

EPIPHANY

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Third Sunday of Lent

March 7, 2021

FROM POPE FRANCIS

GENDER IDEOLOGY



From Pope Francis' 2016 document, "The Joy of Love" (Amoris Laetitia). Please read carefully number 56, below.

55. Men play an equally decisive role in family life, particularly with regard to the protection and support of their wives and children... Many men are conscious of the importance of their role in the family and live their masculinity accordingly. The absence of a father gravely affects family life and the upbringing of children and their integration into society. This absence, which may be physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual, deprives children of a suitable father figure.

56. Yet another challenge is posed by the various forms of an ideology of gender that "denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences, thereby eliminating the anthropological basis of the family. This ideology leads to educational programs and legislative enactments that promote a personal identity and emotional intimacy radically separated from the biological difference between male and female. Consequently, human identity becomes the choice of the individual, one which can also change over time".

It is a source of concern that some ideologies of this sort, which seek to respond to what are at times understandable aspirations, manage to assert themselves as absolute and unquestionable, even dictating how children should be raised. It needs to be emphasized that biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated.

On the other hand, the technological revolution in the field of human procreation has introduced the ability to manipulate the reproductive act, making it independent of the sexual relationship between a man and a woman. In this way, human life and parenthood have become modular and separable realities, subject mainly to the wishes of individuals or couples.

It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality. Let us not fall into the sin of trying to replace the Creator. We are creatures, and not omnipotent. Creation is prior to us and must be received as a gift. At the same time, we are called to protect our humanity, and this means, in the first place, ac-

cepting it and respecting it as it was created.

57. I thank God that many families, which are far from considering themselves perfect, live in love, fulfil their calling and keep moving forward, even if they fall many times along the way.

Vatican 2019 document on gender: Yes to dialogue, no to ideology

The Congregation for Catholic Education has published "*Male and Female He Created Them: Towards a path of dialogue on the question of gender theory in education*". The document is intended as an instrument to help guide Catholic contributions to the ongoing debate about human sexuality, and to address the challenges that emerge from gender ideology.

Specifically, the document is intended to support those engaged in the education of the younger generations to address the issues most debated today on human sexuality.

In particular, it is addressed to Catholic schools and to those who, inspired by a Christian vision, work in other schools; to parents, students, and staff; but also to bishops, priests, and religious, as well as ecclesial movements and associations of the faithful.

The Congregation for Catholic Education, which prepared the text, speaks of "an educational crisis", in particular on the themes of affectivity and sexuality, in the face of "challenges emerging from varying forms of an ideology that is given the general name 'gender theory', which 'denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman'," and considers them as "merely the product of historical and cultural conditioning."

Identity would then "become the choice of the individual, one which can also change over time". The text speaks of an anthropological disorientation that characterizes the cultural climate of our time, contributing to "the destabilization of the family."

Quoting Amoris laetitia, the document says that, among other things, this ideology "leads to educational programs and legislative enactments that promote a personal identity and emotional intimacy radically separated from the biological difference between male and female". This is the context of the new document, which aims to promote a methodology "based on three guiding principles" of **listening, reasoning, and proposing.**

The text speaks of an anthropological disorientation that characterizes the cultural climate of our time, contributing to "the destabilization of the family."

FROM THE PASTOR

GENDER ISSUES



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The bishops of the US (cf. page 4-5) have raised an alarm about legislation focused on sexuality and gender issues.

“The [Equality Act] represents the imposition by Congress of novel and divisive viewpoints regarding ‘gender’ on individuals and organizations. This includes dismissing sexual difference and falsely presenting ‘gender’ as only a social construct. As Pope Francis has

reflected, however, “biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated.” ... It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality’.”

As a pastor, a shepherd of souls, I register with alarm the loss of general (i.e. societal) coherence/agreement in raising children. Rather than a forthright cultural mandate and collective guidance to rear boys to be boys and girls to be girls, all is being surrendered to cater to the exceptional, relying on a deconstruction of sex and gender as “social constructs.” Let me focus on just one concern.

“Environment” is always listed as a factor in the determination of identity, health and psycho-sexual development. That can be in the womb (through hormonal, nutritional, or drug/toxin influences) and outside the womb where societal norms create paths and pressure for adults first, and then their children in various environments (schools especially).

And so I ask: is a radicalized *vision* (a radicalized *environment*) of/for the human person being foisted on the republic and its institutions that will lead directly to greater misery, and increased numbers of confused and damaged individuals? To be sure, we are dealing with matters that are complex and nuanced, but the price of admission for understanding and serving exceptional children and adults is far too high if it involves multiplying their number from the ranks of unexceptional boys and girls—the vast majority—by shattering a healthy formation environment.

Boys need to be raised as boys, and girls need to be raised as girls, but heart needs to be shown to exceptional individuals. Learning to sacrifice for the greater good is a virtuous pursuit and a civic responsibility. Exceptional persons, no more or less than anyone else, need to be raised to understand this, while being affirmed in their inherent dignity. —Fr. Eric

CELEBRATING OUR FAITH

SACRAMENTS SCHEDULE

Mass Times

Incense is used at 10:30am Sunday Mass. All Ministers have Gluten-free Hosts. 7:30 am Sunday Masses are Broadcast on Facebook at Epiphanyparish.com Drive Up Communion is available Sundays till 8:30am (Canopy).

