New school year brings new faces, excitement

AUGUST 27, 2021

Categories: News
Tags: Catholic Schools, Featured
Teachers and staff at Northside Catholic Academy in Pittsburgh’s Brighton Heights neighborhood gathered in a half-circle before the first day of school Thursday morning to pray to the Blessed Mother.

“Mary, we ask for your guidance as we welcome our students into our school this coming school year. Amen.”

With that, principal Rosanne Kwiatkowski pushed open the front doors to start a new academic year, greeting every returning student by name.

“Good morning, Colin, how are you? How are you, Kiera?”

“Uh, well…” came the hesitant answer.

“We’re here, right?” Kwiatkowski replied. “Go on in and get some breakfast!”

Enrollment is up over last year, according to Kwiatkowski. The goal once again during the COVID-19 pandemic is five-day-a-week, in-classroom learning, which means face coverings, social distancing, and an appreciation that everyone is together again.

Remote learning will only take place in cases of quarantine or special medical exemption.

“We ask parents to do a ‘well-child’ check every morning,” Kwiatkowski said. “Take their temperature, ask how they’re feeling and make sure they have no cough or cold symptoms. It’s important to really listen to your children and be responsive.”

“We did such a great job last school year—this is an extension of that,” said Michelle Peduto, director of Catholic Schools. “We’re so happy to be in class together, and keeping everyone safe is the most important thing.”

Once students were in their homerooms, the day began as always with prayer.
“The mission of our Catholic schools is to provide an environment where children can encounter Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior each day,” Peduto said. “The more they come to love Jesus, the more successful they will be in life.”

Principal Rosanne Kwiatkowski greets a student on the first day of school at Northside Catholic Assumption Academy.
Seven educators at Catholic schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh have received the 2021 Golden Apple Award:

- Emily Janocha- teacher, John F. Kennedy Catholic School
- Meloni DiPietro Guthoerl- teacher, Seton LaSalle High School
- Lisa Radzanowski- teacher, Ave Maria Academy
- Darci Smith- teacher, Archangel Gabriel Catholic School
- Robert Childs- associate principal, Serra Catholic High School
- Mallory Gurney- teacher, Blessed Francis Seelos Academy
- JoLynn Clouse- principal, Saint Wendelin School

The award recognizes their excellent performance in the classroom, church and community. Each educator received a monetary prize, thanks to the generosity of the Donahue Family Foundation.

The Pittsburgh Catholic has been featuring a Golden Apple honoree each week through the start of school.

************
Golden Apple Award Winner: Emily Janocha

School/position: John F. Kennedy Catholic School/teacher

Quote: “This school has become one big family to me.”

When it comes to Emily Janocha’s efforts to educate young people at John F. Kennedy Catholic School, the show must go on!

She guides students in the classroom and on stage with a happy heart. In just her sixth year of teaching, she has earned the prestigious Golden Apple Award. Father John Lynam, pastor of Saint James Parish in Washington, PA, described Miss Janocha as “one of the very bright lights here.”

“I was pretty shocked to hear I had won,” she told The Pittsburgh Catholic. “Everything that I put into teaching and directing, I do it for the students. I wanted to be a teacher since I was in the fourth grade.”

Janocha teaches social studies to sixth, seventh and eighth graders, reading and vocabulary to sixth graders, and computers to the entire school. She is also the school’s musical director, choreographer and drama club advisor, among other hats she wears.

“Her passion for learning inspires her students,” principal Kimberly Stevenson wrote in her nomination letter. “She is an encouraging teacher with high expectations,” adding that she “loves the Lord” and “integrates prayer and biblical teachings into her lessons and provides her class with a strong faith foundation.”

The Bodart family wrote that “her energy is infectious. She is enthusiastic about life, faith and education. The Drama Club has blossomed under (her) tutelage.”

Janocha was hired at JFK School in 2015 after earning her Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education at Duquesne University. Last year she received a Masters in Instructional Technology from...
Duquesne.

Growing up at Saint Mary's Parish in Cecil, Janocha taught faith formation for eight years, working alongside her sister and mother. She also was a member of the parish youth group and became its leader for two years.

“The students and teachers welcomed me, and my family as well,” she said of JFK School. “This has become one big family to me.”

