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Saint Paul

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Following the Example of Christ through Lay Apostolate

The mission of the Lay Apostolate of Jesus Christ the Returning King began in 2003, when a woman — known simply as Anne, the lay apostle — approached her local bishop in order to publish her account of the locutions, or inner messages, she had received from Jesus. Titled *Direction of Our Times*, several volumes of Anne's account have since been published. In 2004, the *Direction of Our Times* non-profit organization was founded in order to continue to spread these messages. The organization is based in both Justice, Ill., where Anne is originally from, and in County Cavan, Ireland, where Anne currently lives with her family.

Lay apostles, or the followers of the mission, perform five basic obligations as practicing Catholics — morning prayers, one hour of Eucharistic Adoration each week, monthly Confession, prayer group participation, and the commitment to follow the example of Jesus Christ in the way we treat others.

“What you do to be a lay apostle is to be a good Catholic,” says Susie Nalley, who started the Lay Apostolate prayer group at



St. Paul. “It makes you more aware that you are Catholic, and that you should be increasing your prayer life. It's a way to get people to search for holiness in their own life, and to reach out to people. I think God is really trying to communicate to us that we really need to reach out to others.”

The Lay Apostolate of Jesus Christ the Returning King has already impacted our parish, and its overall impact has extended far beyond the United States.

“The ministry is worldwide, they have a special ministry for young people, and they encourage vocations,” Susie says. “It's a very upbeat group, and it's totally all spiritual. We support each other.”

Members of the prayer group at St. Paul meet every second Tuesday of the month. At these meetings, members read the monthly message from *Direction of Our Times* and pray the Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary.

“The great thing about the messages is that they are all very enlightening — people read them and they feel so much closer to God,” Susie says. “It hits home for so many people. It's a special message that's usually very encouraging.”

The Bible

The Textbook of Stewardship

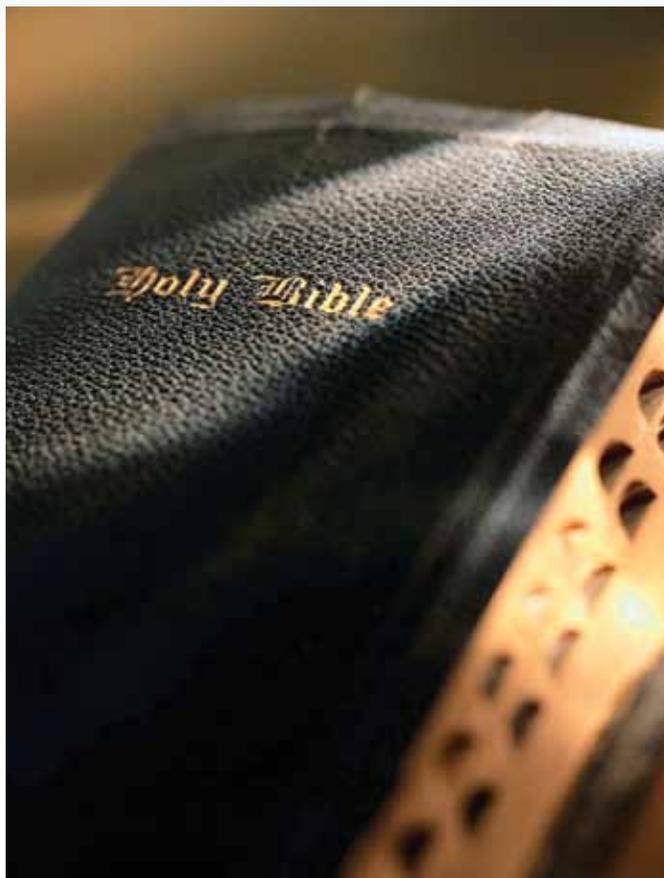
Have you ever wished that life came with an instruction manual? What a valuable resource that would be! Whenever you find yourself running in circles, this instruction manual would give you step-by-step instructions on how to fix the problem and reroute your course.

Well, here's some good news. For those living a Christian life, there is such a manual — the Bible.