Note: 8:15am School Masses are currently closed to the public due to the Pandemic.

Sunday, March 7, Third Sunday of Lent

4:00pm	Steve Fillippone
7:30am	Susan Heller Goforth
10:30am	Bill Cunningham

Monday, March 8, Lenten Weekday

7:00am	Jess Fetsko
--------	-------------

Tuesday, March 9, Lenten Weekday

7:00am	Steven Schultz
8:15am	William Sweeney

Wednesday, March 10, Lenten Weekday

7:00am	Diane Bussan
8:15am	Dr. Grieco (liv.)

Thursday, March 11, Lenten Weekday

7:00am	Clara and Issa Benyamin
8:15am	Susan Lamb

Friday, March 12, Lenten Weekday

7:00am	Albert, Roma and Robert Humenick
5:30pm	Kay Schultz

Sunday, March 14, Fourth Sunday of Lent

4:00pm	Anthony Valone
7:30am	Tom and Margaret Kelley
10:30am	Tom and Mark Krause

Confession Times

5:00pm Friday and 3:00pm Saturday in the Parish Hall. Please enter from the Corridor and depart out the South Door onto the Parking Lot.

Adoration Chapel News

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament has returned to the Chapel: Monday to Friday: 7:30am to 6pm.



United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3000
WEBSITE: WWW.USCCB.ORG • FAX 202-541-3339

February 23, 2021

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative/Senator:

As chairmen of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Religious Liberty, Pro-Life, Marriage, Catholic Education, and Domestic Justice committees, we write to share our support for laws that protect the dignity and ensure the respect that is due all people, as well as our grave concerns with the Equality Act of 2021 (H.R. 5).

Human dignity is central to what Catholics believe because every person is made in the image of God and should be treated accordingly, with respect and compassion. This commitment is reflected in the Church's charitable service to all people, without regard to race, religion, or any other characteristic. It means we need to honor every person's right to gainful employment free of unjust discrimination or harassment, and to the basic goods that they need to live and thrive. It also means that people of differing beliefs should be respected. In this, we whole-heartedly support nondiscrimination principles to ensure that everyone's rights are protected.

The Equality Act purports to protect people experiencing same-sex attraction or gender discordance from discrimination. But instead, the bill represents the imposition by Congress of novel and divisive viewpoints regarding "gender" on individuals and organizations. This includes dismissing sexual difference and falsely presenting "gender" as only a social construct. As Pope Francis has reflected, however, "'biological sex and the socio-cultural role of sex (gender) can be distinguished but not separated.' ... It is one thing to be understanding of human weakness and the complexities of life, and another to accept ideologies that attempt to sunder what are inseparable aspects of reality."¹ Tragically, this Act can also be construed to include an abortion mandate, a violation of precious rights to life and conscience.²

Rather than affirm human dignity in ways that meaningfully exceed existing practical protections, the Equality Act would discriminate against people of faith. It would also inflict numerous legal and social harms on Americans of any faith or none. If passed, this legislation would:

- punish faith-based charities such as shelters and foster care agencies, and in turn their thousands of beneficiaries, simply because of their beliefs on marriage and sexuality (§§ 3, 6);
- force both people and organizations in many everyday life and work settings to speak or act in support of "gender transitions," including health care workers and licensed counselors, even when it's against their professional judgment (§§ 3, 6, 7);
- risk mandating taxpayers to pay for abortions, and health care workers with conscience objections to perform them, ultimately ending more human lives (§§ 3, 6, 9);

¹ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, no. 56 (2016).

² See USCCB Fact Sheet, "[The Equality Act: Its Impact on Government Funding of Abortion](#)."

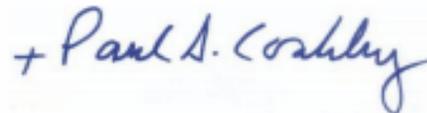
- force girls and women to compete against boys and men for limited opportunities in school sports, and to share locker rooms and shower spaces with biological males who claim to identify as women (§§ 6, 9);
- expand the government's definition of public places into numerous settings, even forcing religiously operated spaces, such as some church halls and equivalent facilities owned by synagogues or mosques, to either host functions that violate their beliefs or close their doors to their broader communities (§ 3);
- exclude people from the careers and livelihoods that they love, just for maintaining the truth of their beliefs on marriage and sexuality (§ 3); and
- discriminate against individuals and religious organizations based on their different beliefs by partially repealing the bipartisan Religious Freedom Restoration Act, an unprecedented departure from that law and one of America's founding principles (§ 9).

Each year the Catholic Church, as the largest non-governmental provider of human services in the United States, helps millions of people in need through its parishes, schools, hospitals, shelters, legal clinics, food banks, and other charities. The same core beliefs about the human person--made with inherent dignity and in the image of God--motivate both our positions on life, marriage, and sexuality, and also our call to serve the most vulnerable and the common good. We oppose this legislation.

