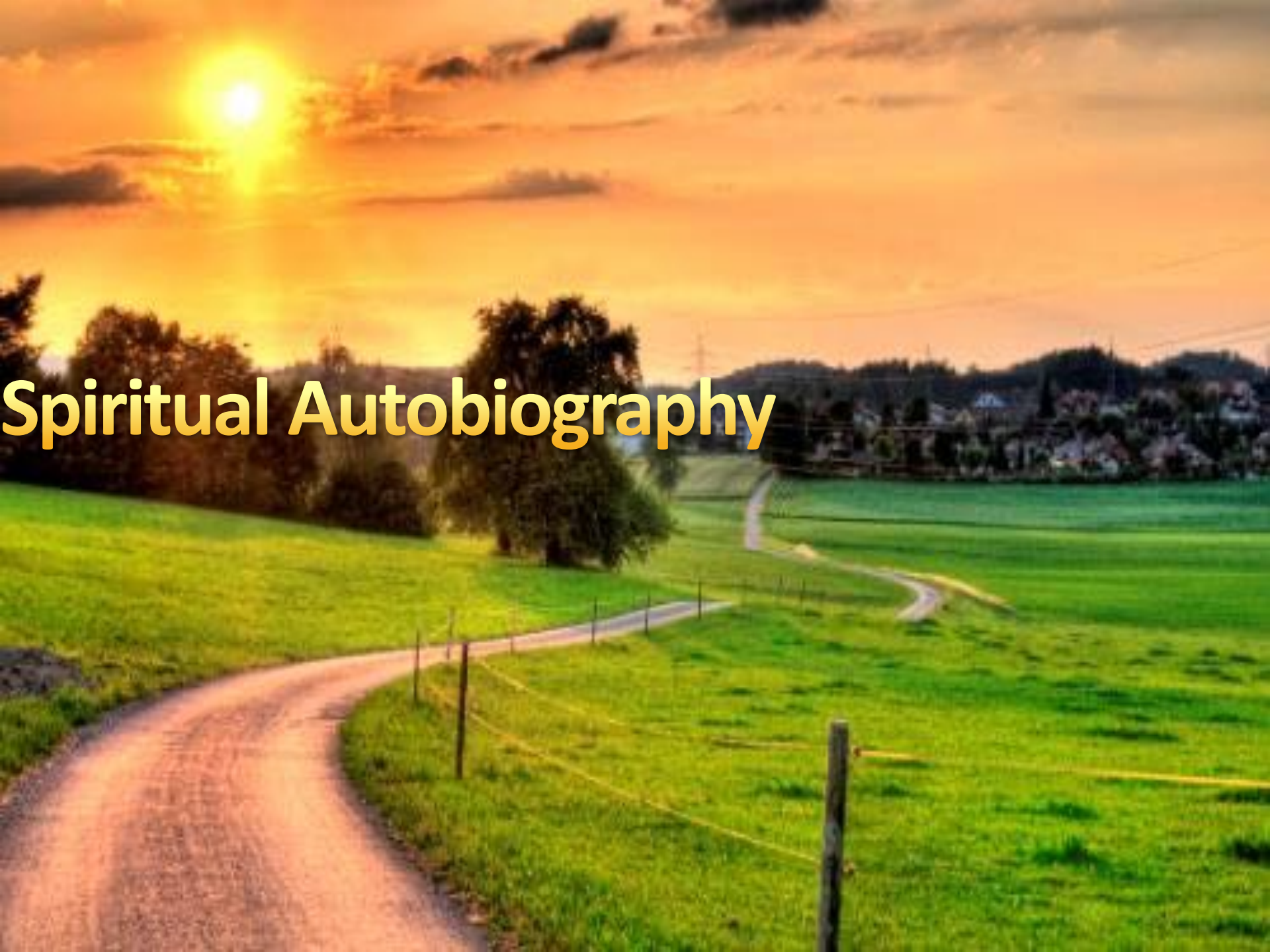
In the Gospel, there are two ways Jesus is tempted to use his power for himself. In what ways are we tempted to do what is self serving?

Pray As You Go – Podcasts you can listen to on the go from your mobile device. Check back each day for a new Podcast.

