



# The Spiritual Light

The Spiritual Light

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By the time you read this, you already know that Pope Benedict XVI has resigned! My heart is sad because the church and the world will not have the guidance of a man who has lived 85 years in the service of God and humanity. At the same time, I rejoice because his resignation shows a man who does not cling to power, but rather recognizes that his mission before God and humanity, has been accomplished. I thank God for our beloved Pope Benedict XVI and pray for his successor to continue to guide Peter's boat (the church) towards a total and complete union with Our Lord.

In this issue, you will find information

about events, programs and *News from the Vatican* that we hope will keep your spiritual light burning during this spring season.

It is our prayer that, during the Lent and Easter seasons, you will find inspiration in the articles: "The Journey Continues" by Gary Forse, and in our *Featured Priests and New Saints* and that the Holy Spirit prompts you to rediscover your journey of faith so you will become a true herald and witness of the Gospel.

We hope that you make the effort to attend the liturgical celebrations of this season; Holy Week, the Annunciation of the Lord, Divine Mercy Sunday, the Feast of the Ascension of the Lord, Pentecost, the Feast of the Visitation, and Vespers.

We have also a list of Bible studies, Prayer Groups, and two Featured Ministries that you can get involved with. Also featured are "The Saints" that we celebrate this season and a list of apps and books from SQPN.com to make the most of Lent.

We welcome new ideas that will keep the spiritual light burning. Please don't hesitate to contact Ruth Stone or myself.

May the Lord shower you with abundant blessings this season and we wish you a very blessed *Easter*.

*Margarita Prinz*

### To contact us:

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A Publication of Adult Faith Formation Team

**Spring Issue (March - May 2013)**



## The Light

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church  
Lake Jackson, TX

## About Us

The Adult Faith Formation ministry came into being as a result of the Envision program held in the parish in 2006. From the meetings of the Envision committee came a vision statement for the parish: "A Eucharistic community in continual transformation, surrendering ourselves to God to be His instruments for world change."

The objective of Adult Faith Formation ministry is to seek to foster life long learning, Catholic education and faith development of adult parishioners. It is the primary educational ministry for adults of our parish.

Adult Faith Formation ministry uses several different facets of learning in the presentation of programs. There have been well-known speakers who lectured in his/her specialty, small group discussions (Study of the Catechism for Catholic adults), movies, and a play.

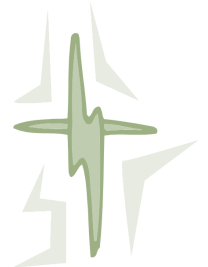
We look for topics in which our parishioners say they are interested. This knowledge came from a survey done in the infancy of this ministry and we search for speakers well known for the topics they present. Agreement on topics and speakers are reached by consensus rather than majority and our annual educational year started in 2007.

In order to continue with these programs we need to almost continually add new members to the ministry. Whether you are new to the parish or have been here for several years, you can bring in fresh and different ideas. Your presence and knowledge will generate fresh energy. While the ministry has made great progress, it still has a long way to go.

Our meetings are held once a month in the evening in the Educational Building. Please come and see the team in action. After a visit we are certain you will want to join us.

If you are interested in finding more about this rewarding ministry, please contact us. We will be happy to visit with you.

A  
F  
F  
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adult  
Faith  
Formation  
Ministry



### Team

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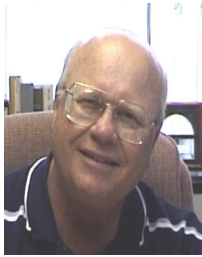
e-mail: [afaulk@brazoriainet.com](mailto:afaulk@brazoriainet.com)



### Clergy's Corner

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#### Happy Retreat Fr. Leo!



Fr. Leo was out on retreat and could not contribute to this issue. We wish him a Happy Retreat and look forward to his input to our next issue.

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### POPE RENOUNCES PAPAL THRONE



Vatican City, 11 February 2013 (VIS) – The Holy Father, at the end of today's consistory for causes for canonization, announced his resignation from ministry as Bishop of Rome to the College of Cardinals. Following is the Holy Father's complete declaration, which he read in Latin:

"I have convoked you to this Consistory, not only for the three canonizations, but also to communicate to you a decision of great importance for the life of the Church. After having repeatedly examined my conscience before God, I have come to the certainty

that my strengths, due to an advanced age, are no longer suited to an adequate exercise of the Petrine ministry. I am well aware that this ministry, due to its essential spiritual nature, must be carried out not only with words and deeds, but no less with prayer and suffering. However, in today's world, subject to so many rapid changes and shaken by questions of deep relevance for the life of faith, in order to govern the barque of Saint Peter and proclaim the Gospel, both strength of mind and body are necessary, strength which in the last few months, has deteriorated in me to the extent that I have had to recognize my incapacity to adequately fulfill the ministry entrusted to me. For this reason, and well aware of the seriousness of this act, with full freedom I declare that I renounce the ministry of Bishop of Rome, Successor of Saint Peter, entrusted to me by the Cardinals on 19 April 2005, in such a way, that as from 28 February 2013, at 20:00 hours, the See of Rome, the See of Saint Peter, will be vacant and a Conclave to elect the new Supreme Pontiff will have to be convoked by those whose competence it is."

"Dear Brothers, I thank you most sincerely for all the love and work with which you have supported me in my ministry and I ask pardon for all my defects. And now, let us entrust the Holy Church to the care of Our Supreme Pastor, Our Lord Jesus Christ, and implore his holy Mother Mary, so that she may assist the Cardinal Fathers with her maternal solicitude, in electing a new Supreme Pontiff. With regard to myself, I wish to also devotedly serve the Holy Church of God in the future through a life dedicated to prayer."

*Let us all pray that the conclave be guided by the Holy Spirit.*



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### For Your Information



#### St. Joseph Table

**R**emember March 17<sup>th</sup>. It is not only St. Patrick's feast day but the Sunday on which the parish will honor St. Joseph, the foster father of Jesus, with a fine Italian dinner and door prizes until they are all gone from the altar. If you would like to help, please call Kathy Latino.

#### Memorial Day

**M**ay 27<sup>th</sup> is Memorial Day, Please remember to fly your flag and go to one of the memorial services being held. Families who have lost loved ones in the wars appreciate seeing others in attendance, remembering their loved ones.



#### Save the Date

### “How To Double Your Happiness”

By

**Fr. Matthew Linn**

Wednesday April 24, 2013

Angelina Room

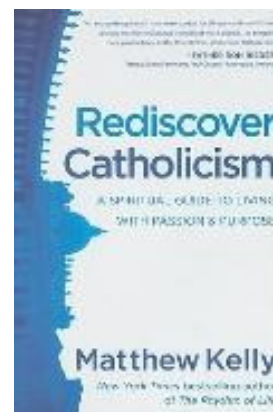
7:00—9:00 pm.

CHECK THE BULLETIN FOR MORE INFORMATION

#### Quotations from “Rediscover Catholicism” by Matthew Kelly

“We should try not to forget that when Jesus was on the cross, He didn't turn to the man next to Him and say, ‘You did the crime, now pay the Price. ‘No, He offered him a better life. This is the responsibility that now falls on our shoulders as followers of Jesus.”

“One part of our ongoing mission as the Church is to offer people a better life. The key word is all of this is ‘offer’. The Church doesn't force people to do things. The Church is a lover who comes to propose to the beloved (you and me). The Church proposes certain courses of action for certain situations, just as a physician offers you a prescription. But your physician does not force you to get your script filled. Nor does she force you to take the medicine. We are free to choose. The Church proposes to you and me a certain way of life. Each of us, like the beloved who is proposed to, can accept the proposal. But whatever our decision, we will live with it forever.”







# The Journey Continues

By Gary Forse



Can it really be that Camille and I have completed our third year in the Diaconate formation process? Although 2015 seems very far removed, the last three years have passed very quickly. Once again, we could not be more grateful for the prayers and support that have been poured out from so many of you at St. Michael's. For those of you that may be new to St. Michael's and may be reading this publication for the first time, my name is Gary Forse and I am a Candidate for the Permanent Diaconate. I have been asked over the last few years to give a reflection on this journey and would like to bring you up to date on my current progress.

As I have mentioned in previous reflections, my call to this vocation was not a "lightning bolt" experience nor was I visited by an angel. This has been an ongoing process. It has been the result of prayer and encouragement by family, friends and religious over an entire lifetime. God has led me to this place and this time. Although I missed some of the "hints" He left me at times when my heart was not completely open to His message, I am able to look back and see how He was guiding and directing me to the Diaconate.