Sincerely,



Most Rev. Michael C. Barber, S.J.
Bishop of Oakland
Chairman, Committee on Catholic Education



Most Rev. Paul S. Coakley
Archbishop of Oklahoma City
Chairman, Committee on Domestic Justice
and Human Development



His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York
Chairman, Committee for Religious Liberty



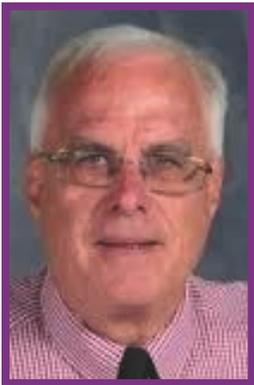
Most. Rev. David A. Konderla
Bishop of Tulsa
Chairman, Subcommittee for the Promotion
and Defense of Marriage



Most Rev. Joseph F. Naumann
Archbishop of Kansas City, KS
Chairman, Committee on Pro-Life Activities

FROM THE PRINCIPAL

SUMMER LEARNING



Dear friends,

It is March! Soon enough we will bid farewell for the summer holidays.

Summer learning loss is real. All children lose some skills or knowledge over the summer months. This phenomenon, commonly referred to as the “summer slide” occurs when student do not engage in educational activities during the summer months. A great deal of research has centered on the summer

slide and concludes:

Elementary school students’ performance regresses by about a month during the summer. This loss is cumulative over time creating producing a great learning loss over the years (Rand Corporation, 2011).

The Campaign for Grade-Level Reading lists summer learning loss as one of the three major obstacles to reading proficiency by the end of the 3rd grade (Gewetz, 2011).

The costs to schools to reteach after the summer slide have been estimated at \$1,500 per student per year (Fairchild, 2002).

Summer Solutions provides the necessary review and practice that helps students retain important Math and Language Arts skills learned during the academic term. Each Summer Solutions practice book contains 30 lessons, along with Help Pages and an answer key for self-checking. If students simply complete a lesson from each of their Summer Solutions workbooks just three times per week over the summer they are systematically re-visiting and practicing learned skills. This type of academic engagement supports long-term retention and helps to prevent the summer slide!

Students are also encouraged to continue reading throughout the summer. Our teachers will provide lists of books for student reading over the summer. Also, local public libraries have excellent summer reading programs for children to participate in.

Various rewards programs are being considered and will be shared with students before the end of the academic term. Information on how to obtain Summer Solutions will be distributed later this spring.

Please contact me at the office with any questions or concerns

Have a great week filled with the blessings of our Lord,

Mike Lootens, GO KNIGHTS!!!

PARISH UPDATES

CATCH UP HERE

Epiphany Youth Ministry

High School Youth Group meets on Sundays from 6:30-8 pm in the Parish Hall. Join us this Sunday to grow in faith together, have fun, deepen our relationship with God, serve others, and grow in community and friendship. All are welcome! Next Sunday (3/21) we are OFF for spring break..

Junior High Youth Group (grades 6-8) meets once a month to play games, share faith, and grow together in our journey towards Christ. The next Junior High Youth Group is Friday, April 23rd from 7-8:30 pm.

Junior High Small Group: We're starting an evening small group! If you're in 6-8th grade and interested in discussing faith with a small circle of friends, then Small Group is for you. We meet Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8 - email Kara to sign up!

To receive Youth Ministry updates, join our Flocknote group or email kara.esker@epiphanyparish.com to be added to the email list!

Johnson and Johnson Covid Vaccine

From the US Bishops: The approval of Johnson & Johnson’s COVID-19 vaccine for use in the United States again raises questions about the moral permissibility of using vaccines developed, tested, and/or produced with the help of abortion-derived cell lines. Pfizer and Moderna’s vaccines raised concerns because an abortion-derived cell line was used for testing them, but not in their production. **The Johnson & Johnson vaccine, however, was developed, tested and is produced with abortion-derived cell lines raising additional moral concerns.** If one has the ability to choose a vaccine, Pfizer or Moderna’s vaccines should be chosen over Johnson & Johnson’s.

Discerning Priesthood or Consecrated Life?

“We proclaim Christ crucified...the power and wisdom of God.” Could Jesus be calling you to proclaim His life, death and resurrection as a priest or in the consecrated life? Call Fr. Chase Hilgenbrinck at (309) 671-1550, or email: fr_hilgenbrinck@cdop.org. For those considering a call to the priesthood or consecrated life, that they will answer the call and proclaim Christ crucified, we pray to the Lord.

ECS School Principal Sought

Normal Epiphany Catholic School, a Pre-K – 8 school of approximately 380 students, is seeking applicants for the position of principal for the 2021-2022 school year. A principal application packet outlining qualifications and procedures is available at <http://cdop.org/careers> or by calling the Office of Catholic Schools at (309) 671-1550. A review of applicants will start in

late march with interviews in mid-April.

Normal Knights of Columbus Scholarship

The Knights are offering a scholarship that is open to any Epiphany Parish 8th grader planning to attend Central Catholic in the Fall of 2021. Details along with the application can be found at <http://kofc6498.org/vfm/forms/>. Applications due 3/31.

Sacraments this Spring

CCD and School students have been preparing to receive their Sacraments of Initiation. Please remember our students receiving First Reconciliation, Holy Communion, and Confirmation in your prayers.

- First Reconciliation: Various dates have been scheduled in the month of April.
- First Communion: Sun. April 25th @ 2 pm (LIMITED ATTENDANCE: Mass closed to the public)
- Confirmation: Sat. May 8th @ 7 pm (LIMITED ATTENDANCE: Mass closed to the public)
- Homeschoolers: Those preparing to receive these sacraments and wish to participate in the mass, please contact Kara Esker, CCD Coordinator.

