



October Newsletter

Saint Joseph Parish School of Religion

Well it is that time of the year again and we are well under way with our PSR program. It is hard to believe that we are already a month in the program. I want to personally welcome all of our new families and on behalf of myself and our catechist's we want to thank you for allowing us to be part of your child's faith formation. This is a big task and we are so blessed to have so many wonderful volunteers in our program that are not only sharing their faith but living it.

As I walk through the halls I pick up on many of the lessons that take place and sometimes I just want to stop what I am doing and just listen. Unfortunately I have things that need to get done, but it is so amazing how well our catechists are touching the lives of our youth. Since my wife is a catechist this year you will probably hear a lot of her class in the newsletter so they better be on their best behavior – just kidding or am I?

We are truly blessed and I definitely feel that the Holy Spirit is on fire within this program. This past Sunday, Rev. Reinersman made a visit to all the classes which was appreciated. I believe that this time change will give plenty of opportunities for our priest to visit the program without being rushed.

For those that are new this will be my typical format of our newsletters that go out every month; Letter to the Parents, Important Dates, Saint of the month, Holiday info if applicable, and miscellaneous information. If you would like to see more of one topic or have a suggestion please let me know – I want to make sure that I am meeting your needs and what you would like to see in this program.

Disciple of Christ,
Steven M. Fischer
Coordinator of Religious Education

COMMUNICATION BY E-MAIL

We would like to set a new procedure to communicate important information to you by e-mail. Please make sure we have your correct e-mail address so we can get information to you promptly. You can call Steven Fischer at 442-0212 or e-mail stjoepsr@hotmail.com to let us know your e-mail address. If you do not have an e-mail address, please let us know so a paper note may be sent home through your child's catechist. Thank you for helping us to save money and resources as well as to inform you of announcements quickly and efficiently.

Important Dates to Remember

September 30 Class
October 7 Class

**October 9 First Reconciliation Parent Meeting
7:00 p.m. Church – 2nd Grade**

October 14 *No Class – Fall Break*
October 21 *Class, Mission Sunday*
October 28 Class

The Three Wise Guys

Christian one-liners

- 1) Don't let your worries get the best of you, Remember, Moses started out as a basket case.
- 2) Some people are kind, polite, and sweet-spirited until you try to sit in their pews.
- 3) Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisors.
- 4) The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close.
- 5) People are funny; they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road, and the back of the church.
- 6) Opportunity may knock once, but temptation bangs on your front door forever.
- 7) Some minds are like concrete: thoroughly mixed up and permanently set.
- 8) Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.
- 9) God doesn't call the qualified. God qualifies the called.
- 10) God grades on the cross, not the curve.
- 11) God loves everyone, but probably prefers "fruits of the spirit" over "religious nuts!"
- 12) God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.
- 13) The best mathematical equation ever:
$$1 \text{ cross} + 3 \text{ nails} = 4 \text{ given}$$

Visit us online:

www.stjosephcoldspring.com/church/psr.html

Protecting God's Children for Adults

Child sexual abuse is a worldwide public health issue. Child abuse, particularly child sexual abuse, is reprehensible—especially when the wrongdoer is affiliated with the Church. The VIRTUS® programs assist the Church in being a safe haven for children and a messenger for preventing child sexual abuse within the Church and society in general. We seek to achieve this lofty goal through our child sexual abuse prevention program: PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN™.

The PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN™ Program

Most organizations that work with children have some sort of child safety program. Through the PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN program, we maximize those efforts by helping churches and religious organizations refine their roles as child safe environments and empowering them with new tools to help them, and adults and parents, protect children.

Why Does It Work?

Child abusers seek to operate and abuse their power within nurturing, child-friendly environments where it is assumed that nobody would want to harm a child. Religious organizations of all faiths are an easy target. The PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN program implements safety mechanisms that send a message to all abusers and potential abusers:

- Child abuse is not tolerated,
- Children are vigilantly protected,
- Victims are listened to, heard, and shielded from further abuse, and
- Offenders are identified and punished.

By utilizing best practices for training and loss prevention, the PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN program helps make churches safe for all people—especially children.

How Does It Work?

Maximizing a church's role as a child-safe environment begins with making adults more aware of the ways children and adults interact with each other. The PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN program educates and trains adults (clergy, religious, teachers, staff, volunteers, and parents) about the dangers of abuse, the warning signs of abuse, the ways to prevent abuse, the methods of properly reporting suspicions of abuse, and responding to allegations of abuse.