Miss J. directing the spring musical
A Tale of Two Booties

AUGUST 27, 2021

Categories: Columns
Tags: Bridging the Gap, Featured

Bishop David Zubik

Bridging the Gap

If you ever had the chance to visit my apartment on the diocesan campus, the first place that I would take you would be to my little chapel. It is one of the first places I go to in the morning and the last place I go to before retiring at night.

As soon as you enter, I would want you to notice a shadow box that was one of the most precious gifts from my dear mom. A number of years ago, she had my baptismal robe and two booties framed with a date plate indicating my baptism on September 18, 1949. You would probably wonder, with amusement, the same thing that I do: how could I have ever fit into those booties and the baptismal robe?

I treasure that precious gift from my mom, I have placed it directly above the holy water font. The reason I have placed my baptismal robe and booties above the font is to remind me each morning that my baptism is more than a one-day event. It is a lifetime challenge. I don’t want to forget that.

Isn’t it true that you and I can fall into the trap of having very short memories. The greatest dream God has for us is that we get to heaven. Out of His infinite love for us, He wants every single one of us to be with Him forever and always. But even though it is His precious wish and He offers us an infinite gift, it is not an automatic “slam dunk” that we’ll get there. Like our ancestors in the faith with whom God established His covenant—His relationship of love—we need to do our part.

Think about our ancestors in the faith! First those in the Old Testament. God was outrageously generous with them. He willingly forgave all the times that they turned their backs on Him. Time and time again their...
memories were short. They forgot how much God loved them. They forgot how much He did for them.

The same is true about so many of the people whom we meet in the New Testament. Even the Apostles, the special ones chosen by Jesus, had short memories. Peter, James, John, Thomas and the rest of them sometimes dropped the ball on taking Jesus seriously.

So, what about you and me? Are we in this company of people who have a short memory about God's love for us, who forget all that God does for us? Whenever the chips of life are down, do we wonder “Where is God?” Whenever the Church in her humanness fails us, are we tempted to wipe her “dust” off our feet, forgetting about the most precious gift of all, the Holy Eucharist, and leave that precious gift behind?

We can be grateful for how God waits for us to put aside our “forgetfulness” and take Him ever more seriously. But that's only half of the story.

It's not only crucial that we accept the gift of God's love, but we must offer it back to Him in return. That's where the symbol of the baptismal robe and the two booties come into play. The baptismal garment is a reminder of what happened the day that we were taken to church for the first time. We arrived wearing a baptismal robe given by our family. When we left church following baptism, we left with another robe, an invisible robe, of having “put on Christ.”

The booties are a sign of our spiritual journey. They symbolize how much we need to walk with Jesus! They represent our mission to take Him to the world in which we live—in our words, in our deeds, in our thoughts, in our plans! They are a reminder not to forget about Jesus. They nudge our hearts to welcome Him every morning when we awake, to keep Him there throughout the day and to close our eyes with Him at night.

Perhaps you have your own precious story about your baptismal robe and booties. It’s been a pleasure for me to share mine with you. I hope it will prompt some reminiscence or a family conversation.

But what must be true for all of us is this. If we are serious about what happened to us at baptism, we must cherish what it means to put on Christ as our garment and to follow in His steps—step by step and foot by foot. And that's “the tale of two booties.”
Father George DeVille celebrated his 90th birthday on Sunday, August 22 with a Mass and reception at Holy Rosary Church in Muse, PA, where he has ministered to parishioners since 2000. Father DeVille is the oldest priest still active in an assignment in the diocese. Born and raised in McKeesport, he received a bachelor of arts from Saint Vincent College in Latrobe before entering Saint Vincent Seminary. Father DeVille was ordained to the priesthood on May 25, 1957, and spent 36 years as a chaplain serving patients at two state mental hospitals. Pittsburgh Catholic editor Bob De Witt asked him five questions:

1. What led to your calling to the priesthood?

I had been thinking about becoming a priest from when I was a child growing up at Saint Pius V Elementary School in McKeesport, and later at Saint Peter High School. I hung around the church rectory a lot. When I was home from college my sophomore year I watched the priest who came to see my grandmother, who was dying. He visited her almost every day, and I saw how much the visits meant to her. That helped me make my decision. I enrolled in Saint Vincent Seminary my junior year. The timing was providential.