8th Grade Students, Aspire To Be Saints

We love showing families of 7th and 8th grade students around our school! 8th grade students also have the opportunity for a Shadow Day - spend the day with a freshman, go to their classes, enjoy our lunch and meet your future classmates. Call Scott Vogel, Director of Enrollment at 533-2200 to schedule a day. Central Catholic's online application is live now. Visit www.blmcchs.org and click on the "Apply Today" button. This begins your registration process and keeps you informed about all of the important dates and opportunities to find out more about our school. If you're thinking about Central Catholic, apply today!

St. Patrick's Day Lunch

Wednesday, March 17, 2021. Wear your green and join us for lunch at 11:30am at Times Past Inn, 1216 Towanda Ave., Bloomington, IL. Corned beef and cabbage will be available or you can order off the menu. Young at Heart welcomes everyone 50 years young and older. It is a wonderful way to meet people from all the parishes. Reservations: please call Mary-Margaret at 452-7976.

Bloomington Knights Fish Fries

The Bloomington K of C hopes to have a successful Fish Fry March 5th and March 12th, and if we have a good to great turnout, we will continue having the Fish Fry Fridays during Lent. But we need to have real good support as we don't want to waste food. And the support we get by having people come and enjoy a great Fish dinner while trying to social distance, and wear your mask when not eating or drinking, but have a good

time socializing with friends. If the first Fish Fry's don't have great amounts of support we will not be able to continue with them this year. So, please come, serving will be from 5:30 till 7 PM.

WELCOME!

NEW TO EPIPHANY PARISH

Let all who arrive be received like Christ, for He is going to say, "I came among you, and you received Me." —Saint Benedict

- Corin Desmond
- Michelle Murphy
- Eva Elmore and family
- Molly Sullivan and family
- Audrianna Schott and family
- Dan & Pamela Boomgarden and family
- Casey Nordine
- Sandra Pisarek
- Lillie Ledbetter
- Pat & Amelia Marino
- Stephen & Brandy Caulfield and family

Cover Painting: The Woman at the Well, by Diego Rivera 1913, shows the artist's incursions into Cubism. Rivera broke up his forms into geometrical elements, departing from a single perspective. Here, the protagonist, a woman raising water from a well, is depicted from various angles.

SHARING IN THE WORK OF GOD

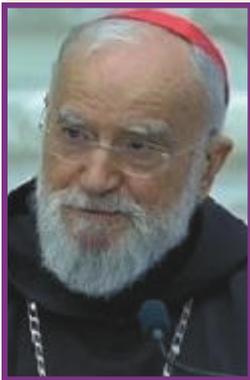
Thank you for your generosity in support of our mission.

Gifts from Our Parish Family

February 28, 2021	\$12,443
E-giving.....	\$13,415
Special.....	\$962
Parish Endowment.....	\$295
School Endowment.....	\$457
Capital Improvement.....	\$210
Weekly Budget	\$24,500
YTD Budget (35 weeks)	\$857,500
YTD Income.....	\$853,117
YTD Balance.....	(\$4,383)

CARD. CANTALAMESSA

REPENT AND BELIEVE



As usual, we shall devote this first meditation to a general introduction to Lent Tide, before delving into the specific subject we have planned once we have completed the spiritual exercises of the Papal Curia. In the Gospel of the First Sunday of Lent of Year B we heard the solemn proclamation with which Jesus began his public ministry: "This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel" (Mk 1:15). We would like to

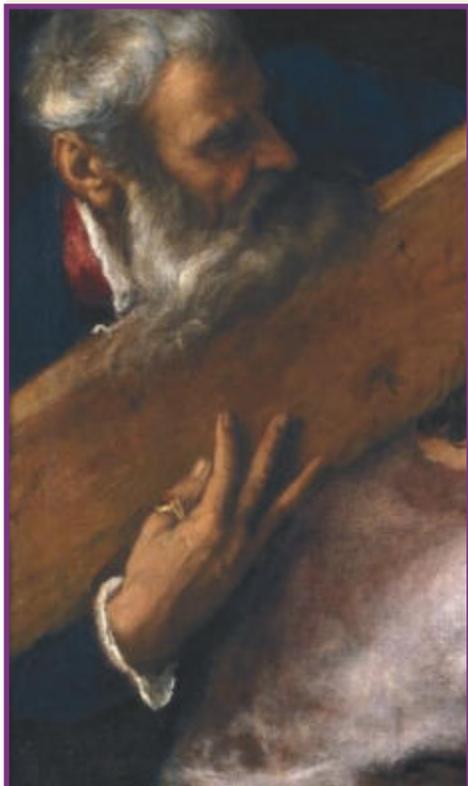
meditate on this ongoing call of Jesus to repentance.

In the New Testament, conversion is mentioned in three different moments and contexts, each highlighting a new component of the process. Three passages jointly give us a complete idea of what the Gospel metanoia is about. We will not necessarily experience all those three components together, with the same intensity. A different kind of conversion is provided for in each season of life. It is important for each of us to identify the one that suits them right now.

Repent, that is believe!

The first kind of conversion is the one that resounds at the beginning of Jesus's preaching and is summed up in the words:

"Repent and believe in the Gospel!" (Mk 1:15). Let us try and understand what the word 'conversion' means here. Before Jesus, converting always meant a 'going back' (the Hebrew word *shub* means reversing route, going back on one's own steps). It defined someone's course of action when, at a certain time in their life, they realize they are 'off track.' Then they stop, to think it all over again; they decide to go back to observing the law



and rejoining their covenant with God. Conversion, in this case, has an essentially moral meaning and suggests the idea of something painful to do, such as changing habits, stopping doing this or that.