App of the Week

Catholic Relief Services Rice Bowl app (free on Android and Apple) takes the experience of Rice Bowl almsgiving into the rest of your life. This helps you stick with the three pillars of Lent – almsgiving, fasting and prayer – right from your device.
There are reflections for each day of Lent, just like on the calendar you get with your Rice Bowl, but you also get to watch videos of the people whose stories you learn during Lent.
Each Friday, there are meatless recipes, along with a family whose story is featured (you can eat the same thing they would eat).

Memories


Spiritual Autobiography

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#77 - May 2017

A Best Practice: Inviting People to Spiritual Autobiography

During our last two issues, we explored the importance of and ways of ministering to mature adults. One of the "spiritual practices" that is often helpful for people in their maturing years is the writing of a spiritual autobiography.

In this issue we will look at one person's journey in her writing of an autobiography as well as her generosity in helping others along this path of writing (how she offered an adult faith formation opportunity for others). We will look at this process of walking with others because it exemplifies some key principles of adult faith formation:

- It is an example of a parishioner with a gift, a parishioner who felt a call to share her experience which had a tremendous impact upon her life.
- It is the witness of an adult faith formation coordinator who recognized the gift, empowered and supported her in sharing it. Thus, many parishioners benefited and were much richer.

What is a Spiritual Autobiography?

A google search will reveal various descriptions of a spiritual autobiography:

- "What is spiritual autobiography? Simply put, it's telling the story of what God has done in your life. It's an invitation to share your God story. Spiritual autobiography is also an invitation to receive the God stories of others. As we share our testimonies of God's faithfulness amidst our struggles we are reminded that God has always been present on our journey. As we hear someone's spiritual autobiography we remember that God is with all of us as we journey. This act of giving and receiving each other's God stories is the gift of spiritual autobiography." (http://www.journeyoncanvas.com/)

- "Regular autobiographies tend to focus on career, accomplishments, degrees, and awards. In many respects they become journals of our ego trips. Spiritual autobiographies, on the other hand, really aren't about us at all. They're about how God has worked in our lives by using dozens and perhaps hundreds of men and women, young and old, who have walked with us on our spiritual journey." (http://www.thebanner.org/departments/2011/01/your-spiritual-autobiography)

- "Writing one's spiritual autobiography is itself a tool for spiritual formation. A spiritual autobiography is not done in the sense of writing a "term paper" or just writing biographical details about your life. This is process that is done prayerfully, with the author paying attention to what God has to say as he or she reflects back over his or her life. Many individuals find the process of writing to be a time of encountering God and coming to a greater understanding of how God has been at work in his or her life. A spiritual autobiography is not meant to be a comprehensive chronicle of your spiritual journey, but rather a selective reflection on events, periods, influences, people and experiences that God leads you to write about." (http://lci.typepad.com/files/aa1-spiritual-autobiography-guidelines.pdf)

The Beginnings

In 1995 Mary C. Ternes, a parishioner at St. Lucy Parish, St. Clair Shores, MI, had no idea why, but she felt led to begin writing her life story. It was a few months after her husband died, a very difficult time in her life. No one suggested journaling, jotting down her thoughts and feelings, or writing the story of her life, but, all of a sudden Mary felt a yearning to write her story. An outline formed in her mind, flowing from "the houses she lived in" and thus her spiritual autobiography began.

After its completion two years later, Mary gave copies to her children, brothers and a few friends. With its conclusion, Mary realized many things, among them:

- The writing of her story brought much healing during a time of grief.

- Mary wanted her children to know their history, what was because of specific decisions; what might have been if there had been other decisions.

MECCANO
ACCOUN
SECRETS

PRAYER

retreat

The Altar

The word "altar" comes from a Latin word that means "to burn up." In antiquity the altar – more a barbecue pit than a dining table – was the place where blood was spilled, flesh roasted, incense oil and grain were burned. It was a place of bloody sacrifice.

