

Saint Teresa of Avila Catholic Church

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A Letter from Our Pastor



Accustom yourself continually to make many acts of love, for they enkindle and melt the soul.

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-82)

Inside this issue:

The New Evangelization	2
The Edge Youth Ministry	2
Mardi Gras	3
St. Katherine Drexel	3
Upcoming Parish Events	4

As we enter the New Year of 2014, it is perhaps worth our time to reflect upon the spiritual health of our Catholic family life. Every year Catholics critique the positives and negatives of their institutional Church. What many fail to remember, however, is that the basic building block of the Church is the Catholic family. After all, isn't a parish simply a group of families united in their common faith? If there is a lack of vocations, perhaps it is because parents never speak about it to their children. If there is a lack of Church attendance, perhaps it is because parents do not view their spiritual life as a priority, and therefore don't take their children to Mass. Therefore, all those things that effect the health of our families will, in turn, effect the health of our Church. With all this in mind, I offer you Dr. Gregory Popcak's, [Five "Mark's" of a Catholic Family.](#)

The Five "Marks" of a Catholic Family

1. Catholic Families Worship Together – The Eucharist is the source of our love and the sign of the intimacy to which we are called. Therefore, as a family, we attend Sunday mass weekly (and Holy Days and at other times as we are able) and we actively participate in parish life—our spiritual home away from home. We also recognize that as fallen persons, we struggle to be the loving community we are called to be. Therefore, as a family, we regularly go to confession (recommended: monthly) to seek God's healing and grace so we might better live his vision of love in our lives and homes.

2. Catholic Families Pray Together – As "domestic church" we recognize that we cannot love one another as God loves us unless we ask him, *together*, to teach us what this means. Therefore, in addition to our individual prayer life, *we gather to-*

gether as husband and wife and also as a family for prayer each day. In that time, we praise and thank God for his blessings, we ask him for the grace to love each other and the world better, we seek his will for our lives, and we pray for both our needs and the needs of the Family of God. We recognize in the words of Servant of God, Fr. Patrick Peyton, "the family that prays together, stays together."

3. Catholic Families are Called to Intimacy – Tertullian once proclaimed, "The world says, 'Look at those Christians, see how they love one another!'" The Christian life is first and foremost a call to intimate communion. We recognize that families are "Schools of Love." Therefore, as a family, we constantly challenge ourselves to seek to discover new ways to be even more open with and loving to each other as husband and wife, parents and children. We recognize that children are to be a visible sign of the loving union between husband and wife and we work to make this a reality in our homes both in the quality of our relationships and in our openness to life. Further, we cultivate marriage and parenting practices that make each member of the family willingly open up to one another and seek to freely give themselves to create a deeper "community of love" and practice all the virtues that help us live life as a gift.

4. Catholic Families Put Family First – We recognize that, because our family relationships are the primary vehicle God uses to perfect us and challenge us to become everything we were created to be, family life, itself, is the most

important activity. To protect the intimacy we are called to cultivate as the domestic church, we recognize the importance of regular family rituals *and* we are intentional about creating and protecting those activities such as family dinner, family prayer and worship, a game night and/or "family day", and regular time for one-on-one communication and relationship-building. We hold these activities as sacred rituals of the domestic church and value them over all other activities that would seek to compete with them.

5. The Catholic Family is a Witness and Sign – God wants to change the world through our families. We allow ourselves to be part of his plan for changing the world in two ways. First, by striving to exhibit, in every way possible in our daily interactions as husband and wife, parents and children, the love and intimacy that every human heart longs for. We must show the world that this love is a possible dream worth striving for. Second, we will carry this love outside the home by serving the world-at-large in a manner that is responsible and respectful of the integrity of the family unit. We do this by committing ourselves and our families to the intentional practice of all the corporal and spiritual works of mercy within the home and outside of it.

Perhaps if we are inclined to make New Year resolutions, these Five "Marks" would be a terrific place to begin for all Catholic Families... beginning with all the families at St. Teresa of Avila Parish. Let's resolve to make sure the health of our family life is a major priority throughout 2014.

The Rev. Edward J. Smith

The New Evangelization

by Dr. Phil Gigliotti

The New Evangelization is a term which has been widely written about by the last 3 popes, John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis. This has occurred in a time in which it was recognized that there are large numbers of persons living throughout the world who do not have an understanding of the Gospel and the Church because of poor catechesis, increasing secularization, and increasing moral relativism. In fact, in Western cultures, including the former centers of Christianity, a post-Christian philosophy and belief system have arisen. This is a situation where hundreds of millions of baptized Catholics have very little or no idea about what Christianity actually is!

How did this happen? What is the solution to this problem? These are the questions at the heart of the New Evangelization.

The Gospel was misunderstood in two main ways. First that it is a series of rules and that these rules must be followed in order to be in good standing with God. These rules are at various levels of importance and severity but the whole relationship depends on how well we do with them. In this scenario, God has a scorecard on each individual.

The other idea is that the Gospel is to be nice to everyone. Certainly the Lord wants us to be nice to everyone

and help those in need. Indeed we are commanded to do so. This thinking sets up a common idea that says there are a lot of people that are worse sinners than I am. In fact, I have never killed anyone or done anything terrible. I do the best I can, I go to church and so therefore I am alright.