For those men who are feeling that God is preparing them for the Permanent Diaconate, I pray that you may receive some encouragement and insight from some of what you read here. One of my fears in the formation process was re-entering college after thirty years! The reading, the papers, the tests! I am not the best reader and most of the professors were requiring us to read two to three books a semester plus supplemental reading for papers. It is the most overwhelming part of the process and yet I have passed all my course work. I say this only to encourage those of you who may not feel you have the academic ability to enter the formation process. If I can do it, you can do it!

Another fear I had regarding the formation process is that I was not nearly as knowledgeable as I needed to be regarding Scripture. I found out I was not alone in my fear and many in my class have benefited from the incredible scholars that we have had the great fortune to spend time with. The formation process has also taught me how much strength and wisdom we receive by spending time every day in the Word of God. If God is tugging at you, you will hear His message reaffirmed through scripture.

My greatest fear, and one that continues, is the knowledge that Satan is alive and well and is not happy about my being in formation. Satan is constantly at work creating stress and doubt. He works to distract me from the things I know I need to be doing to remain faithful to this call. Satan tries to create discord between Camille and me because he knows that it is not just me going through formation. It is why I ask for everyone to keep us in your prayers. We feel the grace and mercy of God as we are covered by your love and support.

This past semester included an *Introduction to Liturgy* which was taught by one of the new professors at St. Mary's seminary, Dr. John Meyer. He will also be teaching *Trinity and Incarnation* next semester. Our Saturday classes included an *Introduction to Mysticism* and an overview of *The Social Teaching of the Catholic Church*. As you might imagine, the class on Social Teaching was quite interesting and emotional. There were a few heated exchanges that took place in regards to the government's involvement and role in many issues that have always been the role of the Church. There is not enough space or time to get into all that came out of those discussions.

Part of our once-a-month Saturday gathering includes a small group discussion that is facilitated



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by our mentoring couple. In this small group we pray for each other's needs and are able to bring up anything that may be of concern or in question regarding the Diaconate Formation Program. This group has become very close as we have shared some very intimate and personal aspects of our formation. Our mentoring couple has been very helpful and encouraging. They addressed some of the same fears and insecurities that they faced while in formation. This past semester we spent time reflecting and discussing some of the writings of the Church mystics, both old and new. I would like to leave you with a poignant reflection that applies to my current situation but is applicable when we think about God working in our lives. This was penned by the Jesuit Teilhard de Chardin:

Above all, trust in the slow work of God.  
We are, quite naturally, impatient in everything to reach the end  
Without delay.  
We should like to skip  
The intermediate stages.  
We are impatient of being on  
The way to something unknown,  
Something new,  
And yet it is the law of all progress  
That it is made by passing through  
Some stages of instability —  
And that it may take a very long time.  
And so I think it is with you.  
Your ideas mature gradually —  
Let them grow,  
Let them shape themselves,  
Without undue haste.  
Don't try to force them on,  
As though you could be today  
What time will make you tomorrow.  
Only God could say what this new spirit  
Gradually forming within you will be.  
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing  
That his hand is leading you,  
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself  
in suspense and incomplete.

If God is calling you to this journey, know it will happen in His time. Hopefully you are open to His nudging. Just know that the nudge can come in so many ways. It is not an accident that you read this far. Feel free to contact me or Camille or the Office of the Diaconate.

Gary Forse 979 236-3431, Camille Forse 979 299-3145

Dcn. Gerald DuPont, Director of Diaconate Formation  
St. Mary's Seminary  
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(713) 686-4345 Ext. 268



### The Liturgical Season

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February 13



**L**ent is here and once again we are in a stage of waiting - only this time that for which we wait - is not the arrival of a baby, but the death of the Savior. Three days later comes His Resurrection and the gates of Paradise become open to everyone since the days of Creation

You have heard read in Church the Lenten rules and regulations imposed by the Church upon her children. Once again we are to fast and abstain, among other things and if we are within the ages, on the days appointed. However, the church now speaks to us of doing more positive things. Fast and abstinence are Church appointed means of penance for trying to get the person back on the road with Jesus. What can we do for each other when we see someone of us in need? Get your catechism out and read the

corporal and spiritual works of mercy. Practice those and feel the good that comes to you in being of help to someone in need. You can add this to your Year of Faith program and continue them when Lent is over as we still have a few months of Year of Faith ahead of us.

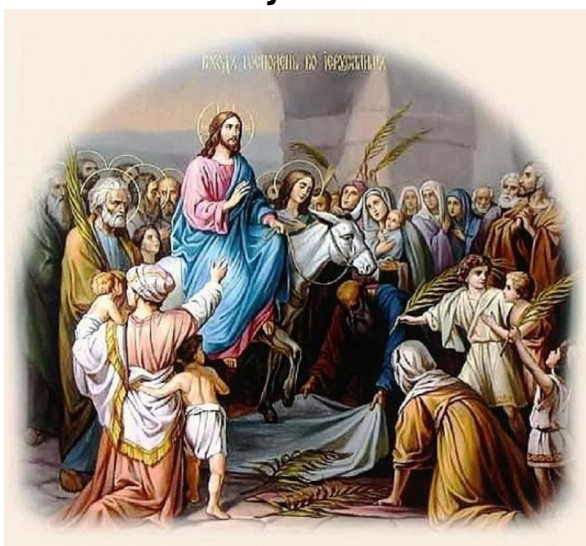
Mike Caserta will have Vespers every Sunday evening at 6:00 pm. If you have attended before, bring someone with you to enjoy starting the week in this prayerful fashion. If you have not attended Vespers before, come to the first one and you will keep coming back every week for the others.

Have you received the Plenary Indulgence the Pope has offered if you fulfill certain conditions? This is not easy, but well worth the effort. A Plenary Indulgence cleanses the soul of ALL the temporal punishment due to the sins you have committed while on earth. This is applicable to the poor souls in Purgatory also. What better gift to give or receive.

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### Palm Sunday

March 24



**T**o us it is known as Palm Sunday, the day Jesus made His triumphant entry into Jerusalem. But to the Jews of the first century it started the week in which the Passover was celebrated. They told the stories of how they were released from slavery in Egypt over and over. There was excitement in the air as they had heard that Jesus would be coming to Jerusalem for the Passover. Some had heard of His wondrous deeds and also heard Him preach. They were anxious to hear him again.

Jesus asked two of his disciples to procure Him a donkey which He would ride into Jerusalem. They went into the village and found the donkey colt tethered - a colt which no one had ever ridden. The owner asked what they were



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## The Liturgical Season

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### Palm Sunday

doing and they responded "The Master has need of it and will send it back at once". So they took the donkey and brought it back to Jesus. They put their cloaks over it and helped Jesus to mount the small animal.

Now it was not by accident that Jesus chose the donkey upon which to ride into Jerusalem. The Jews were expecting a war lord riding a great horse. He who rides a donkey is certainly not that, but a man of peace expecting to bring peace through humility, pardon and non violence. This was the picture Jesus presented. A war lord would ride a great horse equal to the demands of warfare. The crowds did not understand but they still kept shouting: "*Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the Kingdom of our father David that is to come! Hosanna in the highest*". As they filled the air with praises and hosannas, they threw their cloaks in front of Jesus and the donkey. Others strewed His path with palms. It was indeed a triumphal entry for Jesus. Little did the Jews know that in a few days some of those shouting their praises would be speaking against Jesus and calling for His crucifixion.

[Ref: Gospel of St. Mark 11:1-10 The New American Bible](#)

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## Easter Triduum

**March 28—31**



By Mike Caserta

**L**ent ends at dusk on Holy Thursday and we begin the Easter Triduum. The word triduum is Latin and means "three days". The Easter Triduum spans from Holy Thursday evening to Easter Sunday evening reflecting the Hebrew representation of the day, that is, from dusk to dusk. The Easter Triduum is our highest holy season of the church year. The Second Vatican Council, in the document entitled General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar, re-established the Triduum as the season following Lent in the Church. On these three days, days of prayer and celebration, we gather several times as a faith community to hear the church's most beautiful prayers and scriptures and to take part in her most powerful rituals, unique to this season.

### HOLY THURSDAY

**O**n Holy Thursday evening, the Triduum begins with the celebration of the Mass of the Lord's Supper. During the Liturgy of the Word, we hear the story of the Passover of the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt to the life of freedom. We relive Jesus' institution of the memorial of His death and resurrection in the sacrament of Eucharist. The Gospel shows the example Jesus left for his disciples and all of us, through the service of washing of feet. After receiving the holy oils, blessed &





# The Liturgical Season

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## Easter Triduum

consecrated at the Chrism Mass by our bishop, a powerful, once-a-year ritual follows in which we are all invited to wash the feet of one another. We see the feet of family members, extended family members, friends, neighbors, co-workers and others being washed. It is an experience that is very moving and not soon forgotten. At the end of Mass, we process to the Angelina Room where vigil is kept with the Body of Christ. The liturgy is suspended until the next day.