Sometimes referred to as the “textbook of stewardship,” the Bible is a bountiful resource for present-day Christians. Written by anointed prophets and sages, this collection of divinely-inspired parables, poems and letters is full of testimonials that express the blessings that come from true discipleship, expressed through lives of stewardship.

Stewardship is not a new concept. The Bible gives proof to this claim through passages such as the 26th chapter of the Book of Deuteronomy. We read Moses' words, as he tells the Israelites to offer the choicest portions of their harvest to God: “When you have come into the land which the Lord, your God, is giving you as a heritage, and have occupied it and settled in it, you shall take some first fruits of the various products of the soil which you harvest from the land which the Lord, your God, gives you, and putting them in a basket, you shall go to the place which the Lord, your God, will choose for the dwelling place of his name... ‘Therefore, I have now brought you the first fruits of the products of the soil which you, O LORD, have given me.’ And having set them before the LORD, your God, you shall bow down in his presence” (Dt 26: 1-2, 10).

St. Paul briefly touches on the essence of stewardship when he said, “In every way I have shown you that by hard work of that sort we must help the weak, and keep in mind



the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:35).

Again, in St. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, we read about living a life of Christian stewardship: “Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Cor 9:6-7).

While this is well and good, what does it mean for the present day Christian? Why should it matter that the Bible alludes to stewardship in various passages? It shows us that Christians and Jews have struggled with and benefitted from the concept of stewardship for thousands of years. It ties the message of stewardship to the

role of a Christian disciple. It gives proof that stewardship and discipleship go hand in hand. It offers encouragement to us, that stewardship is in fact a foundational component of the Christian life, a way of life that one of the founding fathers of the Church – St. Paul – preached about and advocated.

The Bible is indeed the textbook of stewardship. It lays out the steps we must take to become true disciples of Christ. Reading and meditating upon God's Word is always a fruitful exercise. Those who regularly delve into Scripture often develop a deeper understanding of who God is, how and why He loves us, and how we can show Him our love in return — all most certainly important topics of discussion for any steward in the making.

As you strive to become a grateful steward and live the life of Christian discipleship, develop a love for Sacred Scripture. Allow God's Word to nourish your soul regularly, and watch as stewardship changes from a foreign concept to an integral component of your daily life.

A Letter From Our Pastor

“We are One Body in Christ”

Dear Parishioners,

The past few months have certainly been exciting for us as Catholics. It began with Pope Benedict XVI's resignation; then the election of our new Holy Father, Pope Francis; and of course our traditional rich celebration of Lent and Easter and the Easter season which follows. Easter season continues this month until Sunday, May 19, Pentecost Sunday.

The Senior Cardinal Deacon stepped on to the balcony of St. Peter's above the thousands and thousands gathered below and proclaimed “*Habemus Papam*” (“We have a Pope.”). The people below began to chant “*Viva il Papa*” (“Long live the Pope.”) and His Holiness Pope Francis blessed them.

We all gained a greater understanding of what it means to be the steward of the Church — the Pope — through the example of Benedict XVI, and our new shepherd, a new steward — Pope Francis. As we think about the role he plays in our Church and in our faith lives, it is well for us to keep in mind that we — you and I — are the stewards of St. Paul Parish. What does that mean, to be the stewards of the Church? In the Bishops' Pastoral Letter on stewardship, *Stewardship: A Disciple's Response*, the U.S. Bishops included an entire chapter on this subject titled appropriately “Stewards of the Church.”

In that chapter the Bishops state “Because the individual members (of the Church) do collectively make up the Body of Christ, that body's health and well-being are the responsibility of the members — the personal responsibility of each one of us.”

Our Lord often tried to remind us through Holy Scripture that we share the responsibility for His Church.



From the days immediately following His Resurrection He began preparing His Apostles, and each of us as well, to be stewards of His Church. It is no coincidence that on Pentecost Sunday, in the Second Reading from St. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, we hear these words: “There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them for everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.”

