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In this Issue.....

February 12, 2021

Message from Gary - Two overlapping "Years"?

Office of Catechesis News

- Co-Workers in Transition
- Death Notice

Upcoming Events

- Family Perspectives

Archdiocese News

- The Gift of Sunday
- Safe Environment Office Updates
- 2022 Confirmation Dates

From Our Friends

- Upcoming Mareda Events

Resources

- Essay Contest
- Cyber Threats to Remote Learning
- Resources to Prepare for Lent
- Formation Resources

Message from Gary

Two overlapping "Years"?

You may have heard that we are in the **Year of St. Joseph**. Back on December 8, 2020, Pope Francis commemorated the 150th anniversary of the proclamation of St. Joseph as Patron of the

Universal Church. The pope published [Patris Corde / With a Father's Heart](#), an apostolic letter reflecting on Joseph as beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father, a creatively courageous father, a working father, and a father in the shadows. At the same time, the Vatican issued a [decree](#) granting indulgences for the year, which runs Dec. 8, 2020 – Dec. 8, 2021.

Just a few weeks after holding up St. Joseph as an example, on Dec. 27, the Feast of the Holy Family, Pope Francis declared a **Year of the Family**, to begin on March 19, 2021 and run through June 26, 2022, the 10th World Meeting of Families in Rome. The start date of March 19 is the 5th anniversary of the Pope's issuing [Amoris Laetitia / The Joy of Love](#), his apostolic exhortation on Love in the Family. Of course, March 19 is also the Feast of St. Joseph.

So, we have two overlapping Years, but clearly related, both focusing on family relationships, in a special way on the role of fathers, on the challenges of family life in our time, on the particular way in which family life reveals Love, and on Christian families called to be witnesses of God's love in the world.

We do not set aside other priorities for these Years, but we can take opportunities to supplement our ministries with special attention to family life and to the themes set out by Pope Francis. At the same time, we begin our archdiocese-wide focus on the **Gift of Sunday** (including Sunday as a day for families), and we attend to our own ongoing catechetical efforts.

Resources:

- [Year of St. Joseph](#)
- [Amoris Laetitia Year of Family](#)

Office of Catechesis News

Co-Workers in Transitions

Continuing our updates on new directors of religious education or faith formation, we welcome:

- Trisha Zimmerman, Elementary/Middle School Formation Coordinator, Holy Family-Fond du Lac

For all those beginning a new role this year, let us pray, and let us pledge our support and companionship along the way.

If you know of someone new to a position that we have not listed, please let us know.

Death Notice

We are sad to share news of the death of Rogelio (Roy) Salinas. Roy had been serving as Director of Religious Education at St. John Paul II Parish, Milwaukee for a number of years. He had served in other parishes and roles earlier. Roy was a dedicated catechetical leader and will be missed by those whose lives he touched. (We do not have funeral information at this time.)

*Eternal rest, grant unto him, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon him.*

May he rest in peace. Amen.

*May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.*

Upcoming Events

Family Perspectives: A Presentation on Family Catechesis - COVID and Beyond

March 10, 2021- 9:00-10:30am

Presented By: Gary Pokorny and Dr. Kathie Amidei

Families have had unique circumstances over the past several months including varied experiences in catechetical and educational settings that may have affected them emotionally and spiritually. We may have had less physical contact or face to face meetings, and we have had to find new ways to communicate with them. We may have increased connecting through Zoom, email, and texts. This may have offered new ways to relate to families or we may feel less connected to parents and families. What are the ramifications and implications of this time of alternate interaction with our families?

This session will summarize some of what the past year has meant to catechesis, consider some strategies to transition to a “new catechetical normal” and thrive in catechetical ministry going forward.

[Register to Attend](#)

Archdiocese News

The Gift of Sunday

Recently, Archbishop ListECKi released [The Gift of Sunday](#), a foundational document for a three-year plan to reenergize our local Church, along with a [study guide](#).

We will be holding [The Gift of Sunday Lenten Missions / Misión Cuaresmal EL Don del Domingo](#) on **Wednesday, March 3, 2021, from 7 to 8:30 p.m.** at 18 parishes throughout the archdiocese in English, Spanish, and American Sign Language. The Lenten Missions will be based on *The Gift of Sunday* Theological Reflection.