## GOOD FRIDAY

**W**e re-assemble quietly on Good Friday for the Celebration of Our Lord's Passion. We hear the passion according to John and pray the same intercessions which are being prayed in all Catholic parishes this day throughout the entire world. Then follows another event which happens only on Good Friday: the holy cross is unveiled and held up in our midst and we come forward to venerate it. It is a celebration not only of the sorrow with this instrument of torture and death, but also of the glory of this instrument of our redemption. After the distribution of communion, we depart in silence. Again, the liturgy is suspended.

## EASTER VIGIL

**T**he faith community gathers in excitement on Holy Saturday evening for the most important celebration of the church year, the Easter Vigil. In darkness we light a fire from which the new Paschal Candle is lit, and we all receive this Light of Christ on our own tapers. After processing to the church, we read some of the most powerful scripture of the Bible, tracing the Redemption story, from creation through resurrection. We summon the prayer and support of the holy men & women who have gone before us in faith through the singing of the Litany of the Saints. We baptize, we confirm, and the whole assembly renews our baptismal promises. Together with the newly initiated, we come to the table of the Lord to celebrate the Easter Eucharist.

## EASTER SUNDAY



**J**ust as we waited through Advent for the birth of the Christ Child, so we have waited through the season of Lent for that child, now a mature adult who has endured His passion, crucifixion and finally death upon the cross. With that last expiration of breath, Our Lord became Our Savior and eternal life became available to all.

So you can see why Easter is such an important holy day to all Christians. After Jesus had gone to His Father and became purified, He returned to earth to spend His remaining time teaching and preparing His apostles how to preach His teachings. He had told them He would send the Spirit to help them. They did not know what to expect so they waited after the Ascension along with the Blessed



# The Liturgical Season

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## Easter Sunday

Virgin Mary and others in the Upper Room for this promise to be fulfilled.

So perhaps when you go to Mass and receive the Eucharist on Easter Sunday, you might give a thought as to what the past week has meant to you and to all Christians.

May you and your family enjoy a blessed and *Happy Easter*.

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## The Annunciation of the Lord

March 25



It was during the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries that the Church began the celebration of the Annunciation. Its focus is the Incarnation - God becomes man through the Second Person of the Trinity. The date was fixed to confirm with the date of Christmas - 9 months after the Annunciation when the Savior is born. Soon after this first Christmas, the feast of Christmas was celebrated throughout the universal Church.

This particular feast, that of the Annunciation, celebrates the visit of the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary wherein he tells her God wishes her to be the mother of the Savior. With Mary's "yes" the request that Gabriel brought to Mary became an announcement and this day became the celebration of the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity. The salvation of all mankind would be available to all of God's children.

There are devotional prayers reminding us of the importance of this feast. Two of the prayers are the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary and the Angelus. The Joyful mysteries remind us, with each mystery, of the progress of the life of Jesus as a child. This is Our Savior and we are reminded to meditate on each mystery. The Angelus takes us through the Annunciation, her "yes" to God with the words "Be it done unto me according to Thy Word", the conception of Jesus in the womb of Mary and the Word became Flesh. All of this is followed by the Nativity in 9 months.

So this is, indeed, a great feast and we should acknowledge it - perhaps make a special effort to go to mass and hear the history that unfolds through the scripture readings. We should honor the Blessed Virgin Mary for her part in giving Life to the Savior with a simple "yes" to the angel Gabriel. This was a difficult truth to understand and then try to explain to the early Christians. Many of the church fathers had discussed this, wanting to show the deep love God has for us. St. Athanasius, St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. Augustine were among those hoping they would be able to help the early Christians understand the Annunciation followed by the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Trinity and His becoming human. We, today, may not understand this great truth, but we do accept it as one of the great truths of our faith. Give yourself a treat and read what some of the early fathers, mentioned above, have to say about this mystery.

Ref: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/saint.php?n=188>



# The Liturgical Season

## Feast of the Ascension of the Lord

May 9



The feast of the Ascension of our Lord is celebrated each year on the fortieth day after Easter Sunday in accordance with scriptures (Mark 16:19, Luke 24:51, and Acts 1:2). The moment of the Ascension is told in Acts 1:9; "He was lifted up before their eyes in a cloud which took Him from their sight".

This was Jesus' last appearance on earth before his disciples and he commanded them to stay in Jerusalem to wait for the

"promise of the Father". He told them, "In a few days you will be baptized with the holy Spirit." (Acts 1: 4-5)

Although the place of the Ascension is not clearly stated, it would appear from Acts that it was Mount Olivet near Bethany since after the Ascension, the disciples were returning to Jerusalem from this mount, which is within a Sabbath day's journey.

Tradition has consecrated this site as the Mount of the Ascension and Christians have memorialized the event by building a basilica over the site. St. Helena had built the first memorial, which was destroyed by the Persians in 614; rebuilt in the eighth century, to be destroyed again, but rebuilt a second time by the crusaders. Then in 1187, the Moslems captured the city and destroyed it, leaving only the octagonal structure which encloses the stone said to bear the imprint of the feet of Christ and converted it to a mosque. Since the chapel was mainly used by Christians, a second structure was built during the Ottoman period on the south side of the compound and the mosque relocated to it. In 1835 the Crusader structure was converted by the Armenian Christians to an enclosed room by covering the cape and adding walls between the columns. In 1870, a Russian Orthodox church was built nearby marking another site of the Ascension. Franciscan excavations during 1959-1964 have determined that the present structure is based on the Crusader design, with small changes after their retreat at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> Century.

Ref: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01767b.htm>,  
<http://www.biblewalks.com/Sites/AscensionChurch.html>

## Pentecost

May 19

Pentecost is one of the oldest religious holidays observed in the Catholic Church being first written about in the Acts of the Apostles (2:2-4) and St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (16:8). The Lord had told the apostles that He would send the Spirit to help them before they were to go out and preach. They did not understand what He meant, but the apostles, the Blessed Virgin Mary and other believers had gathered in the Upper Room where they had last seen Jesus. It was 50 days after Easter and 10 days after the Ascension.

"Suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind and it filled the entire room in



# The Liturgical Season

## Pentecost

which they were. Then, there appeared to them tongues of fire which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all gifted with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. There were Jews present from all over the world and they were astounded to hear the apostles speaking in the dialect of the area from which they came. The apostles were so convincing in their preaching that there were about 3,000 people who were converted and baptized."

This is why Pentecost is often called the birthday of the Church. On this day, the day Jesus sent the Holy Spirit, His own personal mission was completed and a new covenant was inaugurated.

*"Through the Holy Spirit we are restored to  
Paradise, led back to the Kingdom of heaven, and  
Adopted as children, given confidence to call God  
"Father" and to share in Christ's grace, called  
Children of light and given a share in eternal glory."*

*St. Basil, De Spiritu Sancto.*

Ref: <http://www.ewtn.com/devotional/pentecost/pentl.htm>



## The Feast of the Visitation

May 31



**T**he feast of the Visitation was introduced by the Franciscan order before 1263. It was not long before it spread throughout the entire Church. The celebration was moved from July 2 to its present date of May 31 - a date chosen because it was between the Annunciation of the Lord and the birth date of St. John the Baptist.

There are great truths and events to be reviewed when one recalls the Visitation. The first is Mary, though pregnant herself, is going to the aid of a pregnant Elizabeth, another is

the cleansing of John in his mother's womb from original sin upon the greeting by Mary. Elizabeth responded, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, calling Mary "the Mother of the Lord" and "blessed among women". Mary returned the greeting with a phrase from the Magnificat. The Magnificat has since been part of the daily official prayer of the Church.

All of this is narrated in the mass of the day. Mary, realizing what grace her visit has conferred on John again recited part of the Magnificat... this time she proclaimed prophetically that she would be venerated down through the ages. Mary stayed 3 months with Elizabeth before returning home.

While this is not a holy day of obligation, it certainly deserves our attention and thoughts - thoughts of what Mary did for our salvation. The feast day falls on a Friday. Hopefully, there will be good attendance all over the world to the masses offered in her honor. While we never forget to say "thank you, Jesus", we sometimes forget that the Blessed Virgin Mary was involved in the salvation process also and deserves a "thank you" as well.





