

YEAR of FAITH:



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Michael Schiele, born and raised in the Christian Science Church, converted to the Catholic faith after a high school friend reached out to him. (Photo by Doug Gundlach)

Accident, Friend Bring Man to Catholic Faith

For Michael Schiele, a convert to the Catholic faith in 2011, the feeling of being alone was never far from him as a child. Raised in the Christian Science Church, he left the religion at the age of 15 because of a lack of connection. For years, Michael's life spiraled into a world of alcoholism, marijuana use and isolation as he struggled to find his place in the world.

"I isolated myself from my friends and family," he explained. "I knew there was something missing in my life, but just couldn't seem to grasp what it was." Discovering that perhaps it was God who was missing, Michael made a promise that he would quit drinking and using drugs and change his life. When his attempts failed, God found another way to get Michael's attention – a car accident.

"Luckily, it was just a fender bender, but I didn't have any car insurance," he said. "Even though no one was hurt and I was

able to pay for the damages, it was enough of a scare for me to realize that I needed to find God in my life."

That very day, Michael dusted off his childhood Bible and began to read, hungry for direction. His friends tried to help him in his faith journey by inviting him to their respective congregations, one Mormon, the other, Baptist. While Michael visited occasionally, he failed to make a connection with either church. Then, unexpectedly, Cathryn Rench, a high school friend, showed up at the garage he was working at as a mechanic, and his life changed.

"We went out to dinner that night, and I told her about what had happened to me, and about reading the Bible, as far as I had gotten," he explained. "She was raised Episcopalian, but told me that she became Catholic in 1992 after a radical conversion



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Living in the Light of Faith: The Year of Faith and the Wisdom of "Lumen Fidei"



By Archbishop
Jerome E. ListECKI

In June, Pope Francis published his first encyclical letter, "*Lumen Fidei*," or "*The Light of Faith*." A great gift during this Year of Faith, this letter examines the mystery of faith and challenges us to live our lives in the light of that faith, through six key themes.

Faith as Light

We speak of faith as light because light is the gift brought to us by Jesus. As *Lumen Fidei* states, "Those who believe, see; they see with a light that illumines their entire journey, for it comes from the risen Christ, the morning star which never sets" (1).

Faith as Grateful Remembrance

Faith is the act of grateful remembrance of God's mighty deeds throughout Salvation History. *Lumen Fidei* says it this way: "Hence, if we want to understand what faith is, we need to follow the route it has taken, the path trodden by believers..." (8).

Faith as Truth Through Love

Faith is an experience of being in love with God, who is Truth Itself. So to love and know God is to love and know the truth. *Lumen Fidei* says this: "The truth we seek, the truth that gives

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Four Ways You Can Close the Year of Faith

What a year this has been! When Pope Benedict XVI called for a Year of Faith, it was his hope that it would inspire in all believers “the aspiration to profess the faith in fullness and with renewed conviction, with confidence and hope.” (Porta Fidei, Pope Benedict XVI, no. 9)

As we near the end of this spiritual year, here are four ways that you can celebrate the closing of our Year of Faith!

1 Reflect on Your Growing Faith Life

Did you make it a habit to attend weekly Mass, receive the sacrament of reconciliation frequently or say the rosary daily? How have these new practices helped your spiritual life? Make a list and remind yourself of the many ways in which God has blessed you throughout this year.

2 Share What You Have Learned

Now that you’ve learned more about your Catholic faith, why not share it with others? Invite a co-worker, neighbor, relative or friend out for coffee and share with them the “Good News” of Jesus Christ. Sometimes, all it takes is an invitation to get the conversation started!

3 Renew Your Commitment

Just because the official year has ended, doesn’t mean your commitment to the New Evangelization should end. Renew your commitment as a disciple of Jesus Christ by digging deeper into Scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church, strengthening your prayer life and participating with even more zeal in the



sacraments of the Mass and reconciliation.

4 Attend the Year of Faith Closing Mass with Archbishop Listecki

What better way to honor this past year than to join thousands of Catholics throughout the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in prayer?