As Pope Francis recently wrote in *Evangelii gaudium*, being a Christian is an encounter with a Person, it is an event which changes our lives. It is the most profound example of God's Love. When we encounter Jesus in a personal way we understand that although we are sinners and have transgressed God's Law, His Love leads to a whole Plan of Salvation that unfolds in the Scriptures and leads to Jesus the Messiah and Redeemer giving His life to pay for our sins. He takes the Wrath of God rather than us having to take it! This is truly unbelievable.

When we understand that this is where our salvation comes from our hearts are transformed. We *want* to be with Him and serve Him. It is no longer a feeling of obligation or drudgery. We do not sit and just read facts about Jesus and the Faith. Like the woman at the well in John Chapter 4 and the first disciples called in John Chapter 1 we *want* to tell everyone about Him.

The Second Vatican Council stated

that all baptized Catholics are missionaries. What does that mean? When we have experienced the Messiah and Redeemer that died and rose for us, we want to tell others about Him. There is nothing more important in our lives. Everything else fades in importance compared to having eternal life.

In John 14:6 Jesus said that He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. He is the only way to the Father. We know as Christians that there is no other way to salvation. If we could go to heaven simply by being good, then Jesus would not have had to die. If we could go by following any other religion or person, then Jesus would not have had to die. If you saw *The Passion of the Christ* you know the terrible suffering and death He endured. That is because that was the only way that sin could be dealt with. This is the Good News! We have the Good News! Our sin has been dealt with!

The New Evangelization must be centered on the Person, Life, and Sacrifice of Jesus. We have the Good News to spread to a dark and dying world. This is the Gospel; that God so loved the world that He sent his only Son to die so that we might have life. He is the Rock on which everything else stands.

For this and other teachings visit:

www.giftofgraceministries.org

Youth Ministry—"The Edge"

by Aaron Davis

The Edge is an extremely fun youth ministry. Dean Robinson not only helps us to better ourselves as Catholics, but he helps us to learn how we can succeed. And

he always has fun ways of doing it. From week to week it varies, whether we are watching a video/movie, doing some sort of activity, or even just having a theological discussion. I find I always come

out of it having had loads of fun, and having learned something new to better me as a person.

For The Edge Youth Ministry schedule visit our website at www.stteresaparish.com.

In the tradition of New Orleans, St. Teresa Parish will host >>>>

Traditional Food

By Smith's Catering, Avon

- Gumbo Shrimp Creole
- Jambalaya
- Roasted Chicken
- Breaded Pork Chop
- Red Beans and Rice
- Cornbread



Friday, February 28, 2014

Tickets will be available for purchase in February.

Invite your family and friends—reserve a table!

Music by Strukely & Cole

PURPLE: symbol of Justice

GREEN: symbol of Faith

GOLD: symbol of Power

Saint Katherine Drexel

by Tom Parkey

Katherine Drexel was born in Philadelphia in 1858 to a very wealthy and prominent family. As a young woman, Katherine was profoundly interested in the plight of the poor in this country, especially blacks and Native Americans. After her father's death in 1885, Katherine and her sisters used some of the money they had inherited to open a school for Native Americans in Santa Fe New Mexico. While her family was travelling to Europe in 1887, she had a private audience with Pope Leo XII and asked him for missionaries to staff Indian

missions she had begun to support financially. The Pope suggested to her that she might become a missionary herself. In 1889, Katherine shocked Philadelphia society by entering a convent-



the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburgh. Two years later, she and some companions founded a new order which they named the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and

Colored People. Over the next several decades, the order founded 60 schools for the poor and disadvantaged throughout the country. Many of these schools faced opposition from the local community and organizations including the Ku Klux Klan. The costs to operate these schools were largely paid for by Katherine herself.

Katherine Drexel died on March 3rd, 1955 at the age of 96. That date was made her feast day when she was canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 1st, 2000.

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We're on the Web!
www.stteresaparish.com

Up Coming Parish Events!

Religious Formation

PSR: Tuesdays from 6—7:15 p.m.

RCIA: Sundays from 10:15—11:30 a.m.

Confirmation: May 11 at St. Anthony Church. Classes begin this winter.

Schedules are in the bulletin, on our Parish website or call the office.

Children's Masses

February 2 at 9:00 a.m.

March 16 at 11:00 a.m.

Coffee and Donuts

February 2, 2014 after Sunday Mass

Food Pantry Donations

Donations taken 1st Weekend/month

January 4/5, February 1/2, March 1/2

Non Perishable Food Items Please

Eucharistic Adoration

Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Please consider spending one hour of the most blessed "quality time" you will ever have! Call the office if interested.

The Edge—Youth Ministry

See bulletin/website for updates

Volunteer at Food Pantry

3rd Saturday/month 9:30 am—1 pm

January 28, February 15 & March 15

Parish Life Center is for Rent

For information visit our website or call our office at 440-934-4227.

For monthly Parish Committee meeting dates, visit our website at www.stteresaparish.com or watch the bulletin for current dates/times.

Lent and Easter

Ash Wednesday: March 5, 2014

Fish Fry on Fridays during Lent from 4:30—7:00 p.m.

Confession on Saturdays at 3:30 p.m.

Holy Week



Holy Thursday, April 17
Mass of the Lord's Supper: 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday: April 18
The Lord's Passion: Noon
Stations of the Cross: 3:00 p.m.

Holy Saturday: April 19
Easter Vigil Mass: 8:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday
Mass: 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.