I acknowledge that I heard the call from the Lord, and I responded. That is why I am privileged to be a priest. At the same time, I challenge you to listen for your call. Have you considered what it is? Have you responded? That, my friends, is what stewardship is all about. It is each of us seeking how we

fit into the Lord's Church. It is each of us responding. It is each of us contributing in multiple ways to build the Kingdom of God, right now, today. As Paul continued in the reading for Pentecost Sunday, “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body ... and we are all given to drink of one Spirit.”

Let us all — our Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, our Pope Francis, I, your humble pastor, and each of you vow to be what Jesus wants us to be — “Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works.” (Mat 5:16)

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Doug Halsema
Pastor

Our Capital Campaign: Frequently Asked Questions



Why have we decided to move forward with these aspects of our long range master plan at this time?

The parish has experienced a healthy level of growth over the past few years that has put a strain on our infrastructure as we continually struggle to find space for our many ministries. We need to support this success so that it continues. In addition, relatively lower construction costs add to the logic of addressing these needs at this time, rather than later.

Why not raise money to pay down our existing debt first?

The parish has the capacity to service our existing debt. Under normal conditions, we would probably use extra financial resources to pay down this debt. But the demands from ministry and our ability to foster their continued growth makes this investment the more prudent choice. We will not incur additional long-term debt with these improvements, but will rely upon the campaign redemption to fund the changes.

Will the redesigned parish hall come first?

When the final construction and renovation plan is completed, we will determine at that time if a sequenced approach is the prudent plan or whether a more all-inclusive plan makes more sense for cost, given the temporary dislocations that might result.

Will all member families be asked to give?

Each member family will be asked to make a sacrificial financial commitment. The total amount of your Faith Promise may be paid over a three-year period and, in most cases, is fully tax-deductible.

How much should I give?

After prayerful consideration, you should select an amount that your family can sacrifice given your financial resources and obligations. Recommendations are included in the Faith Promise Giving Plan.

Is my contribution in addition to my regular tithes and offerings?

Yes. Your contributions for this project are in addition to your regular tithes and offerings. It is important to continue your regular offering to fund ongoing parish operations.



Holy Week Celebrations

Each year, the celebrations of Holy Week are some of the most important and meaningful events for all Catholics, and this year was no different.

Holy Thursday Mass, Good Friday, the Easter Vigil Mass, and the celebration of our risen Lord on Easter Sunday were all memorable and beautiful celebrations for the members of our parish.



The Rosary: Our Lady's Lasso

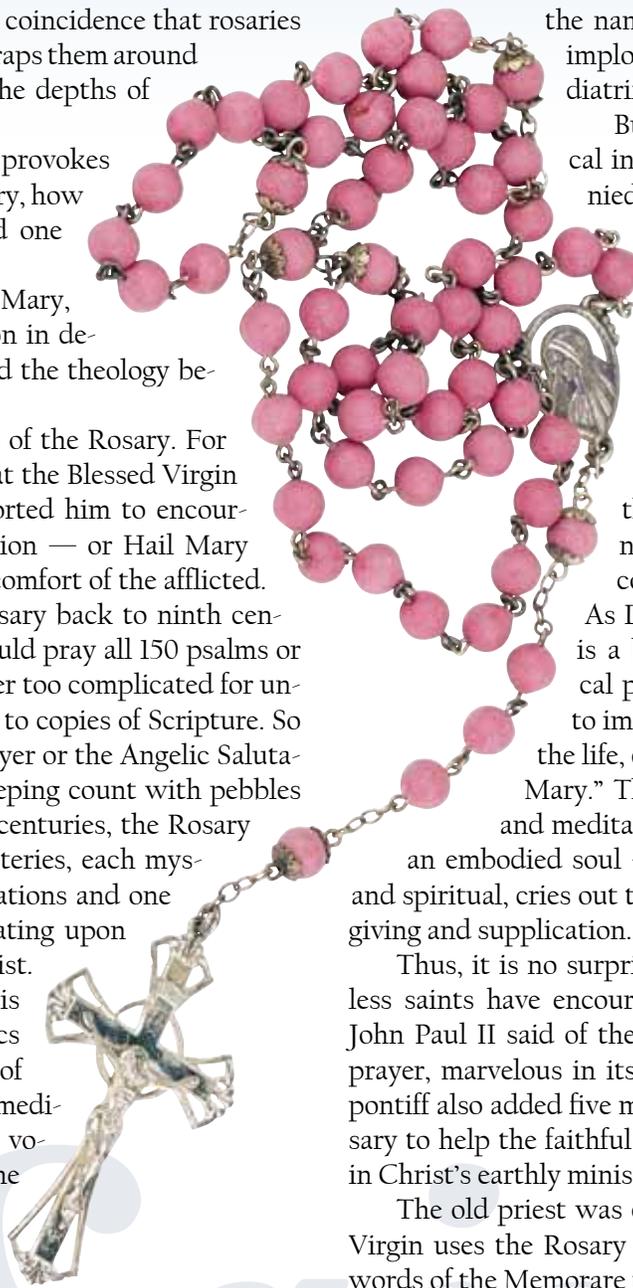
An old priest once said, "It is no coincidence that rosaries look like lassos, as Our Lady wraps them around lost souls and pulls them out of the depths of Hell."