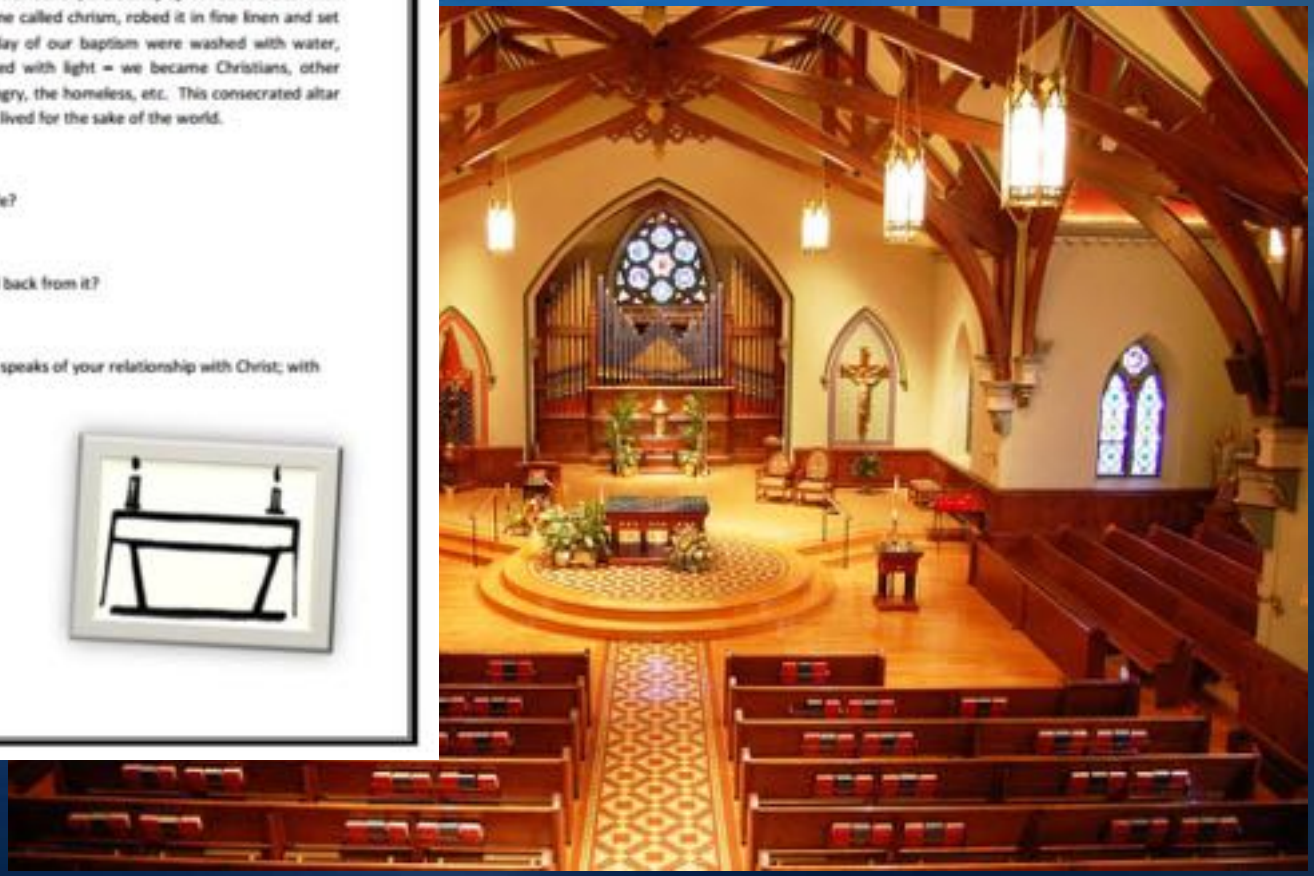
Now God calls us to gather around this dining table-turned-altar. It is our lives lived in common, with and for each other that God desires to be placed on this altar under the signs of bread and wine. It is our hearts -our very selves- that God longs for us to lift up at this altar. We give to God our hearts, baked into this bread. We give our lives -all the pain and promise, joys and sorrows wrung from us like this wine crushed from grapes. All this is put on the altar and God accepts it and makes it holy and gives it back to us as the Body and Blood of Jesus. The bread, the wine, we – the world – all is changed here.

To come to this table is to come to Christ.

That is what we name this table: Christ. On the day of the dedication, the bishop sprinkled this altar with water, slathered it with a mixture of olive oil and perfume called chrism, robed it in fine linen and set candles around it. Sound familiar? We, too, on the day of our baptism were washed with water, anointed with oil, robed in fine garments and entrusted with light – we became Christians, other Christ's, an altar of sacrifice, a banquet table for the hungry, the homeless, etc. This consecrated altar stands here, Christ in our midst, center of our life, our life lived for the sake of the world.