On Jesus's lips that meaning changes. It is not that he enjoys changing the meaning of words, but that, with his coming, things have changed. 'This is the time of fulfillment. The Kingdom of God is at hand!'. Converting or repenting no longer means going back, to the old covenant and to the observance of the law, but rather it means leaping forward and entering the Kingdom, grabbing salvation reaching out to men and women for free, out of God's own free and sovereign initiative.

'Repent and believe' does not refer to two different and subsequent things, but to the same fundamental act: repent, that is believe! "Prima conversion fit per fidem", says St. Thomas Aquinas: The first conversion consists in believing. All this calls for a genuine act of 'conversion,' a deep change in the way of seeing our relationship with God. It requires a shift from the idea of a God that asks, orders and threatens, to the idea of a God that comes to us with full hands to give us everything himself. It is the conversion from 'the law' to 'grace' that St Paul cherished so much.

'Unless you turn and become like children ...'

Let us now listen to the second passage in the Gospel, where conversion is referred to again:

At that time the disciples approached Jesus and said, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child over, placed it in their midst, and said, "Amen, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. (Mt 18.1-3).

This time converting does indeed mean turning back a long way, as far as our childhood! The very verb that is used, *strefo*, points to reversing directions in a march. This is the conversion of those who have already entered the Kingdom, have believed in the gospel and have been serving Christ for a long time. It is our own conversion!

What is the assumption underlying the discussion on who is the greatest? It is the idea that the main concern is no longer the Kingdom, but the place the apostles have in it, their ego. Each of them was somewhat entitled to aspire to be the greatest: Peter had received a promise of primacy, Judas held the money box, Matthew could claim he had left more than the others, Andrew that he had been the first to follow Jesus, James and John that they had been on Mount Tabor with him... The fruits of this situation are clear: rivalry, suspicion, mutual comparisons, frustration.

Jesus suddenly removes the veil. Forget being first: you will never enter the Kingdom that way! What is the remedy for that? Turning, completely changing perspective and direction. Jesus puts forward a genuine revolution. It is necessary to shift the center from yourself and to re-center yourself on Christ.

More simply, Jesus invites the apostles to become like children. For them going back to being children meant going back to their original call on the shores of the lake or at their working desk: without personal demands or titles, mutual comparisons or envy and rivalries. Their only wealth then was Jesus, his promise ('I will make you fishers of men') and his presence. Then they were still fellow travelers; they did not compete for the first place.

For us too going back to being children means going back to the time when we discovered we were called, to the time of our priestly ordination, of our religious profession, or to the time we first truly encountered Jesus. When we said: "God alone is enough!" and we believed it.

'You are neither hot nor cold'

The third context in which a pounding invitation to conversion is repeated is that of the seven letters to the Churches of the Book of Revelation. The seven letters are addressed to people and communities who, like us, have long lived a Christian life and in fact play a leading role within them. They are addressed to the angel of the different Churches: 'To the angel of the church in Ephesus, write this...' Such title cannot be explained but by direct or indirect reference to the shepherd of the community. It is unthinkable that the Holy Spirit should blame the angels for faults and deviations reported in the different churches, or even more that the call to conversion be addressed to angels instead of men!

Out of the seven letters to the Churches, the one that we should most meditate on is the letter to the Church of Laodicea. We are quite familiar with its harsh tone:

I know your works; I know that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth... Be earnest, therefore, and repent. (Rev, 3:15ff.).

The focus here is on conversion from being mediocre and lukewarm. In the history of Christian holiness, the best-known example of the first kind of conversion, from sin to grace, is provided by Saint Augustine; the most instructive example of the second type of conversion, from being lukewarm to being fervent, is provided by St Teresa of Ávila. What she says of herself in her Life is surely exaggerated and dictated by the delicate nature of her conscience, but, in any case, it may help all of us to make a useful examination of our own conscience:

I began, then, to indulge in one pastime after another, in one vanity after another and in one occasion of sin after another. Into so many and such grave occasions of sin did I fall, and so far was my soul led astray by all these vanities [...]. All the things of God gave me great pleasure, yet I was tied and bound to those of the world. It seemed as if I wanted to reconcile these two contradictory things, so completely opposed to one another – the life of the spirit and the pleasures and joys and pastimes of the senses. This state of things resulted in deep unhappiness: I spent nearly twenty years on that stormy sea,

often falling in this way and each time rising again, but to little purpose, as I would only fall once more. My life was so far from perfection that I took hardly any notice of venial sins; as to mortal sins, although afraid of them, I was not so much so as I ought to have been; for I did not keep free from the danger of falling into them. I can testify that this is one of the most grievous kinds of life which I think can be imagined, for I had neither any joy in God nor any pleasure in the world. When I was in the midst of worldly pleasures, I was distressed by the remembrance of what I owed to God; when I was with God, I grew restless because of worldly affections.

Many people could find in this analysis the real reason for their dissatisfaction and unhappiness. Let us then dwell on turning from being lukewarm. Saint Paul urged Christians in Rome with the words: 'Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in Spirit' (Rom 12:11). One would be tempted to object: 'Well, dear Paul, that's exactly where the problem lies! How do you turn from lukewarm to fervent if that is what you have unfortunately slipped into?' We may slip into being lukewarm, as we may fall into quicksand, but we cannot pull ourselves out by ourselves, by dragging ourselves by the hair as it were.