## The Light

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## Bible Studies

*"Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ" St. Jerome*

### The Lectionary

<i>Day</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
Time	9:30 am
Location	Room 149
Leader	Joe Lesnau
Tel.	979-265-6221



### Adult Faith Sharing

<i>Day</i>	<i>Sunday</i>
Time	10:45 am
Location	Room 149
Leader	Gary Forse
Tel.	979-299-3145

### Men's Faith Sharing

<i>Day</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>
Time	6:00 am
Location	Angelina Room
Leader	Duane Williams
Tel.	979-297-5564



### Gospel of St. John

<i>Day</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>
Time	9:30 am
Location	Room 149
Leader	Bettie Carmody
Tel.	979-265-6509

### Resting in Him

<i>Day</i>	<i>Thursday</i>
Time	9:15 am
Location	"F" Wing
Leader	Jeanne Schroll
Tel.	979-297-5860



### Spirituality of the Gospels

<i>Day</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Time	9:15 am
Location	Room 149
Leader	Pam Walker
Tel.	979-297-9746



### Letters of St. John

<i>Day</i>	<i>Friday</i>
Time	9:30 am
Location	Library
Leader	Doris Hickner
Tel.	979-297-7726



For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them. *Matthew 18:20*



## The Light

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church  
Lake Jackson, TX

## Prayer Groups

“Hear my prayer, O God. Give ear to the words of my mouth” Psalm 54:2

Day	Time	Focus	Location
Monday	7:00 pm	Rosary	Church
1 <sup>st</sup> Monday	7:00 pm	Patriotic Rosary	Church
2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday	7:00 pm	Lay Apostle Meeting Luminous Mysteries	Church
Tuesday	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	Rosary Divine Mercy Chaplet	Church
Wednesday	8:00 am 9:00 am	Rosary Divine Mercy Chaplet	Church
Thursday	5:00 pm 6:00 pm	Rosary Divine Mercy Chaplet	Church
Friday	8:00 am 9:00 am	Rosary Divine Mercy Chaplet	Church
Saturday	6:30 am	Men's Prayer Group	“F” Wing
Saturday	8:00 am	Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet	Chapel
1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday	8:00 am	Pro-Life Rosary	Chapel

## Divine Mercy

By Betty Betzynski

**T**he Feast of Divine Mercy is celebrated this year on Sunday, April 7, 2013. St. Michael's will celebrate the feast for one hour from the 3 o'clock hour until 4 pm in the church. Deacon David Mitchell will conduct the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at the start of this devotion. The chaplet of Divine Mercy will be prayed along with other prayers.

The image of Jesus as Divine Mercy has two rays which denote blood and water. Jesus said “The water makes souls righteous. The red ray stands for blood which is the life of souls. These two rays issued forth from the very depths of My tender mercy when My agonized Heart was opened by a lance on the cross ... Happy is the one who will dwell in their shelter, for the just hand of God shall not lay hold of him.” ( St. Faustina's Diary 299)

All are invited to attend and participate in this great gift of mercy of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



## Holidays

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### Texas Declaration of Independence

March 2



Replica of the building at Washington-on-the-Brazos where the Texas Declaration was signed. An inscription reads:

*"Here a Nation was born".*

**T**exas Independence Day, March 2 celebrates day on which Texans developed the Declaration of Independence which told the Mexican government that Texas was now an independent nation with the ability to make treaties and agreements with foreign nations. This date is an annual holiday in Texas. However, something most Texans do not know today is that this day also celebrates the birthday of General Sam Houston who led Texas to victory in this war. It marks, also, Texas Flag Day.

Upon reading the Texas Declaration of Independence one is struck by the similarity between this document and that of the declaration developed by the representatives of the 13 colonies when they were seeking freedom from England.

The Texas convention was held at Washington on-the-Brazos March 1, 1836. The delegates immediately started working on the Declaration of Independence for the self declared new nation. It was completed and accepted March 2, 1836 by the delegates present. The writing of the constitution was next in line and it was written and accepted by March 16.

Washington-on-the-Brazos became a historic site when the Texas government purchased 50 acres of the old town site in 1916. It was brought to its present size when the state of Texas purchased more of the land in 1976 and 1996. It now covers 293 acres and features three main attractions- Independence Hall, Barrington Living History Farm and the Star of the Republic Museum which is administered by Blinn College. A replica of the building where the delegates met and signed the declaration is on this site.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington-on-the-Brazos,-\\_Texas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington-on-the-Brazos,-_Texas)



## Holidays

### The Battle of San Jacinto

April 21



On April 18, 1836 General Sam Houston and his small army had found General Santa Anna and his large army camped at what is now San Jacinto Battleground. The Mexican troops were resting and enjoying their success in previous battles with the Texans.

On April 19th, General Houston took his troops across Buffalo Bayou just outside of Harrisburg. Santa Anna's forces, only miles away, now numbered 1200 troops. The Texans numbered 900. On the morning of April 21 General Houston called his leaders together and asked their opinions as to what should they do. The decision was almost unanimous - wait and see what moves Santa Anna and his force would make. Houston said nothing until later in the day and then the decision was "ATTACK".

On 4:30 PM of April 21 General Houston gave the order and the Texans swarmed over the resting Mexican soldiers. Santa Anna had felt so safe that he had not posted sentries so the whole army was caught off guard. The

Mexican army had better training militarily but they were not prepared to fight with men using long knives and clenched fists, especially since that was the group that had the surprise advantage.

In 18 minutes the battle was over and the Texans had won a victory. Over 600 Mexican soldiers were killed, 700 taken prisoners. The Texas army lost only 9 men. General Sam Houston was shot in the ankle. General Santa Anna was found the next day hiding in the grass and wearing the uniform of a common soldier.

This was one of the biggest military upsets in the Hemisphere. It led to the end of Mexico as a world power. For Texas, the victory led to the annexation of Texas into the United States and later the war between the United States and Mexico.

The United States would gain not only Texas but also New Mexico, Nevada, Arizona, California, Utah and parts of Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming. Almost 1/3 of what is now the United States changed ownership. April 21<sup>st</sup> was made a partial staffing holiday by joint resolution of the 14<sup>th</sup> Legislature, 1874, Section 1. People take the day off and go to the Battlegrounds to see the re-enactment of a battle which meant so much to our country. They marvel and explore the grounds and the San Jacinto monument - the tallest monument column in the world - 570 feet (Guinness Book of Records).

[http://www.sanjacinto-museum.org/The\\_Battle/April\\_21st\\_1836/](http://www.sanjacinto-museum.org/The_Battle/April_21st_1836/)





## The Light

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church  
Lake Jackson, TX

### Featured Ministries

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## P RISON M INISTRY

### Clemens Unit, Brazoria

*...I was in prison and you visited me.*  
(Matthew 25:36)

**P**rison ministry at St. Michaels is a wonderful, multifaceted ministry, with something to appeal to any volunteer. It consists of mainly three programs:

[Kairos Prison Ministry](#) - Kairos is an international, non-denominational Christian prison ministry. It's mission is to bring the love and forgiveness of Jesus to the incarcerated and their families, and establish Christian community in the prison. Kairos volunteers form a team that facilitates weekend retreats for the prisoners at their unit. These weekends are a special time of prayer, witness talks, music and good food for the prisoners. The team works with the Prison Chaplain and Warden to organize and conduct the weekend, including the preparation of meals, cookies and agape. Kairos teams are made up of men from many Christian denominations, and the focus is on Jesus and the common belief's that we all share as Christians.

[Catholic Studies](#) - This activity is typically on a weeknight, and volunteers facilitate scripture readings, discussions, the Rosary, and instruction on the beliefs of the Catholic Church. Where there is a need, an RCIA program is available to provide a way for prisoners to join the church, receive sacramental instruction, or general catechesis.

[Saturday Services](#) - A Priest, who is accompanied by volunteers, comes to the unit to hear confessions and conduct Mass. When a Priest is not available the volunteers conduct a Communion Service.

Please consider trying prison ministry. We need lots of volunteers, and there is no special theological training required - just a love of the Church and a desire to spread the Gospel message. Admittedly, the thought of prison ministry can be intimidating to some people. However these ideas are often the result of stereotypes of prisons and prison life. This ministry is rewarding, fun, and results in great blessings for both the prisoners and volunteers. For more information on Prison Ministry, please call **Bill Behr at Phone 979-297-0547**.



## The Light

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church  
Lake Jackson, TX

## Featured Ministries

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### Pastoral Council By Chad Funk, PC member

#### What is the Pastoral Council?

The Pastoral Council's primary task is counsel and consultation for Father Leo. Eight Pastoral Council (PC) members should represent the *whole* parish – its beliefs, goals, hopes, and concerns – when answering Fr. Leo's questions and when giving feedback on pastoral plans and activities.