- How is your life Christ's? How is this altar your life?
- What do you need to lay on it? What do you hold back from it?
- You are invited to do some gesture of prayer that speaks of your relationship with Christ; with this altar.

Mary Ann Ronan
St. Paul Catholic Church
Phoenix, Arizona



GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#29 - May 2013

A Best Practice: A Do-It-Yourself Evening of Reflection

Would you like to offer an opportunity for the faith growth of the adults in your parish which:

- takes very little planning and work
- requires minimal materials and no media
- necessitates no set-up
- calls people to prayer
- provides the potential for deepened understanding and appreciation of Eucharist and the church as sacred space

Then this issue, featuring another best practice of adult faith formation, is exactly what you need.

> In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy,
> this full and active participation by all the people
> is the aim to be considered before all else,
> for it is the primary and indispensable source
> from which the faithful
> are to derive the true Christian spirit.

(Let's digress for a moment to explain this process at St. Paul Parish for the New Roman Missal: The Lifelong Faith Formation Committee realized that formation for the changes because of the New Roman Missal would need to be planned by and led by the parish. They knew that their people would have to be formed as leaders in this process.

Thus, the committee began with their lists of lectors, ushers, choir, Eucharistic Ministers and prayed over them. They culled it to sixty-six people, sending each a letter inviting them to a process that included them becoming "teachers"/facilitators in the implementation of the Roman Missal.

It was a six-week process. Materials from Liturgy Training Publications were used as the basis. The committee joined these trainers in doing some of the teaching. Sixty-two people committed to the six weeks.

They formed teaching groups of three or four and taught various sessions to the parishioners. There were teams for the evening, after Masses, during the day. Two hundred and fifty parishioners participated and learned of the changes in this manner through small groups.

The sixty-two trainers also took turns being present after the weekend liturgies for several weeks ... just being present so parishioners could ask

Facing Death and Dying

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

 # 13 - November 2011

A Best Practice: *Don't Be Caught Dead, Plan Ahead* … (and some other best practices)

A very common adult faith formation technique is a series of talks or workshops. Why is this one being featured? Let's read on and it will, hopefully, become obvious.

In addition to an extensive description of *Don't Be Caught Dead, Plan Ahead*, you will also find here:

- two other opportunities offered by additional parishes
- some suggested resources

Just what is it?

A few years ago, Jann Newman, Christian Service Director at St. Isaac Jogues Parish, St. Clair Shores, Michigan planned a three-week workshop series designed to help people work on plans for their funeral, with each session focusing on a specific aspect of the preparation.

The series, entitled *Don't Be Caught Dead, Plan Ahead*, **attracted people's attention** and got them thinking and talking, **even before the first session** began.

Why was this planned and offered?

- Jann began to realize that often after funerals, parishioners would come up to her and say, "I really liked that hymn. I want it at my funeral." "I would like that Scripture reading at my funeral."

  Many times these folks were saying it as though they wanted Jann to remember their particular request when it came time for *their* funeral. Therefore, it seemed time to help them look at **their own funeral planning** and provide an opportunity *for them* to write down their plans.

- It was becoming more and more obvious as families came to arrange for a funeral and make plans for the liturgy that they were stymied in **knowing where to begin** and often in understanding the various parts of the Mass.

- As the years are passing, people's lives are becoming busier, families are living further apart, and customs are changing; for some people, **attitudes toward death and funerals are shifting.**

The theology of death and resurrection, and **the rituals of the funeral rites** within the Catholic Church, are **rich with meaning**, filled with hope and consolation. Yet, many people have never experienced them, or had a chance – catechetically – to reflect on their meaning.

Why is this a "good" adult faith formation offering?

- One of the most important principles of adult learning is that adults learn best when:
  - the learning is **meeting a life need**
  - the offering is coming directly from their **life experiences**
  - it is something that will **answer their questions**

At times, do we offer programs that answer questions which people aren't asking? Things might be on our agenda, but they don't have anything to do with the questions, worries, concerns that are currently on people's minds.