2. You were trained in psychiatric chaplaincy and assigned to Woodville State Hospital in Carnegie from 1964 to 1992. You then served at Mayview State Hospital in Bridgeville until 2000. How did you meet the patients' spiritual needs?

On Sundays I rode the hospital bus across the 1,200 acres at Woodville, picking up Catholic patients who had ground privileges and taking them to 9 a.m. Mass. We went around to all the buildings. Then we took them back, did same with Protestant patients, taking them to services, then celebrated 11 a.m. Mass for the nurses.
I also said Mass every morning in different buildings and then took communion to patients on the wards. That had not been done before I got there. At one point there were 2,900 patients at Woodview. Back in those days we didn’t anoint anyone until they were critical, so I was often up late. In caring for Alzheimer’s patients, I was taught that what you learn first in life, you remember longest. They remembered Holy Communion. I made a special prayer book with different color pages, so I could tell if they were following on the right pages. It was all trial and error. I heard confessions on Saturdays. I would say to the patients, ‘Say three Hail Marys,’ and they would repeat the words, ‘say three Hail Marys.’ I loved working with mental patients. It was not a burden or uncomfortable for me. Toward the end, Mayville was getting smaller, with patients being released into homes in the community, so I asked for a parish assignment.

3. In 2000, you became pastor of Holy Rosary Parish in Muse, now part of Saint Oscar Romero Parish. What would you say are the most important ministries in a parish?

When you become pastor, they don’t teach you Electricity 101, Plumbing 101, or about buildings or finances—that’s valuable. But I always go out to visit the sick, I also think that’s very important. The priest comes to you. My list of communion calls is always 15 or 20. When I visit parishioners, we talk about everything. I know how long it takes to get to different houses, and I go pretty far. I think it’s important to keep them in touch with the parish so they still feel they belong. I tell them at the end of our visits, “You have to admit you had fun!” I’m laughing with them.

4. What keeps you going at an age when most people have long since retired?

With a shortage of priests, I feel I have an obligation to continue to serve. Besides, why should I retire? I love what I’m doing. I enjoy doing things for people.

I’ve always wanted people to see more than a priest in me. I can help them with a lot of different things, mentally and physically as well.

People also seem to like my homilies. I try to say them in as few words as possible. Sometimes I don’t think I’ve made my point, but then it hits somebody.

5. Have you give any thought as to what might be your lasting legacy as a priest in the Diocese of Pittsburgh?

Oh! Probably the future priests I trained at Woodville for 16 years, including Fr. Larry DiNardo, our vicar general. I was training them to understand mental illness, which was not well understood back then. If you had a mental problem, the response used to be, pray your rosary and get right with God. I started with the seminarians, so that they would better understand mental illness when they began serving in parishes. They learned about depression, Alzheimer’s, geriatrics, and how to ask questions.
Submitted photos

*With his brother Robert DeVille and sister Mary Ellen Adamec.*
Felician sisters on front line of Haiti relief

AUGUST 27, 2021

Categories: News
Tags: Featured

Nine years after Felician Sisters Marilyn Minter and Inga Borko arrived in Haiti with one suitcase and a guitar between them, they have helped thousands of Haitians get an education, gain job skills and receive healthcare. In the wake of the recent earthquake and tropical storm, which killed at least 2,200 people, they are sending crucial supplies to those most in need.

The nerve center for donations is at the Felician Sisters of North America provincial house in Beaver Falls, Beaver County. There, Marcia Wallander, chief mission advancement officer for the Felician province, has stockpiled supplies, which she will load into a van on August 30 and personally drive to the Felician community in Lodi, NJ. Sisters there will sort it all into barrels and put it on a ship bound from Newark to Haiti.

No matter the obstacles the sisters face, “they truly believe that nothing is impossible with God,” Wallander said. “Their sense of grace and humanity is like nothing I’ve ever seen. They walk in God’s light.”

The Felician mission is in Jacmel, which escaped earthquake damage only to have many homes seriously damaged by the subsequent tropical storm. Sisters Marilyn and Inga returned to the United States to organize relief for Jacmel and the Les Cayes earthquake zone.

The Felicians were founded in Poland by Blessed Mary Angela Truszkowska, whose motto was “serve where you are needed.” After the Haiti earthquake of 2010, the quest to find “the greatest need” took Sister Inga and Sister Marilyn from a convent in New Jersey to Haiti.