All VIRTUS training programs, including the PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN programs, are comprehensive and multi-dimensional—incorporating proven best practice standards for the prevention of child sexual abuse by clergy, staff, volunteers, and others who interact with children within the church environment. Our training programs incorporate instructor-led training, train-the-facilitator education, awareness videos, and regularly scheduled continuing education and training via state-of-the-art web-based training and education courses.

Training Adults To Protect Children

They begin by making adults of the Church that interact with children aware of how to protect children. Our PROTECTING GOD'S CHILDREN program for adults is a three to four hour awareness session that instructs adults of the Church that interact with children that to protect children you must have continuous awareness and vigilance. This awareness session makes trainees understand the signs of child sexual abuse, the methods and means by which offenders commit abuse and five empowerment steps one can use to prevent child sexual abuse.

Any Parent that wishes to volunteer must attend this course to keep us in compliance with the Diocese of Covington – which includes those that volunteer for Library. Below you will find a list of classes that are available and how to enroll – thank you for your time and for protecting God's children.

- St. Pius X Church, Meeting Rooms 1-2-3, Edgewood
Sunday, Oct. 7, 6:30 – 10 p.m.
- Holy Family School Hall. Covington
Tuesday, Oct. 9, 6:30 to 10 p.m.
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Father Britt Hall, Burlington, (lower parking lot)
Tuesday, Oct. 16, 6:30 to 10 p.m.
- St. Cecilia School, Independence
Sunday, Oct. 21, 1 to 4:30 p.m.

To Register and Sign Up for the Class:

www.virtus.org, "Registration"

User ID should be your email address. If you are having difficulties with the program, call Anita Geifer at (859) 392-1565 or email ageiger@covingtondocese.org

We are so excited to have the privilege of sharing this artwork with you. If you are an art enthusiast, or just love the beauty and peace found in spiritual works of art, do not miss this special exhibit!

LOST IN THE BEAUTY OF HER GOD is the title of Sister Marie Pierre Semler's (New York 1901-1993) exhibit that Fr. Stef Bankemper will be presenting on **Sunday, October 7th @ 7:00pm at St. Catherine Church.** "When Sister Marie looked at a piece of wood, stone or canvas, she saw stories, messages of inspiration and the achievements and shortcomings of humankind." Fr. Stef will guide us in prayer and meditation inspired from the art. **The exhibit will be on display in the undercroft prior to the talk from 4:00-7:00 pm.** Questions call Terri 859-441-3438.

Celebrating Saint
Saint Francis of Assisi
Patron Saint of animals and the ecology
Feast Day: October 4



Francis of Assisi was a poor little man who astounded and inspired the Church by taking the gospel literally—not in a narrow fundamentalist sense, but by actually following all that Jesus said and did, joyfully, without limit and without a mite of self-importance.

Serious illness brought the young Francis to see the emptiness of his frolicking life as leader of Assisi's youth. Prayer—lengthy and difficult—led him to a self-emptying like that of Christ, climaxed by embracing a leper he met on the road. It symbolized his complete obedience to what he had heard in prayer: "Francis! Everything you have loved and desired in the flesh it is your duty to despise and hate, if you wish to know my will. And when you have begun this, all that now seems sweet and lovely to you will become intolerable and bitter, but all that you used to avoid will turn itself to great sweetness and exceeding joy."

From the cross in the neglected field-chapel of San Damiano, Christ told him, "Francis, go out and build up my house, for it is nearly falling down." Francis became the totally poor and humble workman.

He must have suspected a deeper meaning to "build up my house." But he would have been content to be for the rest of his life the poor "nothing" man actually putting brick on brick in abandoned chapels. He gave up every material thing he had, piling even his clothes before his earthly father (who was demanding restitution for Francis' "gifts" to the poor) so that he would be totally free to say, "Our Father in heaven." He was, for a time, considered to be a religious "nut," begging from door to door when he could not get money for his work, bringing sadness or disgust to the hearts of his former friends, ridicule from the unthinking.

But genuineness will tell. A few people began to realize that this man was actually trying to be Christian. He really believed what Jesus said: "Announce the kingdom! Possess no gold or silver or copper in your purses, no traveling bag, no sandals, no staff" (see Luke 9:1-3).