#### What does PC do?

At St. Michael's (as in most parishes) PC often spearheads *strategic* goal setting. For example, this past year we hosted four "listening" sessions to determine what the ministry leaders believe St. Michael's is doing well and what needs improvement. That feedback should feed the 2013 PC to set long-term goals (3-5 years) for the parish as a whole. What the PC does *not* typically do is implement any of those strategic goals.

#### What does PC do *in our parish*?

Outside of strategic information gathering and goal setting, PC sponsors or hosts several annual parish activities (this is not a full list):

- Ministry Appreciation Dinner
- Holy Thursday Mass Recommitment
- PC Scholarship Award for graduating seniors
- Gifts to clergy
- Charitable Donations
- Budget Review
- Ministry Awareness
- Senior Citizens Appreciation Dinner

#### Will you consider PC as a ministry?

##### Request

Please consider discerning for PC. It is a rewarding way to get to know many families and ministries within our parish. We particularly need younger parishioners because they are often under-represented, busy with young families. We need that group represented, and it is a great way to teach your children the importance of being involved in your parish and community – it is one of those ongoing teaching opportunities where you don't even have to speak.

##### Discernment

There is not an *election*, but rather a *discernment* to join PC. If you are interested in being a member of PC, you come to this meeting and we discuss what is required and pray and finally discern who should be on PC. Rather than people guiding the process and decisions, the idea is to allow the Holy Spirit to guide the process.

##### Obligation

A member of PC is obligating himself/herself to come to the monthly meetings, of course, and to help with PC-sponsored activities, of course, but also to reach out to and listen to fellow parishioners to find out how they feel about what is going on in the parish.

##### Time Commitment

PC meets once each month (on the second Tuesday from 7:00 - 9:00 PM). The meetings are typically punctual. There are always volunteer activities available, but each member is obligating himself/herself (typically) to 1 Saturday morning in January for PC Goal Setting, 1 Sunday afternoon for PC Discernment, and 1-2 Saturday evenings to host appreciation dinners (in 2012 one was in January and one was in November). Overall, the time required is minimal.



### Featured Priests and New Saints

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**F**r. **Augustus Tolton** was born the son of Peter Paul Tolton and his wife, Martha Jane on April 1, 1854 in Ralls County, Missouri. His parents were slaves, being the property of Stephen Elliott, thus making Augustus the property of Stephen Elliot as well. The Elliot's had their slaves baptized and made no exception to this with the Tolton family. However, being baptized did not keep the overseer from treating the slaves harshly and Augustus, from the time of his youth until his death, bore the marks of the whip on his back.

Knowing that the War Between the States was imminent, Peter Paul planned his escape from the slavery state to the northern Free State, promising his family he would send for them. He joined the Union Army, but became ill and died.

His widow, Martha, wanting the same thing as Peter Paul had planned was successful in stealing away from the slave quarters, with her four children and finding a boat, she set out to cross the Mississippi River. However, she and her family were discovered by Confederate soldiers who tried to stop the fugitives with a fuselage of bullets, but were unsuccessful and the little family continued their crossing, arriving finally in Quincy, Illinois where they found the freedom they sought.

Martha and children settled in Quincy and she and Augustus began work in the local tobacco factory. It was during this time that she began to go to the Catholic Church. Seeking an education for her children, Martha managed to teach them the little she knew - the Ten Commandments, psalms and other prayers. Knowing this was not enough she sent her children to the Catholic school. Little did she dream of the uproar this would cause. While they were free and living in a free state, they were black people, which deprived them of equal treatment with the white race. White parents did not want to see their children sitting side by side with the black children and were prepared to cause the little church some problems. Not wanting to see this happen Martha withdrew her children from the school and set out to find another school. She found just that for which she was searching in St. Peter's school. The pastor, Fr. McGuirr welcomed, and made certain the children would do well in his parish school by making arrangements with the nuns (the Sisters of Notre Dame) at the school to tutor the children privately.

The parish priests, Fr. McGuirr and Fr. Richardt, soon noticed that Augustus appeared to have a vocation and was very interested in the priesthood. They tried to get him admitted to the seminary, but each time they tried, Augustus was not admitted because he was black. The priests began to teach the young man themselves, while still trying to find a seminary that would accept him. Finally in 1878 the Franciscan College in Quincy accepted Augustus as a special student. Two years later his patron priests succeeded in getting him enrolled at the college of the "Propaganda Fidei" in Rome. On April 24, 1886 Augustus was ordained in Rome at the Basilica of St. John Lateran. These had been years of hard study, but of enjoyment also. There were young men of many nations and Fr. Augustus did not stand out as he had in America. He made many friends and planned to go to Africa after his ordination. Much to his surprise he was told that America needed black priests and so his assignment was as pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church in his home town of Quincy, Illinois. It was not long before he became well known as an orator, giving good sermons from the pulpit and speaking at religious meetings. People, white and black, flocked to him for confession as he was able to get to the heart of problems and help the parishioners with his advice.

But fame does have its drawbacks and soon the ugly head of jealousy arose in one of the pastors of another church in Quincy. Through his gossiping and slandering, the priest made it difficult for Fr. Augustus to continue his mission. It finally became so bad that the Archbishop of Chicago decided to transfer Fr. Tolton to a poor parish on the south side of the city. The parish consisted of many Negro Catholics who were glad to have Fr. Augustus as their pastor and once again people flocked to his



### Featured Priests and New Saints

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church to hear him preach the faith. He preached from many pulpits and many podia. He preached at the First Catholic Colored Congress in Washington, D.C.

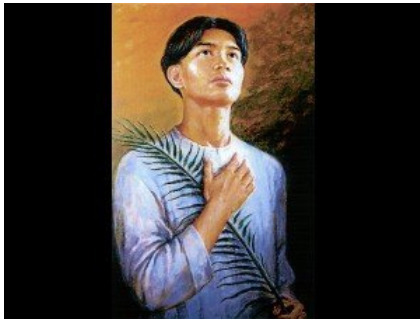
He did not do much writing and did not keep a diary. He had one confidant, Mother Katherine Drexel, to whom he often talked of the difficulties at being the first black priest in America. But wherever he went, he made black people proud of their heritage and proud of him.

On July 9, 1889 (a very hot day) Fr. Augustus de-trained at the Chicago station with other priests. They were returning from attending a retreat. Suddenly Fr. Augustus suffered a heat stroke and collapsed. He died that night in Mercy Hospital at the age of 43. His cause for canonization was introduced in February, 2011.

This was a priest who tore down a racial barrier on direct orders from Rome. All his work was done for the saving of souls, both living and dead. He never turned anyone from the doors of his church. He was a true evangelizer.

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### San Pedro Calungsod a New Saint of the Philippines



Pedro Calungsod was born in Cebu, Visayan Islands. He became fascinated with the work done by the Jesuit missionaries who brought the Christian faith to the surroundings islands and was able to begin his training as a catechist while only 14 years of age.

It was in 1668 that he was asked to accompany Fr. Diego Luis de San Vitores to the Mariana Islands and help with the catechetical teaching and begin to bring the faith to these islanders. Pedro was well aware of the dangers and persecution going on at that time in these islands, but he never hesitated in saying “yes”.

The little group arrived in the islands and set up their “home”. They began their religious teaching and had many converts. His life of purity and dedication to the Gospel impressed the islanders and the missionaries had many converts.

It was in 1672 that Pedro and the other missionaries were making a visit to one of the islands whose people had developed an attitude of hostility toward the missionaries. The hostile islanders stealthily crept into the abode of the religious group and were able to slay Fr. Luis with a spear through his body. Pedro could have saved himself had he either a weapon or chose to run away. He had no weapon and rather than run away, he stayed by the side of Fr. Luis to see if he could help him. Making this decision led to his martyrdom for the faith at the age of 17.

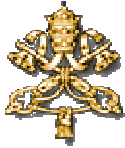
Pope Benedict XVI canonized him on October 21, 2012 - World Mission Day - a rather appropriate day for the martyred youth. It was thus that San Pedro became a model for the youth of the Philippine Islands. Citizens in the Islands and all over the world celebrated this great event. It is said that there were 50,000 people in Rome who came to be part of this wonderful event.

Fr. Giovanni Re, regional head for the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions said: “for centuries, people honored foreign saints and martyrs imported by the missionaries. Now there are two figures that look at these people showing that it is possible to live at this time a faith that arrived in this land almost 500 years ago”. Now the Philippine Islands have two saints to honor and emulate. Religious leaders agree that the canonization of San Pedro comes at a time when the Filipino youth appear to be very much in need of a new model. San Pedro appears to “fit the bill”.