The bishop of Jacmel gave them a room in an earthquake-damaged parish. There, they began learning Creole from street children.
“We don’t assume that we know the needs of the people,” Sister Inga said. “We wanted to be a ministry of presence and to enter into a relationship with the people and get to know them. It was important to walk the streets, to go to people’s houses, to talk to them and get to know their lives.”

Five boys came to their door and said they were hungry.

“At that point all we had were granola bars, but we shared them,” Sister Marilyn said.

That led to Mother Angela’s Kitchen, with serves hot meals. Next, they realized that most children were on the streets because they couldn’t afford school supplies and uniforms.

The sisters set up “Pay It Forward,” a sponsorship program that provides the school fees and supplies while requiring participants to help in the food ministry or to tutor younger students.

Their ministry principles are empowerment, sustainability and independence for the Haitians, but they say it all depends on Jesus.

“Christ really takes care of his poor,” Sister Inga said. “When we wanted to send someone to school and didn’t have the money to send them, the money appears the next day. Exactly the sum we needed to send this child to school. God provides. God wants us to take care of the poor.”

Graduates from Pay It Forward can progress to Madonna University, a Felician school in Michigan with an online program for Haitian students.

One day a high school student told the sisters he wanted to become a doctor. With their support, Dr. Tchery Louis is finishing his residency at a Haitian hospital and is directing the sisters’ efforts to assist in the earthquake zone.

He told them that the greatest need is clean water, so the Felicians are supplying simple filtration equipment to Les Cayes, which has the worst damage.

“We are forming a group to go from Jacmel to Les Cayes, where they will teach the women how to filter the water,” Sister Inga said.

The best way to help the sisters send help where it is needed most is to donate funds at www.FelicianSistersNA.org/give or to send a check made payable to FSNA to Felician Mission: Haiti, 871 Mercer Road, Beaver Falls, PA 15010, with Haiti Mission in the memo line. Young adults who want to volunteer to tutor Haitian high school students in English via Zoom can also contact Wallander at 724-944-9814 or mwallander@feliciansisters.org.

The Felicians in Haiti blog at www.feliciansistershaiti.com.

**Editor’s note:** Bishop David Zubik is asking all parishes to take up a special collection the weekend of Sept. 18-19, 2021 to support the efforts of the Bishops Emergency Disaster Fund to provide direct emergency aid to Haiti.
AUGUST 27, 2021

Categories: Columns
Tags: Featured, Guest Contributors

By Father Matthew Hawkins

Parochial vicar, St. Benedict the Moor Parish

“I came here hoping to find my sister,” said a desperate man after a 7.2 magnitude earthquake hit the southern peninsula of Haiti two weeks ago. “But, instead, I found this,” he continued, gesturing toward a church that was reduced to rubble.

Over the past month-and-a-half, Haiti has been hit with a series of tragedies, including the assassination of its president, consequent social unrest in the streets, a hurricane, and a devastating earthquake. Along with causing thousands of deaths and destroying the homes of the poor, the earthquake obliterated churches throughout Haiti’s southern peninsula, thus demolishing the region’s central outpost of aid, comfort and hope.

New York Times bureau chief Maria Abi-Habib, reported that as she traveled from one town to the next, not a single church was left standing. This leaves more than 1.5 million people in that region of the country without a place to worship. Abi-Habib told NPR, “I realized that the Church is the institution where people go for help. This is the only institution of support that they know... this is where they have a community... a lot of people feel like the Catholic Church, which has been there throughout is gone. It’s just not there... and they've got nothing.”

The Church is a sign of hope and life among the people. In the New Testament, the letter from James the Apostle illustrates the value that we place on the presence of the word of God in our lives: “Dearest brothers...
and sisters: All good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no alteration or shadow caused by change. He willed to give us birth by the word of truth that we may be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.”

Nevertheless, while we rely on God’s love, we live in a world of tragedy. Our lives are contingent. We are always dancing perilously close to annihilation.

The 2020 Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists reported that “It is 100 seconds to midnight ... Humanity continues to face two simultaneous existential dangers—nuclear war and global climate change.” Unlike the natural disasters that are devastating Haiti, the two dangers cited by these scientists result from the tendency to exercise the powers of humanity without a sense of our limitations or constraints with respect to God.