Francis' first rule for his followers was a collection of texts from the Gospels. He had no idea of founding an order, but once it began he protected it and accepted all the legal structures needed to support it. His devotion and loyalty to the Church were absolute and highly exemplary at a time when various movements of reform tended to break the Church's unity.

He was torn between a life devoted entirely to prayer and a life of active preaching of the Good News. He decided in favor of the latter, but always returned to solitude when he could. He wanted to be a missionary in Syria or in Africa, but was prevented by shipwreck and illness in both cases. He did try to convert the sultan of Egypt during the Fifth Crusade.

During the last years of his relatively short life (he died at 44) he was half blind and seriously ill. Two years before his death, he received the stigmata, the real and painful wounds of Christ in his hands, feet and side.

On his deathbed, he said over and over again the last addition to his Canticle of the Sun, "Be praised, O Lord, for our Sister Death." He sang Psalm 141, and at the end asked his superior to have his clothes removed when the last hour came and for permission to expire lying naked on the earth, in imitation of his Lord.



Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen

Mission Sunday – October 21st

St. Joseph PSR students will participate in a program entitled "Come and See!" provided by the Columban Mission Education Program. The students and catechists are about to go on a missionary journey and, like the early disciples, want to know where Jesus lives. Jesus has given us an open invitation to "come and see!"

This journey will take our students to different lands where they will experience the customs and faith expressions of our brothers and sisters in their search for God. Each grade level will discover a different part of the world and learn how we can all become **Globally Aware Citizens**.

- Why take this journey? We take this journey because it is an act of faith. Finding Jesus in our brothers and sisters around the globe is what Christianity is all about.
- *Why educate for mission?* We educate for mission because Jesus taught us to be missionaries. Jesus was the first and primary missionary of God. He was sent to bring us the Good News of God's unconditional love, to tell us that God is constantly among us, and to tell us we are called to be missionaries - to spread the good news of God's love wherever we are.

Jesus said, "As the Father sent me, so I send you." (John 20:21)

- *Why use the "Come and See!" program?* This program will help both students and catechists:
 1. To awaken an appreciation of the relationship between different nations.
 2. To share the pains and the struggles of the developing nations of the world and to learn how the Church is responding to these situations.
 3. To celebrate the multi-cultural richness of our Church.

Our Journey...

1st Grade:	Korea ~ One world, one home, one family
2nd Grade:	Fiji ~ Building Christian community
3rd Grade:	Chile ~ The contrast between the rich and the poor
4th Grade:	Japan ~ Respect for other religions
5th Grade:	Peru ~ Power of the Gospel
6th Grade:	Philippines ~ Christian citizenship
7th Grade:	World Poverty
8th Grade:	World Hunger

Visit the Columban Missions website, www.columban.org for more information!



Halloween and Its Christian Roots

When you think of Halloween, what comes to mind? For a lot of people, Halloween has become synonymous with candy, costumes, scary stuff, witches, ghosts and pumpkins. But do you know the Christian connection to the holiday?

The true origins of Halloween lie with the ancient Celtic tribes who lived in Ireland, Scotland, Wales and Brittany. For the Celts, November 1 marked the beginning of a new year and the coming of winter. The night before the new year, they celebrated the festival of Samhain, Lord of the Dead. During this festival, Celts believed the souls of the dead—including ghosts, goblins and witches—returned to mingle with the living. In order to scare away the evil spirits, people would wear masks and light bonfires.

When the Romans conquered the Celts, they added their own touches to the Samhain festival, such as making centerpieces out of apples and nuts for Pomona, the Roman goddess of the orchards. The Romans also bobbed for apples and drank cider—traditions which may sound familiar to you. But where does the Christian aspect of the holiday come into play? In 835, Pope Gregory IV moved the celebration for all the martyrs (later all saints) from May 13 to November 1. The night before became known as All Hallow's Even or "holy evening." Eventually the name was shortened to the current Halloween. On November 2, the Church celebrates All Souls Day.

The purpose of these feasts is to remember those who have died, whether they are officially recognized by the Church as saints or not. It is a celebration of the "communion of saints," which reminds us that the Church is not bound by space or time.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* says that through the communion of saints "a perennial link of charity exists between the faithful who have already reached their heavenly home, those who are expiating their sins in purgatory and those who are still pilgrims on earth. Between them there is, too, an abundant exchange of all good things" (#1475).

Saint Anthony Messenger,
by Susan Hines-Brigger