Archbishop Jerome E. Listecki will celebrate a special Mass to close the Year of Faith on Sunday, **November 24, 2013** at Christ King Parish, 2612 N. Swan Blvd., Wauwatosa, at 10:30 a.m. All are welcome to attend – see you at Mass!

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experience.” The following Saturday, she took him to Mass, and from that point on, Michael knew he had found a faith home.

“Cathryn explained to me the importance of maintaining what she called ‘kingdom living’ – living my life in the teachings of Jesus Christ – as I journeyed through the RCIA program and became an active, invested person

in the Catholic faith and as I prepared for baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist,” Michael remembered.

Today, a member of St. Elizabeth Parish in Kenosha, Michael tries his best to live his Catholic faith fully and completely each day, especially with the help of the sacrament of reconciliation.

“One of the things that I try to do is pray the rosary every morning,” he explained. “With my actions as a

Catholic, I always think back to what is said at the end of every Mass: ‘Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.’

“We’re supposed to go forth and evangelize. What seems to have happened to me is that I keep finding ‘Cradle Catholics’ who’ve fallen away from their Catholic faith for decades. Through my actions and words, my hope is to be able to bring some of them back to the Church.”

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meaning to our journey through life, enlightens us whenever we are touched by love” (27). This understanding is in direct conflict with today’s culture, which either completely denies all permanent truth or claims that truth can be known through science and technology alone.

Faith as Ecclesial Communion

Faith is never an individual decision or a private relationship with God. “*Lumen Fidei*” expresses this beautifully saying, “By its very nature, faith is open to the ‘We’ of the Church; it always takes place within her communion” (39). The Church preserves and communicates her living tradition through the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, the Decalogue, and, most especially, the sacraments.

Faith as Building the City of God

Faith does not draw us away from the concerns of the world, but, instead, “helps us build our societies in such a way that they can journey toward a future of hope” (51). The earthly City of God is built on strong marriages and families, the common good, the dignity of each person, forgiveness, justice and peace.

Mary as the Icon of Faith

Mary is the perfect model to follow because she walked the pilgrimage of faith fully. Thus, we turn to Mary in prayer, asking for her intercession as both Mother of the Church and Mother of our faith (60). St. Mary, pray for us and help us to LOVE ONE ANOTHER!

Read “Lumen Fidei” in its entirety by visiting <http://tinyurl.com/ksytnap>.



How Am I Supposed to Pray?

Through baptismal grace, we become God’s adopted children, sharing in the divine life, members of Christ’s Body, and the Church. For this God-given identity to grow, it must be nurtured through a lifelong practice of personal and communal prayer. There are many ways to pray that come to us from the sacred scriptures and apostolic teaching (CCC, 2625).

The prayer of blessing opens our hearts to thank God for so many marvelous gifts (CCC, 2627). The prayer of adoration is humbly paying

homage to the greatness of the Lord who made us (CCC, 2628). The prayer of petition is listening to the deepest hungers of our hearts and asking God to give us what we need (CCC, 2631).

The prayer of thanksgiving is expressing deep gratitude to God for his loving presence in our lives. The prayer of intercession is widening our perspective and praying for the needs of others (CCC, 2635). The prayer of praise is giving glory to God simply because He is (CCC, 2639). Finally, the Eucharist “contains and expresses all forms of prayer” (CCC, 2643).



“C4” Yourself!

Learn more about your faith through video. Each week during the Year of Faith, Bishop Donald J. Hying is featured in a two-minute video to walk you through the catechism of our Catholic faith. The videos are posted on www.archmil.org/year-of-faith.htm. Sign up to have a link to each newly posted video electronically delivered to you. Click on the RSS feed symbol on the homepage of www.archmil.org to register for this free service!



Viviendo Bajo la Luz de la Fe El Año de la Fe y la Sabiduría de “Lumen Fidei”

En junio, el Papa Francisco publicó su primera carta encíclica, “*LUMEN FIDEI*” o “*La Luz de la Fe*”. Un gran regalo durante este Año de la Fe, esta carta examina el misterio de la fe y nos desafía a vivir nuestras vidas bajo la luz de esa fe, a través de seis temas importantes.