Ref: <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Philippines-stop-to-celebrate-new-saint,-Pedro-Calungsod...>

Ref: <http://lifestyle.inquirer.net/72254/san-pedro-calungsod-is-new-role-model-for-filipino-youth>





# YEAR OF FAITH <sup>2012</sup><sub>2013</sub>

Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization



## HOLY FATHER'S CATECHESIS "CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH"

*An excerpt from The Vatican Information Services:*

Vatican City, 6 February 2013 (VIS) – Continuing his catechesis on the symbol of Christian faith, the Holy Father's General Audience today focused on the phrase "*Creator of heaven and earth*", explained in light of the first chapter of Genesis.

"God," the Pope said, "is the source of all things and the beauty of creation reveals the omnipotence of the loving Father. As the origin of life ... He cares for what He has created with unceasing love and faithfulness. ... In the first chapter of Genesis, with the solemn presentation of divine creative action ... The phrase 'and God saw it was good' is repeated six times. ... Everything God creates is good, and beautiful, full of wisdom and love. In the story of Genesis, it later says that the Lord created with His word and ten times in the text the phrase 'God said' is repeated... Life springs forth; the world exists, so that everything might obey the Word of God."

"But does it still make sense to talk about creation," the Pope wondered, "in this age of science and technology? The Bible isn't intended to be a natural science manual. Its intention is to reveal the authentic and profound truth of things. The fundamental truth revealed in the stories of Genesis is that the world isn't a collection of opposing forces, but has its origin and stability in the Logos, in God's eternal reason, which continues to sustain the universe. There is a plan for the world that springs from this reason, from the Creator Spirit."

"Men and women, the only ones capable of knowing and loving the Creator," are the apex of all creation. "The creation stories in Genesis ... help us to know God's plan for humanity. First, they say that God formed man out of the clay of the ground. ... This means that we are not God; we have not made ourselves; we are clay. But it also means that we come from the good earth by an act of the Creator. ... Beyond any cultural and historical distinctions, beyond any social difference, we are one humanity, formed from the one earth of God who ... blew the breath of life into the body He formed from the earth. ... The human being is made in the image and likeness of God. ... We carry within us His life-giving breath and all human life is under God's special protection. This is the deepest reason for the inviolability of human dignity against any temptation to judge the person according to criteria of utility or power."

In the first chapters of Genesis, "there are two significant images: the garden with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the serpent. The garden tells us that the reality that God has placed the human being within is not a savage forest, but a place that protects, nourishes, and sustains. Humanity must recognize the world, as a gift from the Creator ... to cultivate and care for respectfully in accordance with God's plan. The serpent is a figure derived from oriental fertility cults that fascinated Israel and that were a constant temptation to forsake the mysterious covenant with God." "Sin begets sin and all the sins of history are related. ... We receive life from others, not only at birth, but every day."

"Living by faith," Benedict XVI concluded, "means acknowledging God's greatness and accepting our smallness, our creatureliness, letting God fill us with His love. Evil, with its burden of pain and suffering, is a mystery that is illuminated by the light of faith, giving us the certainty of being able to be freed from it."



# HOLY FATHER'S MESSAGE FOR THE 50th WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Vatican City, 15 December 2012 (VIS) - The Holy Father's Message for the 50th World Day of Prayer for Vocations, to be celebrated on *21 April 2013*, fourth Sunday of Easter, was published today, in which Benedict XVI reflects on the theme of "*Vocations as a sign of hope founded in faith*". Given below are extracts from the message.

"Dear Brothers and Sisters, what exactly is God's faithfulness, to which we adhere with unwavering hope? It is his love! He, the Father, pours His love into our innermost self through the Holy Spirit. And this love, fully manifested in Jesus Christ, engages with our existence and demands a response in terms of what each individual wants to do with his or her life, and what he or she is prepared to offer in order to live it to the full.

"The love of God sometimes follows paths one could never have imagined, but it always reaches those who are willing to be found. Hope is nourished, then, by this certainty: 'We ourselves have known and believed in the love that God has for us'. This deep, demanding love, which penetrates well below the surface, gives us courage; it gives us hope in our life's journey and in our future; it makes us trust in ourselves, in history and in other people.

"Just as He did during His earthly existence, so today the risen Jesus walks along the streets of our life and sees us immersed in our activities, with all our desires and our needs. In the midst of our everyday circumstances He continues to speak to us; He calls us to live our life with Him, for only He is capable of satisfying our thirst for hope. He lives now among the community of disciples that is the Church, and still today calls people to follow Him. The call can come at any moment.

"Today too, Jesus continues to say, 'Come, follow me'. Accepting His invitation means no longer choosing our own path. Following Him means immersing our own will in the will of Jesus, truly giving Him priority, giving Him pride of place in every area of our lives: in the family, at work, in our personal interests, in ourselves. It means handing over our very lives to Him, living in profound intimacy with Him, entering through Him into communion with the Father in the Holy Spirit, and consequently with our brothers and sisters. This communion of life with Jesus is the privileged 'setting' in which we can experience hope and in which life will be full and free.

"Vocations to the priesthood and the consecrated life are born out of the experience of a personal encounter with Christ, out of sincere and confident dialogue with Him, so as to enter into His will. It is necessary, therefore, to grow in the experience of faith, understood as a profound relationship with Jesus, as inner attentiveness to His voice which is heard deep within us. This process, which enables us to respond positively to God's call, is possible in Christian communities where the faith is lived intensely, where generous witness is given of adherence to the Gospel, where there is a strong sense of mission which leads people to make the total gift of self for the Kingdom of God, nourished by recourse to the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist, and by a fervent life of prayer. This latter 'must on the one hand be something very personal, an encounter between my intimate self and God, the living God. On the other hand it must be constantly guided and enlightened by the great prayers of the Church and of the saints, by liturgical prayer, in which the Lord teaches us again and again how to pray properly.'

"Deep and constant prayer brings about growth in the faith of the Christian community, in the unceasingly renewed certainty that God never abandons His people and that He sustains them by raising up particular vocations – to the priesthood and the consecrated life – so that they can be signs of hope for the world. Indeed, priests and religious are called to give themselves unconditionally to the People of God, in a service of love for the Gospel and the Church, serving that firm hope which can only come from openness to the divine.

"By means of the witness of their faith and apostolic zeal, therefore, they can transmit, especially to the younger generations, a strong desire to respond generously and promptly to Christ Who calls them to follow Him more closely. Whenever a disciple of Jesus accepts the divine call to dedicate himself to the priestly ministry or to the consecrated life, we witness one of the most mature fruits of the Christian



## The Light

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church  
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### HOLY FATHER's MESSAGE FOR THE 50th WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

community, which helps us to look with particular trust and hope to the future of the Church and to her commitment to evangelization. This constantly requires new workers to preach the Gospel, to celebrate the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

"So let there be committed priests, who know how to accompany young people as 'companions on the journey', helping them, on life's often tortuous and difficult path, to recognize Christ, the Way, the Truth and the Life, telling them, with Gospel courage, how beautiful it is to serve God, the Christian community, one's brothers and sisters. Let there be priests who manifest the fruitfulness of an enthusiastic commitment, which gives a sense of completeness to their lives, because it is founded on faith in Him, who loved us first.

"Equally, I hope that young people, who are presented with so many superficial and ephemeral options, will be able to cultivate a desire for what is truly worthy, for lofty objectives, radical choices, and service to others in imitation of Jesus. Dear young people do not be afraid to follow Him and to walk the demanding and courageous paths of charity and generous commitment! In that way you will be happy to serve, you will be witnesses of a joy that the world cannot give, you will be living flames of an infinite and eternal love, you will learn to 'give an account of the hope that is within you!'"

### HOLY FATHER's MESSAGE FOR THE 47th WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY



Vatican City, 24 January 2013 (VIS) – "*Social Networks: Portals of Truth and Faith; New Spaces for Evangelization*" is the title chosen by the Pope for his message for the World Communications Day which will take place this year on *Sunday, May 12*. The message is dated from the Vatican, 24 January, the feast of St. Francis de Sales, patron of writers and journalists. Following is an excerpt of the message.

"As the 2013 World Communications Day draws near, I would like to offer you some reflections on an increasingly

important reality regarding the way in which people today communicate among themselves. I wish to consider the development of digital social networks which are helping to create a new 'agora', an open public square in which people share ideas, information, and opinions, and in which new relationships and forms of community can come into being.

These spaces, when engaged in a wise and balanced way, help to foster forms of dialogue and debate that, if conducted respectfully and with concern for privacy, responsibility, and truthfulness, can reinforce the bonds of unity between individuals and effectively promote the harmony of the human family.

The development of social networks calls for commitment: people are engaged in building relationships and making friends, in looking for answers to their questions and being entertained, but also in finding intellectual stimulation and sharing knowledge and know-how.