The objection we raise results from neglecting or misinterpreting the additional words "in Spirit" (en pneumatī) which the Apostle appends to his exhortation: 'Be fervent.' In Paul the word 'Spirit' almost invariably –and certainly in this case – indicates or includes a reference to the Holy Spirit. It hardly ever exclusively refers to our own spirit or will, except in 1 Thessalonians 5:23, where it is a component of the human being, along with body and soul.

We are the heirs of a spirituality which typically saw progress to perfection as divided into three classic stages: via purgativa, via illuminativa and via unitiva. Purgification, illumination, union. In other words, we need to practice renunciation and mortification at length before we can experience fervor. All this is based on great wisdom and on centuries of experience and it would be wrong to think it is outmoded by now. No, it is not outmoded, but it is not the only way God's grace chooses

Go to Next Page



es to follow.

Such a stern distinction shows a slow gradual shift from divine grace to human efforts. According to the New Testament it is a circular and simultaneous process, whereby mortification is surely necessary to achieve the fervor of the Spirit, but at the same time it is also true that the fervor of the Spirit is necessary to be able to practice mortification. Embarking on an ascetic journey without a strong starting push by the Spirit would be dead toil and would not generate anything but 'pride of the flesh.' We are granted the Spirit to be able to mortify ourselves, rather than as a prize for mortifying ourselves. St. Paul has written, "If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live" (Rom 8:13).

This second way, going from fervor to asceticism and to the practice of virtue, was the one Jesus wanted the apostles to follow. As the great Byzantine theologian Cabasilas put it,

The apostles and fathers of our faith had the advantage of being instructed in every doctrine and what's more by the Savior in person. [...] Yet, despite having known all this, until they were baptized [at Pentecost, with the Spirit], they did not exhibit anything new, noble, spiritual, better than in the old times. But when baptism came for them and the Paraclete stormed their souls, then they became new and they embraced a new life, they were leaders for others and made the flame of the love for Christ shine within themselves and others. [...] In the same way God leads to perfection all the saints who have come after them.

The Fathers of the Church expressed all this with the attractive image of 'sober drunkenness'. What drove many of them to take up from Philo of Alexandria this paradoxical statement, or oxymoron, were Paul's words to the Ephesians:

Do not get drunk on wine, in which lies debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another [in] psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and

playing to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father" (Eph 5:18-19).

Starting with Origen, countless texts of the Fathers spelled out this image, by playing either on the analogy or on the contrast between physical and spiritual drunkenness. Those who, at Pentecost, mistook the apostles for drunkards were right – as saint Cyril of Jerusalem writes – their only mistake was to relate that drunkenness to ordinary wine, whereas it was 'new wine,' made from the 'true vine' which is Christ; the apostles were indeed drunk, but theirs was a sober drunkenness crushing their sins and reviving their hearts.

How can we take up this ideal of sober drunkenness and embody it in the present situation in history and in the Church? Why should we take it for granted that such a strong way of experiencing the Spirit was an exclusive privilege of the Fathers and of the early history of the Church, but that it is no longer the case for us? Christ's gift is not limited to a specific age, but it is offered to every age. It is precisely the role of the Spirit to make Christ's redemption universal and available to anyone, at any point in time and space.

As an early Father put it, a Christian life filled with ascetic efforts and mortification, but short of the enlivening touch of the Spirit, would look like a Mass service with many readings, rituals and offerings, but without the priest consecrating the species. All would remain what it was before, bread and wine. As the Church Father concluded,

The same also applies to Christians. Even if they have perfectly fasted, taken part in the vigil, sung the psalms, performed every ascetic deed and practiced virtue, but grace has not worked the mystical operation of the Spirit on the altar of their hearts, that whole ascetic process is incomplete and almost vain, because they are not

filled with the joy of the Spirit mystically working in their hearts.

What are the 'places' where the Spirit acts today in the same way as it acted at Pentecost? Let us listen to Saint Ambrose who, among the Latin Fathers, was the herald par excellence of the sober drunkenness (*sobria ebrietas*) of the Spirit. After mentioning the two classic 'places' – the Eucharist and Scriptures – where the Spirit can be drawn from, he hints at a third option, saying:

There is also another drunkenness caused by the drenching rain of the Holy Spirit. In the same way, in the Acts of the Apostles, those who talked in different languages appeared to their listeners to be filled with wine.

After mentioning the 'ordinary' means, with these words saint Ambrose hints at a third 'extraordinary' one, by which he means something that is not pre-planned, nor is it something institutional. It is about reliving the experience of the apostles on the day of Pentecost. ...

The secret is to say 'Come, Holy Spirit', but to say it with your whole heart, knowing that such invitation will not remain unheard. To say it with an "expectant faith", leaving the Spirit free to come in the way and with the manifestations he decides, not in the way we think he should come and manifest himself.

The 'baptism in the Spirit' has turned out to be a simple and powerful means to renew the life of millions of believers in almost all Christian Churches. ...

1.S. Tommaso, S.Th, I-IIae, q. 113, a. 4.

2.St Teresa of Ávila, *The Life of Teresa of Jesus*, chs. 7-8; http://www.carmelitemonks.org/Vocation/teresa_life.pdf.