We need humility and the capacity to look out, not only for those closest to us, but especially for the most vulnerable. James the apostle wrote: “Humbly welcome the Word that has been planted in you and is able to save your souls.”

Yet, the divisions between the rich and poor in our society and in the world are growing wider by the day.

The Covid-19 crisis both reveals and exacerbates those divisions. Drawing on data from Forbes Magazine, the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) reported this month that the wealth of global billionaires has surged by $5.5 billion since the beginning of the pandemic. IPS reports: “Global billionaire total wealth has increased more over the past 17 months of the pandemic than it did in the 15 years prior to the pandemic ...” The pandemic, says the report, “has supercharged existing global inequalities” as many small and family-owned businesses have been forced to cut back their operations or shut down altogether.

James the apostle wrote that the truth of religion is something that is lived, not merely something that is preached. He cautioned his listeners to attend to the vulnerable among them:

“Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”

Each of us needs to reflect on what that requires of us as we see the news from Haiti. We have a call to support our sisters and brothers in need, through the Church.

A priest in Haiti explained the continued importance of the Church in people’s lives, even though the Church buildings in the southern peninsula of the island are no longer standing: “Even if these buildings are not going to be repaired anytime soon, come what may, we are going to restart school in September because without the Church there is nothing for these kids. They will be lost.”

The Church is not just a physical building, it is the Holy Spirit alive in the people. As long as the Spirit of God remains alive in them and in us, there will still be hope.

Editor’s note: Bishop David Zubik is asking all parishes to take up a special collection the weekend of Sept. 18-19, 2021 to support the efforts of the Bishops Emergency Disaster Fund to provide direct emergency aid to Haiti.
Catholic at Home: Help us to learn Jesus

AUGUST 27, 2021

Categories: Columns
Tags: Catholic at Home

Jennifer Antkowiak

There was a time in my house where back-to-school prep meant crayons, glue sticks, and uniforms. Now it’s laptops, mini-refrigerators, and dorm decorations.

This year, I find myself trying to wrap my head around the reality that two of our five kids have graduated from college, two are in college, and my 6’1” “baby” is a senior in high school.

No matter how old they get (and I get), part of me always looks forward to this time of year as a season of learning. There are many famous quotes about how when we stop learning, we “stop progressing,” or “stop growing,” or “start dying.” That’s scary stuff.

Still, I know that not everyone has a love of learning. Some have closed themselves off from learning. Why might that be?

Maybe we hesitate because we feel too tired to learn anything new. Maybe we think we’re too busy to devote the time needed. Maybe we just don’t know how to start.

Learning is critical to developing into our full potential. We need to learn to be able to maximize all the gifts and talents God has given us. It opens us up to new ideas and helps us to take advantage of greater opportunities.

In Bishop Zubik’s Prayer for On Mission for The Church Alive! He asks our Heavenly Father to “Help us to learn Jesus, to love Jesus and to live Jesus.”
Imagine if we approached learning about our faith in a way that recaptured the eagerness for learning that we had in preschool. Remember that place and time where our minds and hearts were eager and open, and every day was an adventure?

One of my sisters is an elementary school teacher, and I am always amazed at her efforts to make learning fun for her students.

For each lesson, she builds activities that allow for interaction and engagement. If we did the same, one activity to “learn Jesus” could be spending time in Church. Everything there is designed to engage our senses and draw us closer to Him: the scent of candles and incense, the sight of the stained-glass windows and religious articles, the sound of people praying and singing, the feel of the pews and the holy space, and the taste of the Host.

My sister allows time for her students to practice what they learn. We can reinforce what we learn about Jesus by trying to emulate Him in our daily lives. How would He deal with difficult people or situations? Taking action on what we learn makes it relevant and brings it to life.

She introduces real life examples of what she teaches. As we learn about Jesus, we could spend some time talking with a member of the clergy. Those who have formally studied theology and have devoted their lives to Jesus can teach us so much. Many enjoy the role of spiritual advisor. They feel rewarded when they help someone find their way to a closer relationship with Jesus and greater understanding of the teachings of His Church. If world events have you frustrated and confused about how to think, seek out a member of the clergy for spiritual guidance.