This thought is comforting but provokes inquiry — what exactly is the Rosary, how does one pray it, and why should one pray it?

Since May is the Month of the Mary, this is a great time to utilize reason in defense of faith and try to understand the theology behind this intense spiritual weapon.

There are two putative origins of the Rosary. For many centuries, it was believed that the Blessed Virgin appeared to St. Dominic and exhorted him to encourage the use of the Angelic Salutation — or Hail Mary — for the conversion of souls and comfort of the afflicted. Modern scholarship traces the Rosary back to ninth century Irish monasticism. Monks would pray all 150 psalms or "psalters" every day, a form of prayer too complicated for uneducated laypeople without access to copies of Scripture. So many began reciting the Lord's Prayer or the Angelic Salutation in response to each psalm, keeping count with pebbles or a knotted rope. Through many centuries, the Rosary evolved into three sets of five mysteries, each mystery consisting of 10 Angelic Salutations and one Lord's Prayer recited while meditating upon the life, death, or glory of Jesus Christ.

In *The Secret of the Rosary*, St. Louis De Montfort expounds the dynamics of the Rosary. The prayer consists of both vocal or exterior prayer, and meditative or interior prayer. The first vocal component of the Rosary, the Creed, is important because faith is "the foundation of all Christian virtues, of all eternal virtues, and also of all prayers that are pleasing to Almighty God." The Lord's Prayer is the "perfect prayer" to the God of Heaven because it was authored by Christ, is free of all human limitations, and "contains all the duties we owe to God, the acts of all the virtues and the petitions for all our spiritual and corporal needs." The Hail Mary blesses



the name of Mary and her Divine Son and implores her powerful intercession as mediatrix of graces.

But the Rosary is not simply a physical incantation. Vocal prayer is accompanied by contemplation of the mysteries of Christ's life and the virtues of the Virgin. It is by lifting the incorporeal soul in prayer that one quiets the passions, tastes the peace of Christ, marvels at his loving plans and promises, and grows in the desire to emulate Him and his sinless mother. Because the soul animates the body, a strengthened soul means nobility of action and a will that is commensurate with the will of God.

As Louis de Montfort says, "The Rosary is a blessed blending of mental and vocal prayer by which we honor and learn to imitate the mysteries and the virtues of the life, death, passion and glory of Jesus and Mary." The Rosary's emphasis on both vocal and meditative prayer caters to man's nature as an embodied soul — one's entire being, both physical and spiritual, cries out to God in praise, repentance, thanksgiving and supplication.

Thus, it is no surprise that the magisterium and countless saints have encouraged devotion to the Rosary. Pope John Paul II said of the prayer, "The Rosary is my favorite prayer, marvelous in its simplicity and its depth." The late pontiff also added five more "luminous" mysteries to the Rosary to help the faithful meditate upon significant moments in Christ's earthly ministry.

The old priest was correct in asserting that the Blessed Virgin uses the Rosary to convert lost souls. However, the words of the Memorare must be remembered:

"Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help or sought thy intercession, was left unaided."