3.N. Cabasilas, *Life in Christ*, II, 8: PG 150, 552 s.

4.Philo of Alexandria, *Legum allegoriae*, I, 84 (*methē nefalios*).

5.St Cyril of Jerusalem, *Cat. XVII*, 18-19 (PG 33, 989).

6.Macarius the Egyptian, in *Filocalia*, 3, Torino 1985, p. 325).

7.St Ambrose, *Comm. on Ps.* 35, 19.

8.St Augustine, *Confessions*, VIII, 8, 19.



Kibler-Brady-Ruestman Memorial Home

Catholic Funeral Directors: Dan Brady - Tim Ruestman
1104 N. Main St. • Bloomington
309.828.2422 ~ www.KiblerBradyRuestman.com

Let's talk about your real estate needs.



Janel Harrison

Proud Parent of an Epiphany Student

(309) 825-1668 | JanelHarrisonHomes@kw.com
www.facebook.com/RealtorJanelHarrison/



**Town & Country
Animal Hospital, Ltd.**
901 N. Linden Street
452-1717
Dave Bussan, DVM • Ron Goeckner, DVM
Matthew Bussan, DVM Parishioners

Independent & Assisted Living
**THE VILLAGE AT
MERCY CREEK**
FRANCISCAN COMMUNITIES
Franciscan Ministries sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Chicago
A VIBRANT CATHOLIC SENIOR LIVING COMMUNITY
309-268-1501
www.villageatmercycreek.org

"Together We Grow... One Jewel at a Time"

- Outdoor play area and underground sprinkler pad
- Music, Gymnastics and Sign Language
- Field Trips on our own fleet of buses
- Parent's Nights Out once a month
- Locally owned and operated by Bob and Julie Dobski



Three Convenient Locations:
4117 E. Oakland Ave., Bloomington
1730 Evergreen Blvd., Normal
210 N. Williamsburg Dr., Bloomington
www.littlejewelslearningcenter.com

**SUPPORT YOUR
LOCAL PARISH.**
Buy a bulletin ad space today!

**health
markets**
Chris Bischoff, Licensed Insurance Agent
309-824-4747 | HEALTH & MEDICARE
chris.bischoff@healthmarkets.com
www.facebook.com/ChrisBischoffHM

Larson & Darby Group
Architecture Engineering Interiors
815.484.0739

From "Yes" To "I Do"
LET EASTLAND SUITES SPOIL YOU
1801 Eastland Drive | Bloomington, IL | 309.662.0000 | WWW.EASTLANDSUITES.COM

Come visit us in our NEW home!
915 E Washington St. • Bloomington, IL 61701
(309) 827-8811
Hours: Mon-Fri 9am-7pm • Sat 9am-5pm • Sun 12pm-4pm
www.gingerbreadhousetoys.com

F&W
Lawn care • Landscaping • Mowing • Snow removal
Irrigation • Outdoor living • Commercial projects
2405 E. Empire, Bloomington, IL
309-664-2666

ADT-Monitored Home Security
Get 24-Hour Protection From a Name You Can Trust
Burglary • Flood Detection • Fire Safety • Carbon Monoxide
1-855-225-4251

Citizens Bank
Proudly Serving the Area since 1903!
Chatworth Normal
815-635-3134 309-452-3360
www.CBChatworth.com
Member FDIC Equal Housing Lender

**UPGRADE TO A
VIBRANT
ad**
Contact us for details
800-950-9952

SPREAD THE WORD
A Thriving, Vibrant Community Matters
SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

**CDS
OFFICE
TECHNOLOGIES**
More Than Just Technology
Providing innovative solutions, services & support for over 45 years
Managed Network Services/IT Support
Public Safety • Print Solutions
888-318-1816

area Disposal Service, Inc.
Waste Collection Services
Residential • Commercial • Industrial
Waste Equipment Rental • Recycling
Municipal Solid Waste Disposal
309-821-9743 email: info@pdccarea.com

**College Hills
Great Stop**
1522 E. College Ave.
Normal, Illinois 61761
Ph. (309) 452-2222
Wholesale/Retail
Open 7 Days
Tim Leary - Owner/Operator

Birthright®
PREGNANT? NEED HELP?
Free Pregnancy Tests
All Services Free & Confidential
www.birthright.org
505 N. Center • Bloomington • 309-829-5430
24 Hr. Hotline • 1-800-550-4900



NEVER MISS A BULLETIN !
Sign up to have our weekly parish bulletin
emailed to you at www.parishesonline.com

**OSF
HEALTHCARE**
www.osfhealthcare.org

Too Sick for Mass?
SUPPORT OUR PARISH NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE!
Sign-up to get your bulletin delivered
right to your inbox!
www.parishesonline.com



DANIEL G. DENEEN
ATTORNEY & COUNSELOR AT LAW
CONCENTRATION ON WILLS, PROBATE &
COMMERCIAL LAW
207 W. JEFFERSON, SUITE 603, BLOOMINGTON
663-0555



**PROTECTING SENIORS NATIONWIDE
MEDICAL ALERT SYSTEM**
\$29.95/MO PLUS SPECIAL OFFER
BILLED QUARTERLY
CALL NOW! 1.877.801.7772 • WWW.24-7MEDALARM.COM

**WE'RE HIRING
AD SALES EXECUTIVES**
• Full Time Position with Benefits
• Sales Experience Preferred
• Paid Training
• Overnight Travel Required
• Expense Reimbursement
CONTACT US AT
careers@4LPi.com
www.4LPi.com/careers

ENTEC
HVAC Service & Solutions
Energy Services • Building Automation
(309) 697-2122
www.entecservicesinc.com
Building Performance. Building Relationships.