La fe como luz

Hablamos de la fe como luz porque la luz es el don que Jesús nos trajo. Como *Lumen Fidei* expresa, “Quien cree ve; ve con una luz que ilumina todo el trayecto del camino, porque llega a nosotros desde Cristo resucitado, estrella de la mañana que no conoce ocaso” (1).

La fe como un recuerdo agradecido

La fe es un acto de recuerdo agradecido de las grandes obras de Dios a través de la historia de la salvación. *Lumen Fidei* lo expresa de este modo “Por eso, si queremos entender lo que es la



fe, tenemos que narrar su recorrido, el camino de los hombres creyentes...” (8).

La fe como la verdad a través el amor

La fe es una experiencia de estar enamorado con Dios, quien es la Verdad. De manera que amar y conocer a Dios es amar y conocer la verdad. *Lumen Fidei* dice esto: “La verdad que buscamos, la que da sentido a nuestros pasos, nos

ilumina cuando el amor nos toca” (27). Este entendimiento está en conflicto directo con la cultura de hoy en día, el cual niega completamente toda verdad permanente o reclama que la verdad puede ser conocida solamente a través de la ciencia y tecnología.

La fe como comunión eclesial

La fe nunca es una decisión individual o una relación privada con Dios. *Lumen Fidei* expresa esto bellamente diciendo “Por su misma naturaleza, se abre al « nosotros », se da siempre dentro de la comunión de la Iglesia” (39). La Iglesia preserva y comunica su tradición viva a través del Credo, el Padre Nuestro, el Decálogo y más especialmente, los Sacramentos.

La fe como la edificación de la ciudad eterna de Dios

La fe no nos aleja de los problemas del mundo, sino que “nos ayuda a edificar nuestras sociedades, para que avancen hacia el futuro con esperanza” (51). La ciudad terrenal de Dios está edificada sobre matrimonios y familias fuertes, el bien común, la dignidad de cada persona, el perdón, la justicia y la paz.

María como la imagen de fe

María es el modelo perfecto para seguir porque ella caminó la peregrinación de fe plenamente. Por lo tanto, nos dirigimos en oración a María, pidiendo su intercesión como “madre de la Iglesia y madre de nuestra fe” (60). Santa María, ruega por nosotros y ayúdanos a ¡AMARNOS LOS UNOS A LOS OTROS!

¿Cómo debo rezar?

A través de la gracia bautismal, nos convertimos en hijos adoptivos de Dios, participando en la vida divina como miembros del cuerpo de Cristo y la Iglesia. Para que la identidad otorgada por Dios se desarrolle, tiene que ser nutrida a través de la práctica de la oración personal y comunal a lo largo de la vida. Hay siete maneras de hacer oración que surgen de las Sagradas Escrituras y las enseñanzas apostólicas (CEC, 2625).

En la oración de bendición abrimos nuestros corazones para bendecir a Dios por bendecirnos con tantos dones maravillosos (CEC, 2627). La oración de adoración es una humilde prostración a la grandeza del Señor que nos creó (CEC, 2628). En la oración de petición escuchamos los más profundos deseos de nuestros corazones y pedimos a Dios que nos provea lo que necesitamos (CEC, 2631).

La oración de acción de gracias es una expresión de profunda gratitud a Dios por su amorosa presencia en nuestras vidas. En la oración de intercesión extendemos nuestra perspectiva y rezamos por las necesidades de los demás (CEC, 2635). En la oración de alabanza glorificamos a Dios simplemente porque él es Dios (CEC, 2639). Finalmente, la Eucaristía, “contiene y expresa todas las formas de oración” (CEC, 2643).



Cada semana encontrarán disponible un nuevo mensaje en nuestro sitio web, <http://www.archmil.org/Espanol.htm> y en el programa de radio “El Mensajero Católico” los sábados de 8 – 9 de la mañana en la Gran D, 104. 7 FM.