> "An approach of 'corned beef and hash
> for everyone' (which is tantamount to
> 'We don't care what you need,
> this is what you get
> because this is what we've got')
> and programs based simply on what
> the religious educator or pastor wants to teach
> are too capricious."
>
> - McKenzie and Harton in
> *The Religious Education of Adults*, 2002

GEMS

GREAT ENDEAVORS MINED & SHARED

from an International Adult Faith Formation Best Practices Study

#73 - January 2017

A Best Practice: Hospice Nurses and Heaven

When we reflect on our own lives as well as listen to the life stories of others, it doesn't take us long to realize that the various happenings within our lives are the jump-starts to our readiness to learn and grow in faith.

The best practice highlighted in this issue is a prime example of this reality: growth in faith and spirituality occurs and deepens because of reflection on the reality of our everyday life and death experiences.

The book and website - *Seasons of Adult Faith Formation* – provides more ideas on this truth: our growth faith is deeply connected with our everyday life experiences; paying attention to the life tasks and needs of the various seasons of life provide rich opportunities for faith growth.

- *The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation*
  http://www.lifelongfaith.com/store/p25/The_Seasons_of_Adult_Faith_Formation.html

- *The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation website*
  http://www.lifelongfaith.com/2015-adult-faith-formation-symposium.html

Who?

This opportunity, *Hospice Nurses and Heaven*, is currently offered for two different groups (with appropriate adaptations for each). The department of evangelization of the diocese of Green Bay, WI designed and presents *Hospice Nurses and Heaven* for:

- Senior citizens (especially in retirement communities and nursing homes)
- Interested parishioners (many who come are grieving the loss of a family member and/or friend)

How did it begin?

Listening to people's questions and wonderings, there is a universal curiosity and interest in what happens during the dying process and after death.

Joe Tremblay, adult faith formation coordinator for the diocese of Green Bay, WI, became acquainted with several hospice nurses. One of them had written a book about her experiences with dying patients who routinely reached out to God and their deceased relatives during their dying process. Joe found that other hospice nurses recounted similar experiences.

Joe realized that a reflection and conversation on this reality of dying (for many people) would be advantageous:

- to console those in grief, sharing with them the hopeful reality of seeing their loved ones again
- to help alleviate the fear that some people have of dying
- to deepen people's awareness of heaven
- to offer an opportunity to reflect on the Paschal Mystery – that death empowers us to live fully
- to help people realize that human experience confirms the teaching of Scripture and tradition

God said to St. Catherine of Siena
regarding family members in heaven:

"Although they are all joined in the bond of charity,
they know a special kind of sharing with those
whom they loved most closely
with a special love in the world,
a love through which they grew in grace and virtue. …

So now in everlasting life they have not lost that love;
no, they still love and share with each other
even more closely and fully,
adding their love to the good of all."

- The Dialogue of St. Catherine of Siena

Potential Topics

- Facing losses gracefully
- Wisdom—the gift of age: what do I do with it?
- Taking stock: finding meaning in later life

Potential Topics

- Coping with illness
- Life after retirement: Writing the Next Chapter
- Lifestyle changes in later life

Potential Topics

- New-Old Ways to Pray
- Comfort-Challenge of Resurrection
- The Best is Yet to Come (elder spirituality)
- The 12 Keys of Successful Aging

Explore the defining human experiences of the following time in life...

"THE CHURCH'S PASTORAL ACTION MUST FOLLOW THE FAMILY, ACCOMPANYING IT STEP BY STEP IN THE DIFFERENT STAGES OF ITS FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT." POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II - FAMILIARIS CONSORTIO #66

Newly Married

- From single to couple
- [illegible] family system
- Career
- Spirituality/faith practice
- Family planning & infertility

- Include spouse in previous parish involvement
- Configuration/openness

- NFP info sessions
- Life in the Spirit Seminar
- Marriage mentor couples

Becoming a parent

Families with Young Children

- Parenting training for children
- Couple time/communication
- Parental expectations
- Work/home balance
- Children with special needs

- Baptism
- Children's Liturgy of the Word
- Preschool programs

- Mom's Group
- Elizabeth Ministry

School age

Families with School-Aged Children

- Bullying
- Over-commitment
- Encountering diversity
- School/home re-bonding
- Passing on the faith
- Love

- Catholic School
- Religious Education
- Person Centered Sacrament Preparation

- Single parent support strategies
- New Life Retreat
  St. Andrews School of Evangelization
- Journey together as a family