Like the youngest children in faith formation programs, we should also embrace these basics:

- God made everything.
- Jesus is our friend and teacher.
- Jesus loves us.
- Jesus loves us even when we make mistakes.
- We need to say that we are sorry for our mistakes.
- We should thank God for everything we have.
- Our families are part of God’s family.
- We should be kind to everyone because we all belong to the same family.
- Let’s pray that we may learn Jesus with child-like wonder.
- Let’s pray that we may teach others about Him through our own behaviors.
- Let’s pray for our teachers as we begin another school year, so that they may have the strength they need to remain passionate about making learning fun.
- Every time we pray, or make a sacrifice that benefits someone else, or show compassion for others, we are putting into action how we’ve “learned Jesus.”
Hace aproximadamente dos años, en un esfuerzo por llegar a la vibrante y creciente comunidad latina de la Diócesis de Pittsburgh, Jorge Vela, director del Apostolado Hispano, comenzó a escribir una columna mensual de espiritualidad en español.

Esperamos que también lo disfruten los hablantes nativos de inglés, incluidos los estudiantes de nuestras escuelas católicas que están aprendiendo el idioma español.

About two years ago, in an effort to reach the vibrant and growing Latino community in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Jorge Vela, director of Hispanic Apostolate, began writing a monthly spirituality column in Spanish.

We hope that it also will be enjoyed by native speakers of English, including students in our Catholic schools who are learning the Spanish language. (English translation follows Spanish.)

La voz del mensajero

Una columna de Jorge Vela

Profundicemos en el Misterio de Cristo

Hace tiempo tuve la oportunidad de leer un libro “Teresa de Jesús,” sobre la vida de Santa Teresa de Ávila y literalmente me encantó. Se trata de la biografía de una de las grandes santas de la Iglesia escrito por José María Javiere.

Uno de los aspectos que más me llamaron la atención es un comentario sobre el gran paralelismo entre la doctrina espiritual de Santa Teresa de Ávila y la postura de San Juan Pablo II durante su pontificado. ¿Cómo puede ser posible? Hay cerca de 500 años de diferencia entre ella y él.
La explicación consiste en la profunda vida espiritual entre estos dos grandes santos de la Iglesia. Como todos ustedes saben Santa Teresa de Ávila es una de las grandes pioneras de la oración llamada meditación y de San Juan Pablo II todos sabemos la importancia que le daba a su vida de piedad, especialmente en esas grandes jornadas de trabajo.

“El misterio de Cristo representa cabalmente un puente de Dios hacia la creación y de la creación hacia Dios. Gracias al círculo o anillo de la encarnación de la fe cristiana entable relaciones eficaces y fecundas entre el círculo de Dios y de lo creado” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, ediciones sígueme, página 21).

“A la tentación de aislar al hombre cortándole sus referencias profundas al misterio de Dios, Santa Teresa y Juan Pablo II responde asíéndose a la persona de Cristo que por su naturaleza divina nos alza hasta Dios y por su naturaleza humana ilumina la existencia del hombre; Santa Teresa arranca del misterio de Cristo para elevarse al misterio de Dios; y Juan Pablo II arranca del misterio de Cristo, para iluminar las realidades terrenas” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, ediciones sígueme, página 21).

“Todos los iniciados en la doctrina teresiana conocen la fuerza con que Santa Teresa utiliza la humanidad de Jesús para interpretar y vivir el misterio de Dios: a través de Cristo, Teresa camina su camino hacia Dios. Su penetración en el misterio la cumple apoyada, sostenida, probada y consolada con Cristo hombre, su esposo, su amor, su ternura, su Jesús de Teresa.” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, ediciones sígueme, página 21).

“El Papa Wojtyla utiliza la humanidad de Jesús para interpretar y vivir el misterio del hombre. Wojtyla apoya y defiende a los hombres, con la fuerza especial a los hombres marginados, hambrientos, sufrientes. Pero esta inmersión de Wojtyla en el tema humano, esta participación y esta interpretación, la realiza desde el misterio se Cristo” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, ediciones sígueme, páginas 21 y 22).

“La monja mística y el Papa catequista coinciden, pues, en la humanidad de Jesucristo, en ese misterio eje de nuestra historia de la salvación que empalma el círculo misterioso de Dios con el círculo misterioso del hombre. Ella cumple su misión histórica agarrándose a la túnica de Jesús para caminar hacia las estancias más interiores del castillo. El sale con Jesús hacia los campos abiertos donde los hombres viven su aventura personal y colectiva” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, ediciones sígueme) (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, ediciones sígueme, página 22).