The culture of social networks and the changes in the means and styles of communication pose



### HOLY FATHER'S MESSAGE FOR THE 47th WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

demanding challenges to those who want to speak about truth and values. Often, as is also the case with other means of social communication, the significance and effectiveness of the various forms of expression appear to be determined more by their popularity than by their intrinsic importance and value. The social media thus need the commitment of all who are conscious of the value of dialogue, reasoned debate and logical argumentation; of people who strive to cultivate forms of discourse and expression that appeal to the noblest aspirations of those engaged in the communication process. Dialogue and debate can also flourish and grow when we converse with and take seriously people whose ideas are different from our own.

The challenge facing social networks is how to be truly inclusive: thus they will benefit from the full participation of believers who desire to share the message of Jesus and the values of human dignity which His teaching promotes. Believers are increasingly aware that, unless the Good News is made known also in the digital world, it may be absent in the experience of many people for whom this existential space is important. The digital environment is not a parallel or purely virtual world, but is part of the daily experience of many people, especially the young.

The ability to employ the new languages is required, not just to keep up with the times, but precisely in order to enable the infinite richness of the Gospel to find forms of expression capable of reaching the minds and hearts of all. In the digital environment the written word is often accompanied by images and sounds. Effective communication, as in the parables of Jesus, must involve the imagination and the affectivity of those we wish to invite to an encounter with the mystery of God's love.

In social networks, believers show their authenticity by sharing the profound source of their hope and joy: faith in the merciful and loving God revealed in Christ Jesus. This sharing consists not only in the explicit expression of their faith, but also in their witness, in the way in which they communicate 'choices, preferences and judgments that are fully consistent with the Gospel, even when it is not spoken of specifically'. The growing dialogue in social networks about faith and belief confirms the importance and relevance of religion in public debate and in the life of society.

For those who have accepted the gift of faith with an open heart, the most radical response to mankind's questions about love, truth and the meaning of life – questions certainly not absent from social networks – are found in the person of Jesus Christ. We need to trust in the fact that the basic human desire to love and to be loved, and to find meaning and truth – a desire which God himself has placed in the heart of every man and woman – keeps our contemporaries ever open to what Blessed Cardinal Newman called the 'kindly light' of faith.

An authentic and interactive engagement with the questions and the doubts of those who are distant from the faith should make us feel the need to nourish, by prayer and reflection, our faith in the presence of God as well as our practical charity: 'If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal'.

In the digital world there are social networks which offer our contemporaries opportunities for prayer, meditation and sharing the word of God. But these networks can also open the door to other dimensions of faith. Many people are actually discovering, precisely thanks to a contact initially made online, the importance of direct encounters, experiences of community and even pilgrimage, elements which are always important in the journey of faith. In our effort to make the Gospel present in the digital world, we can invite people to come together for prayer or liturgical celebrations in specific places such as churches and chapels.

I pray that God's Spirit will accompany you and enlighten you always, and I cordially impart my blessing to all of you, that you may be true heralds and witnesses of the Gospel. 'Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation'."

To read the full article visit: [http://www.vatican.va/news\\_services/press/vis/vis\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/vis/vis_en.html)





## The Light

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church  
Lake Jackson, TX

## The Saints

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*O Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary, infuse into me grace,  
wisdom, charity, chastity and humility.*

### St. Perpetua and St. Felicity

Feast: March 7



**P**erpetua was a beautiful and well educated young woman - a noble person living in Carthage, North Africa. She had an infant son and was also the historian of the persecution of Christians by the emperor Septimius Severus. Her mother was a Christian and her father a pagan who continually pleaded with her to deny her faith. She adamantly refused him, saying "When my father, in his affection for me, was trying to turn me from my purpose by arguments and thus weaken my faith, I said to him 'Do you see this vessel - water pot or whatever it might be? 'Can it be called by any other name than what it is?'

"No, he replied. "So also I - cannot call myself by any other name than what I am - a Christian"

Just as constantly as her denials were so the threats of persecution and death came as often. Perpetua, Felicity (a young slave girl who was pregnant) and three other companions - Revocatus, Secundulus, and Saturninus all steadfastly refused to deny their faith. Finally the emperor would stand no more of this back and forth "arguments" with the group and ordered that they all should be put to death. So the Christians were sent to the games. Perpetua and Felicity were beheaded and the other three were killed by wild beasts.

Perpetua had been imprisoned at the age of 22. She kept a diary of her life in prison describing it as it unfolded. "What a day of horror. Terrible heat because of the crowds. Tough treatment by the soldiers. To crown all I was tormented with anxiety for my baby. Such anxiety I suffered for many days but I obtained leave for my baby to remain in the prison with me and I, being relieved from my troubles and anxiety at once recovered my health and my prison became a palace to me and I would rather have been there than any where else. Perpetua's recording of her trial and imprisonment ends the day before the games begin. "Of what was done in the games themselves, let him write who will". The diary was finished by an eyewitness.

Felicity gave birth to a girl a few days before the games commenced. The references are at odds as to what happened to the baby and also what happened to the infant son who stayed in the hospital with Perpetua. The writer prefers to believe that a loving God allowed them to be placed with caring families who cared for them during their lifetimes.

Ref: <http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saints/saint.aspx?id=1315>

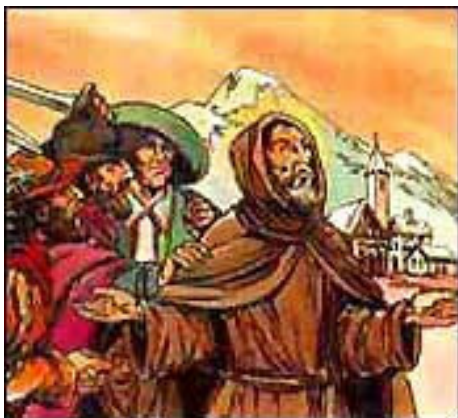


## The Saints

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### St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen

Feast: April 24



**M**ark Rey was born in Sigmaringen, Prussia (now Germany) in 1577. In his youth he was known by his birth name, Mark Rey. But when he decided to become a religious, he took the name of Fidelis, which followed him throughout his life and sainthood.

Mark became a lawyer and taught philosophy. He developed the reputation of being concerned about the poor, weak, needy and ill. He practiced law for only a year during which time he became disenchanted with the profession because of seeing all the corruption and greed among his fellow lawyers. It was then that he decided to become a priest and entered the Capuchin order of which his brother, George,

was a member. At this time he took the name of Fidelis. He saw to it that his wealth was dispersed among the needy seminarians and the poor of the city.

He became a priest, heard confessions and preached in his native Prussia. However his calling was to care for the poor and the sick. When an epidemic broke out in the town in which he was living, Fidelis went out into the streets to care for those who were ill. He is credited with saving many lives.

By this time the Congregation for the Propaganda of the Family (later called Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith) was established. It was this group that called upon Fidelis to lead a mission to Switzerland to fight the Protestant heresy which now had a foot hold in the country. This was the first group of missionaries sent to try for the recovery of those Catholics who had given up their faith for the new heretical doctrine of the Protestants. Fidelis was highly successful through preaching, having debates with the town officials and writing pamphlets against this "faith". Unfortunately none of his writings survived. His success in this mission was given to the fact that he prayed before the Blessed Sacrament many hours and sometimes all through the night.

He was in constant communication with God, praying that he might not commit a mortal sin and that God would allow him to die for the faith. The latter petition was heard and answered first in 1622. On April 24, 1622 he celebrated mass and then went into the Sewis area to preach against the heresy. He was accosted by a group that demanded he deny his faith publicly or suffer death. He was very adamant in his negative response, saying: "I came to extirpate heresy, not to embrace it". This angered the group so that they fell upon him stabbing him multiple times until he died. He died praying for forgiveness for his murderers. A Protestant preacher, witnessing the event and hearing the statement Fidelis made, was converted.

Another prayer that Fidelis said often was: *"Woe to me if I should prove myself but a halfhearted soldier in the service of my thorn crowned Captain"*

Fidelis was beatified March 24, 1729 by Pope Benedict XIII. On June 29, 1746 he was canonized by Pope Benedict XIV.

Ref: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/saint.php?n=448>, [saints.sqpn.com/saint-fidelis-of-sigmaringen/](http://saints.sqpn.com/saint-fidelis-of-sigmaringen/)



## The Saints

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### St. Pius V, Pope

Feast: April 30



**S**t. Pius V was born Michele Ghislieri in 1504 to noble, but poor, parents at Bosco, near Alexandria, the date being January 17, 1504. It was necessary that the future pope and saint had to work as a shepherd until the age of 14. Thus from shepherd boy to Pope was the road he was to follow.