Children become adolescents

Families with Adolescents

- Self-discovery/individuation
- Mental health
- Social media impact
- Developing relationships
- Sexual development
- Shift in parent-child relationship

- Confirmation
- Youth Groups
- Catholic High Schools

- Just for Parents Discussion Group
- Kerygma: A Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- Charity programs

Launching young adult children

Single/Married Adults

- Changing spousal relationship
- Parent-adult child relationship
- Intergenerational caregiving
- Wellness
- Assessing leadership roles

- Parish Ministry Leadership
- Fraternal Organizations

- Caregiver Workshops
- Focolle International
- Marriage Encounter
- Marriage Ministry

Retirement

Golden Years

- Retirement
- Financial adjustments
- Loss and bereavement
- Health issues
- Losing independence
- Mortality/end-of-life issues

- Kings
- Vision Social Groups
- Traditional Organizations

- Transgenerational Ministry for Seniors
- Spiritual Grandparenting

Janet Schaeffler, OP

...Faith Formation Matters...

- Home
- About Janet
- For Your Needs
- Adult Formation
- Catechists
- Leadership
- Parents/Family
- Reflection Days
- Best Practices

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

- 14 Ideas for Adult Faith Formation
- A View from the Community: Adult Faith Formation Today
- Adult Faith Formation: Counting the Consequences
- Effective Formation Practices for Mature Adults
- Formation Possibilities for Adults in These Times
- Ideas Mushroom in a Think Tank
- In the Process is the Growth
- Many Ways to Do Adult Faith Formation
- Moving into the Future through a Parish Synod
- Opportunities for Growth for Today's Maturing Adults
- The Planning Process Involves Everyone
- Some Innovative Options for Adult Faith Formation
- Ten Tried and True - or Relatively New - Adult Faith Formation Ideas
- Using Everyday Observances for Adult Faith Formation

CATECHETICS

- 12 Quick Tips for Catechists
- Breath-Taking Responsibility, Exhilarating Challenge
- Catechists Co-Partnering with Parents
- Communications 101 for Catechetical Leaders
- Forming People of Compassion
- Is Your Class Too Busy?
- Let Your Lessons Travel Home to the Family
- Living our Baptismal Call: The ABCs of Catholic Social Teaching

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- Articles

GEMS: Great Endeavors Mined and Shared

from an International Best Practices Study

#1 (September 2010): The Sunday-Monday Connection
#2 (October 2010): A Year of Renewal
#3 (November 2010): A Royal Welcome: Secrets of Belonging *(Part I)*
#4 (December 2010): A Royal Welcome: Secrets of Belonging *(Part II)*
#5 (January 2011): A Royal Welcome: Secrets of Belonging *(Part III)*
#6 (February 2011): A Royal Welcome: Secrets of Belonging *(Part IV)*
#7 (March 2011): A Royal Welcome: Secrets of Belonging *(Part V)*
#8 (April 2011): A Royal Welcome: Secrets of Belonging *(Part VI)*
#9 (May 2011): A Royal Welcome: Secrets of Belonging *(Part VII)*
#10 (June-July 2011): Scripture by the Sound

#11 (September 2011): Online Scripture Study
#12 (October 2011): A Vicariate Mission
#13 (November 2011): Don't Be Caught Dead: Plan Ahead
#14 (December 2011): Parish Lenten Book Study Process
#15 (January 2012): Hospitality in Adult Faith Formation *(Part I)*
#16 (February 2012): Hospitality in Adult Faith Formation *(Part II)*
#17 (March 2012): Hospitality in Adult Faith Formation *(Part III)*
#18 (April 2012): Hospitality in Adult Faith Formation *(Part IV)*
#19 (May 2012): Empowering the Living of Gifts
#20 (June 2012): A Retreat by Parishioners

#21 (September 2012): Adult Faith Formation that Keeps Growing
#22 (October 2012): Content in Adult Faith Formation *(Part I)*
#23 *(November 2012)*: Content in Adult Faith Formation *(Part II)*
#24 (December 2012): Content in Adult Faith Formation *(Part III)*
#25 (January 2013): Lenten Evening of Prayer
#26 (February 2013): Content in Adult Faith Formation *(Part IV)*