Me permití transcribir estos párrafos, ya que ambos parten del conocimiento y amor a Jesucristo, para acercarse al amor del Padre (Sta. Teresa), o aplicar ese amor de Jesucristo en los hombres (San Juan Pablo II).

Dentro de unos días se estará celebrando en Hungría el Congreso Internacional Eucarístico del 5 al 12 de septiembre. Seguramente la gran mayoría no podrá asistir, pero eso no nos excluye de participar en el Congreso desde la iglesia a la que asistamos y, dedicar un tiempo estos días a la adoración Eucarística y meditar en la persona de Cristo. Todo lo que hicieron Santa Teresa de Ávila como San Juan Pablo II fue fruto de ese verdadero conocimiento y amor a Jesucristo.

Les invito a participar en esos días, para que nuestra comunidad de Pittsburgh pueda ser parte del Congreso Eucarístico, profundizando en el amor de Cristo en nuestras vidas y que nos lleven a una profunda renovación espiritual.

_The Voice of the Messenger_
A monthly column by Jorge Vela

Let's delve into the Mystery of Christ

Some time ago I had the opportunity to read a book “Teresa de Jesús,” about the life of Santa Teresa de Ávila and I literally loved it. It is the biography of one of the great saints of the Church written by José María Javiere.

One of the aspects that most caught my attention is a comment on the great parallelism between the spiritual doctrine of Saint Teresa of Avila and the position of Saint John Paul II during his pontificate. How can it be possible? There is about 500 years of difference between her and him.

The explanation lies in the deep spiritual life between these two great saints of the Church. As you all know, Saint Teresa of Avila is one of the great pioneers of prayer called meditation and of Saint John Paul II, we all know the importance she gave to her life of piety, especially in those great days of work.

“The mystery of Christ fully represents a bridge from God to creation and from creation to God. Thanks to the circle or ring of the incarnation of the Christian faith, establish effective and fruitful relationships between the circle of God and what is created.” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, follow me editions, page 21).

“To the temptation to isolate man by cutting off his deep references to the mystery of God, Saint Teresa and John Paul II respond by clinging to the person of Christ who by his divine nature raises us up to God and by his human nature illuminates the existence of man; Saint Teresa starts from the mystery of Christ to rise to the mystery of God; and John Paul II starts from the mystery of Christ, to illuminate earthly realities” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, follow me editions, page 21).

“All those initiated into Teresian doctrine know the strength with which Saint Teresa uses the humanity of Jesus to interpret and live the mystery of God: through Christ, Teresa walks her way towards God. Her penetration into the mystery is fulfilled supported, sustained, tested and consoled with the man Christ, her husband, her love, her tenderness, her Jesus of Teresa” (Teresa of Jesus, José María Javiere, follow me editions, page 21).

“Pope Wojtyla uses the humanity of Jesus to interpret and live the mystery of man. Wojtyla supports and defends men, with special forces marginalized, hungry, suffering men. But this immersion of Wojtyla in the human theme, this participation and this interpretation, is carried out from the mystery of Christ” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, follow me editions, pages 21 and 22).

“The mystical nun and the catechist Pope coincide, then, in the humanity of Jesus Christ, in that mystery axis of our history of salvation that connects the mysterious circle of God with the mysterious circle of man. She fulfills her historic mission by clinging to Jesus’ tunic to walk towards the innermost rooms of the castle. He goes out with Jesus to the open fields where men live their personal and collective adventure ” (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, follow me editions) (Teresa de Jesús, José María Javiere, follow me editions, page 22).

I allowed myself to transcribe these paragraphs, since both start from the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ, to get closer to the love of the Father (St. Teresa), or to apply that love of Jesus Christ in men (St. John Paul II).

In a few days the International Eucharistic Congress will be held in Hungary from September 5 to 12. Surely the vast majority will not be able to attend, but that does not exclude us from participating in the Congress from the church we attend and dedicating time these days to Eucharistic adoration and meditating on the person of
Christ. Everything that Saint Teresa of Avila did as Saint John Paul II was the fruit of that true knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.

I invite you to participate in those days, so that our Pittsburgh community can be part of the Eucharistic Congress, deepening the love of Christ in our lives and leading us to a deep spiritual renewal.