Bloomington Meats
BEST MEAT on BUNN STREET
Custom Processing & Retail Market
Mon & Tues 8am-5pm, Wed-Fri 8am-6pm, Sat 8am-4pm, Sun 11am-3pm
2401 S Bunn 828-9731
ASSORTED BUNDLES • OVER 50 FLAVORS OF BRATS • WEEKLY SPECIALS

AVANTI'S
www.avantisbloomington.com
ORDER ONLINE



For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • www.4lp.com

Epiphany, Normal, IL

B 4C 01-0382

GENE AGNEW, Broker, Parishioner
Buying or Selling Your Home?
309-530-0473 or geneagnewsells@gmail.com
www.geneagnew.com
Berkshire Hathaway Home Services

FREE AD DESIGN
WITH PURCHASE OF THIS SPACE.
- 800-950-9952 -

TWIN CITY PLASTIC SURGERY
Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Breast & Body Contouring Surgery
Skin & Breast Cancer Reconstruction
www.chadtattinimd.com
(309) 664-1007
Chad Tattini, M.D. Parishioner
2502-C E. Empire St., Bloomington

Liliana Timoorazi
Broker, CRS, GRI
Award Winner for Impeccable Customer Service, Loyalty & Integrity
(309) 826-5559 • www.lilianacoldwellhomes.com
A Relationship that will last forever

BETSY ULRICH, D.D.S., M.S.
SUGAR CREEK ORTHODONTICS, P.C.
200 S. Towanda Ave. 400 North Chicago St.
Normal, IL 61761 Lincoln, IL 62656
(309) 452-7445 (217) 732-1073
www.sugarcreekortho.com

Wedding Express
WEDDING BLOCKS
HOT BREAKFAST BUFFET
MTGS & BANQUETS 100
Conference Center
1715 Parkway Plaza Drive & Veteran Pkway
309-862-1600 | Deacorp@aol.com
Tony & Karen De Angelis, Owners

Children's Center for Dentistry
Specialized Care for Kids
Gregory M. Dietz, DMD
Pediatric Dentist
309-827-KIDS(5437)
www.bloomingtonpediatricdentist.com
Parishioner

PETERSON
INSURANCE SERVICES, INC.
Serving you since 1956
Auto • Home • Business
Farm • Life • Work Comp
Dustin A. Peterson, Parish Member
(217) 935-6605 • www.peterson.insurance

STARCREST CLEANERS
PARISHIONER LUKE HERMES AND FAMILY

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL PARISH.
Buy a bulletin ad space today!

NEVER MISS A BULLETIN!
Sign up to have our weekly parish bulletin emailed to you at www.parishesonline.com

State Farm
Axel Jimenez, Agent & Parishioner
309-451-3276 • axelismyagent.com
Providing Insurance and Financial Services

PRONTO PACK
from Budget's
\$4000
1501 N. Veterans Parkway • Bloomington
(309) 668-8322 • www.BIAGIS.com

ADT-Monitored Home Security
Get 24-Hour Protection From a Name You Can Trust
• Burglary • Flood Detection
• Fire Safety • Carbon Monoxide 1-855-225-4251

WEBER ELECTRIC INC.
RESIDENTIAL • COMMERCIAL
INDUSTRIAL - DATA - COMM
SERVICE CALLS
John Weber
827-7337
For All Your Electrical Needs 200 E LAFAYETTE

CARING HANDS
Home Care • Caregivers
309-589-0888 • Hourly & Live-In
Serving the greater Bloomington/Peoria areas
www.HBHCaringHands.com

HERMES
Service and Sales
Trusted Since 1957
Residential & Commercial
NETS • AIR CONDITIONERS • REFRIGERATORS • GREAT DEALS!
309-828-8111
HermesService.com

Prairie Dental Associates
Quality Dentistry by Dental Professionals Who Value Your Trust.
• Cigna Dental Providers. • Delta Dental Providers
• Free oral cancer screenings at every cleaning appointment.
• Office located behind Buffalo Wild Wings and Bloomington Avantis.
3220 Gerig Drive, Blm. • 309-662-7722
Hours: Mon.-Tues. 8-5 • Wed. 8-7 • Closed Thurs. • Fri. 8-3
PrairieDentalAssociates.com

Phillips & Associates, CPAs, PC
TAX AND ACCOUNTING SERVICES
Richard W Phillips, CPA - Parishioner
1600 Hunt Dr, Normal 452-2417

SPREAD THE WORD
A Thriving, Vibrant Community Matters
SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

Too Sick for Mass?
SUPPORT OUR PARISH NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE!
Sign-up to get your bulletin delivered right to your inbox!
www.parishesonline.com

AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME
ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS HERE
Contact **Trey Hill** to place an ad today!
thill@4LPI.com or (800) 950-9952 x2613

UPGRADE TO A VIBRANT ad
Contact us for details
800-950-9952

Image of a family (mother, father, and two children) all using tissues, illustrating the 'Too Sick for Mass?' theme.