In order for the Rosary to help us, it must be actively embraced and recited frequently and fervently.

Sunday Morning Coffee and Donuts: Bringing the Parish Together

Are you looking for a way to get to know other parishioners and also to enjoy some Sunday morning breakfast? Twice a month, St. Paul parishioners can gather after the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Masses for Coffee and Donuts, where they can enjoy a delicious donut, fresh coffee and fellowship with the community.

"It gives us a time in a relaxed atmosphere where parishioners can socialize, say 'hello' and see a friendly face," says Scoutmaster Dean Stewart. "The church has been so active in so many areas to draw people in, and when you have a friendly face at church, it lends toward a welcome feeling. And anyone feeling welcome within the church is a good thing."

Sunday morning Coffee and Donuts is hosted by the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and ACTS Retreat team members as a way to promote fellowship within the parish, serve others, and raise awareness for the various events in which each group participates. The scout troops typically run Coffee and Donuts on the first Sunday of the month, and the ACTS team runs the third Sunday. Volunteers take turns with two different shifts, one for each Mass. For the scouts, troop members have a rotating roster designating them to a certain shift on a certain day, with two adult leaders always present. The breakfast offerings include donuts, bagels, coffee, milk and juice.

Although Coffee and Donuts is free for all parishioners, donations that go towards certain scouting or ACTS programs are accepted. For example, this past year, various Sundays were designated to raising funds for a Girl Scout trip to Savannah, Ga. — the birthplace of Girl Scouts.



Members of Boy Scouts Troop 425 serve at the Coffee and Donuts fellowship on the first Sunday of the month.

Indeed, Coffee and Donuts provides a great way for Boy and Girl Scouts to serve others and while developing an appreciation for helping their own community.

"Scouting is a values-based program, which teaches several things," Dean says. "One thing is the value of work — they have to prepare and plan, and execute the process of setting up. Especially as the scouts get older, the program becomes more community minded."

"It helps the scouts because it's a different thing than what they normally do," says Judy Fitzpatrick, whose son participated in Coffee and Donuts

through Boy Scouts for many years. "They're in a service situation, and they get to meet people that they normally wouldn't in their everyday life. And they have fun with it!"

The event is also an easy way for parishioners to gather in fellowship, while also meeting those who are new to the parish.

"It's a meet-and-greet," says Judy. "It helps everybody become more of a tight-knit group!"

All parishioners are welcome to attend Coffee and Donuts every first and third Sunday of the month in the parish center. See you there!

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— Scoutmaster Dean Stewart

Address Service Requested

Following the Example of Christ

continued from front cover

As a special addition to the meetings, members of the group at St. Paul specifically pray for their families and children.

“This world seems like such a crazy place now, and it can be hard for our children to maintain their spiritual lives today,” says Susie. “Since many of us are parents, we focus on praying for our children.”

Through these meetings, lay apostles can encourage each other not only to share their faith with others, but also to develop their own interior faith life.

“A lot of it is about daily prayer and your own spiritual life,” Susie says. “It has increased my spiritual life — we all talk about how wonderful it is and how it seems more meaningful when you pray together as a group. We find great comfort and encouragement

from that. As Jesus said, ‘Where two or more are gathered in my name... ‘We truly feel that when we are together.’”

Participation in the prayer group as a lay apostolate is also an easy complement to a full and busy life.

“All the people who come are very involved in other ministries, too,” Susie says. “The meeting doesn’t take more than an hour of your time — some people come and say the Rosary and then leave if they have to, but others stay and talk.”

All parishioners are welcome to take part in the Lay Apostolate of Jesus Christ the Returning King. For more information, please contact Susie Nalley at 850-433-4876.

Liturgy Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4:30 p.m. | **Sunday:** 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 a.m., 6:00 p.m. | **Daily Mass:** Monday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m.
Confessions: Saturdays, 9:00 a.m., 3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m., 1st Wednesdays, 6:30 p.m., and by appointment
Eucharistic Adoration: Thursday 9:00 a.m. until Friday 7:30 a.m.