In addition to the Lenten Missions, a [Lenten Prayer Card](#) in English and Spanish is being made available to parishes and Catholic high schools to be distributed on Ash Wednesday and throughout Lent.

We are also working on a booklet that parishes and schools will be invited to hand out at Easter. Watch for more details in the near future about this booklet.

For more information, visit the [Gift of Sunday webpage](#).

The Sunday Mass Initiative will continue long beyond this Lent-Easter season. In the future as the initiative unfolds, we will point you to catechetical resources to use with children and families.

Safe Environment Office Updates

Last Month, the Safe Environment Office sent out office updates which included important information and resources for Grade Level Safe Environment Lesson Instruction. Hopefully your Safe Environment Coordinator has passed this along to you and you have looked it over. If not, please look over the [Safe Environment Office Update](#) as it gives guidance to you for when your program is going to be teaching the annual safe environment lesson regardless of whether it is in-person, at-home with a parent, virtual, or hybrid.

2022 Confirmation Dates

Submit your **2022 Confirmation** date request!

It is time for parishes to submit date requests for high school **Confirmation for 2022**. Only by exception is youth Confirmation celebrated without a bishop.

Please use this link: <https://archmil.regfox.com/2022-youth-confirmation>

to submit your request **no later than March 31, 2021.** For more information, please see the [original email](#) sent out on February 1st.

From our Friends



Upcoming Mareda Events

- **February 24** at 10:00 am- Bishop Schuerman will join Mareda to share his personal Lenten practices and talk about hope.

Visit [Mareda Webpage](#) for more information and to register for upcoming events

Resources

Offer this Essay Contest to your Students Grades 3-8!

Here is a national contest for kids in your faith formation program. The Communication Center is inviting all children in grades 3 through 8 who are enrolled in a Catholic school or in a parish religious education program to participate in Christ Is Alive! National Essay Contest. Share it with your students and their families. Two winners in each grade from across the United States will be selected.

“Christ is alive and he wants you to be alive!
He is in you, he is with you and he never abandons you.”
– Pope Francis, Christus Vivit

Visit the [Christ Is Alive webpage](#) for details and everything you need to promote.

Cyber Threats to Remote Learning

During the pandemic, many schools and religious education programs switched to using online instruction. Even when parishes, schools and instructors take precautions, there are people out there who seek to disrupt or take advantage of the situation. Our Safe Environment Office offers two resources to alert parents, caregivers, and educators of the particular risks of online learning:

- For Parents and Caregivers - [Public Service Announcement by the FBI](#)
- For Educators - [Cyber Threats to K-12 Remote Learning](#)

Please feel free to share with parents, catechists and others.

Resources to Prepare for Lent

Ash Wednesday

You may have heard that the [distribution of ashes will be different this year](#). The directive from the Vatican explains, “The priest takes the ashes and sprinkles them on the head of each one without saying anything.” Parishes will provide some catechesis before the distribution. But even afterward, you may find yourself in conversations about what people have experienced. It is good to be prepared yourself, and to help prepare catechists and others who can help your parishioners understand how and why this familiar practice has been modified. Here is the [Archdiocesan information](#) and a [recent news article](#).

LENT Webpage

Our [Lent webpage](#) offers links to catechetical resources to help you observe and teach the season. Resources include classroom and home activities, brief videos, Lenten practices, catechesis on the sacrament of Reconciliation, Stations of the Cross, and more.

CRS Rice Bowl

CRS Rice Bowl is Catholic Relief Services' Lenten solidarity program that brings Lent to life! Through the Rice Bowl, we reach out to assist our brothers and sisters around the world through traditional Lenten practices, while we learn about the global issues affecting our neighbors overseas, as well as here in the United States. For more information, visit the [CRS Rice Bowl page](#) of the Archdiocese.

Formation Resources

Discover free-of-charge resources to supplement or enhance your lessons. Videos, lesson plans and other resources have been vetted by our review team, and are listed by general topic and by age group. Visit: <https://www.archmil.org/Catechesis/Technology/Formation-Resources.htm>

Do you have a favorite resource to share? Send us your suggestions under "Submit a Resource."

Contact Us

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Do you have an article, event or district meeting you would like included in the newsletter???

Please send information to: murphyjc@archmil.org



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