While working as a shepherd he met two Dominicans who recognized the intelligence and virtue in the youth. He joined the Dominicans and was ordained as a priest at the age of 24. He was to teach theology and philosophy for sixteen years. During this time his organizational abilities and his leadership skills were recognized. He was elected prior of many of the Dominican houses. He was recognized for the hard penances he gave to those seeking reconciliation. He fasted long hours as well as prayed for great lengths of time.

Michele held many offices. He was elected Bishop of Sutri in 1556. He was so successful as an inquisitor in Milan and Lombardi that he was elevated to the office of inquisitor General of the Catholic Church and a cardinal in 1557.

He became known as a person who would go to any lengths to fight heresy and corruption wherever and whenever he encountered it. On January 7, 1566 he was elected Pope with the influential support of his friend, Charles Borromeo (later to become St. Charles). He took the name Pius. He was the fifth Pius in the long line of Popes for the church and became known as Pope Pius V.

During the time before his reigning years he had developed a vast program of reform. As Pope he was able to act quickly on putting the reformation plan into action as he saw around him the extravagant luxuries then present in his own court. He gave the money he impounded to the poor. Often he could be found caring for the poor and needy, washing their feet, consoling those who were dying and caring for lepers and the very ill - doing what he could to help God's unfortunate children. Despite all this self work, he still found time to spend before the Blessed Sacrament and pray.

He had dedicated his papacy to seeing that the reforms of the Council of Trent were implemented. By doing this he raised the standards of morality and reformed the clergy. He gave his strong support to foreign missions, seeing the missions as a way of spreading the faith. He continued writing and introducing reforms to make the church strong. It was during this time of his reign that the Catechism of the Council of Trent was completed. He also revised the Roman Breviary and Missal both of which had been in use until the reforms of Vatican II were introduced (1962-1965).

During his reign (only 6 years) Pope Pius V was constantly at war with the heretics (Protestants) who were approaching his territory from the west and then the Turkish armies approaching his military forces from the East. He tried to fight this battle through education and preaching. He still gave strong support to the Society of Jesus, founded by St. Ignatius. He even excommunicated Queen Elizabeth for which he was criticized. However, he continued to support those Catholics who were oppressed by the Protestant princes, particularly those in Germany.

It was the battle of Lepanto on October 7, 1571 which brought things to a head. The Turks had a massive fleet which had attacked the island of Malta. Almost every military person on the island was



## The Saints

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### St. Pius V, Pope

killed. To counterattack this “defeat” Pope Pius V sent out a fleet to meet the stronger force. He asked every man on board pray the Rosary and receive Communion. Then he asked for a 40 hour devotion, during which time the battle was to take place. For this massive prayer he called upon all of Europe. The two forces met in battle and the Christian fleet, still outnumbered by the Turkish navy, inflicted a decided defeat upon the enemy, demolishing their entire army.

In memory of this triumph, the Pope declared the day, October 7, as the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, giving her full credit for the victory. For this massive request of Our Lady, the Pope has been called the Pope of the Rosary.

Pope Pius V died on May 1, 1572, just seven months later. He is enshrined at Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, and was beatified by Pope Clement X in 1672 and later canonized by Pope Clement XI in 1712.

Ref: <http://www.catholicnewsagency.com/saint.php?n=452>

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### St. Rita of Cascia

Feast: May 22



**M**argarita Conciliatore di Cristo, was born in 1381 in Roccaporena, Perugia, Umbria, Italy. During her lifetime she became an Augustinian nun, was widowed and then elevated to the state of sainthood.

Rita was married young and the marriage lasted 18 years. During those years she exhibited the values required of a model wife and mother. She tried to convert her husband to the faith, but he was an abusive husband causing her to suffer both physically and mentally during the years of their marriage. She was released from such problems when her husband was murdered by another feuding family. Her son sought revenge against this deed but Rita was able to talk him out of revenge, at this time.

At this time Rita decided she wanted to join a religious order, especially an Augustinian community. Legend has it that she was flown into the convent by St. Nicholas of Tolentino, St. John the Baptist and St. Augustine. In this manner she became a member of the Augustinian community of nuns.

Rita devoted her life to prayer and her prayers were often answered. Various miracles were attributed to her intercessions. She is often pictured with a bleeding wound in her forehead which the Church claims to have been a partial stigmata.

Rita died May 22, 1457. She was canonized by Pope Leo XIII on May 24, 1900 and she has been known as St. Rita of Cascia ever since that date. However, the date of her feast did not change, but was left on May, 22. Because of the life she led, she is recognized as the patroness of lost and impossible causes, sickness, wounds, marital problems, abuse and mothers.

Ref: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rita\\_of\\_Cascia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rita_of_Cascia)

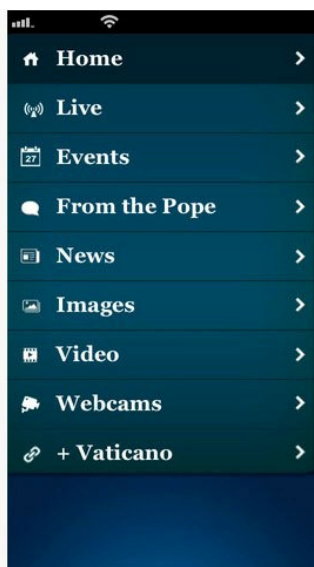
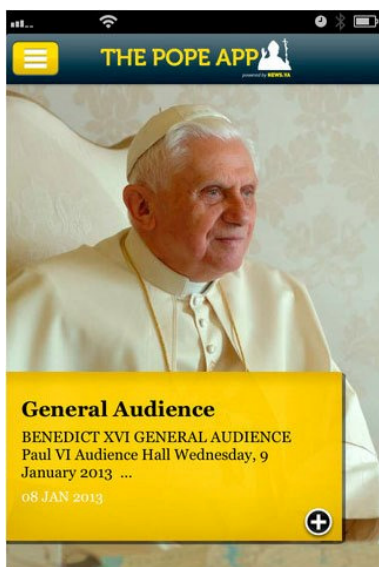




## The Light

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Lake Jackson, TX

## From The Web



THE POPE APP  
THE POPE APP

## SQPN.COM

LEADING THE WAY

### Five Apps To Make The Most Of Lent

POSTED ON [FEBRUARY 6, 2013](#) BY [INGE](#)

1. [Lenten Magnificat Companion](#) by Magnificat Magazine (\$0.99)
2. [iConfess - Confession Handbook and Guide](#) by BlueInstincts
3. [Stations of the Cross](#) by Ave Maria Press
4. [Catholic Meditations for Lent by St. Thomas Aquinas](#) by Valent Richie (\$2.99)
5. [Scriptural Rosary App](#) by Valent Richie (\$2.99)

I hope this is useful for you, let me know what your experiences using apps during Lent are!

### Five Book Tips For Lent

POSTED ON [FEBRUARY 5, 2013](#) BY [INGE](#)

This is my top five of favorite reads during Lent:

1. Bl. Fulton J. Sheen - [The Cross and the Beatitudes – Lessons on Love and Forgiveness](#)
2. Fr. Walter Ciszek s.j. - [He Leadeth Me](#)
3. Pope Benedict XVI – [Lent With Pope Benedict XVI: Meditations For Every Day](#)
4. Henri Nouwen - [Life of the Beloved: Spiritual Living in a Secular World](#)
5. St. Francis de Sales – [Introduction to the Devout Life](#)

For more information about these books and apps visit [SQPN.com](#)





## The Light

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### Important Dates In This Trimester

Date	Celebration	Date	Celebration
Mar. 2	Texas Independence Day	Apr. 30	St. Pius V, Pope
Mar. 17	St. Patrick	May 1	St. Joseph, the worker
Mar. 19	St. Joseph Feast	May 2	St. Athanasius, Bishop & Doctor of the Church
Mar. 24	Palm Sunday	May 3	St. James and Philip, Apostles
Mar. 28	Holly Thursday	May 9	Ascension of the Lord
Mar. 29	Good Friday	May 12	Ascension of the Lord, Observance
Mar. 30	Holy Saturday	May 13	Our Lady of Fatima
Mar. 31	Easter Sunday	May 14	St. Matthias
Apr. 7	Divine Mercy	May 18	St. John I, Pope and Martyr
Apr. 9	Annunciation of the Lord	May 19	Pentecost
Apr. 21	San Jacinto Day	May 22	St. Rita of Cascia
Apr. 24	St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen	May 26	Most Holy Trinity
Apr. 25	St. Mark, Evangelist	May 27	St. Augustine of Canterbury, Bishop
Apr. 29	St. Catherine of Siena	May 31	Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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