

Office of Lifelong Faith Formation Newsletter

July 19, 2021

Volume 3, Issue 1

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Newsletter, New Volume, New Look



As we move onto volume 3 you may notice a few changes in the monthly OLFF newsletter. As you may be able to tell the OLFF staff has switched from using Publisher to produce the newsletter to a more advanced and intuitive Microsoft program called Sway. Microsoft Sway is free to those who have a Microsoft email account. From Sway you can create a variety of documents from slideshows, to newsletters, to business presentations, to blogs and more. Sway acts as your graphic designer choosing for you a style that it thinks will look best for whatever you are creating. If you disagree with Sway's styling you can always change the style by selecting the style you want or previewing different styles by hitting the "Remix" button. Overall, Sway will help us to share the stories of our Diocese in a more effective and organized manner. For more information on how to use Sway click [here](#).

Volume 3 of the OLFF Newsletter will also have more consistent features such as the following:

- Information on the catechetical plan
- LFFA highlights
- Walking with Families Across the Diocese
- Inspiration
- Prayer

We hope that these changes will enhance the look of the newsletter and will be engaging while helping you to still get information about the events and happenings in the Diocese of Portland Maine.

Overview of the Diocesan Catechetical Plan & Professional Development Gathering

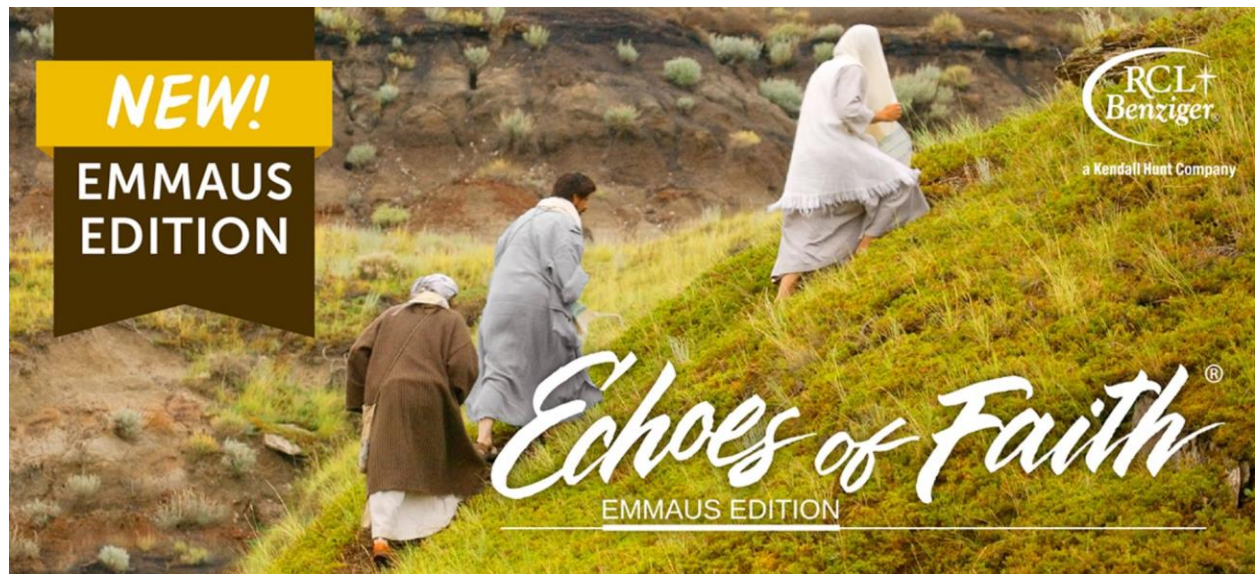


The Office of Lifelong Faith Formation (OLFF) staff have been working diligently to put together a Diocesan catechetical plan which will inform the efforts of both the Diocese and parishes across the state of Maine. The catechetical plan is made up of goals that the Office of Lifelong Faith Formation will be working towards during a 7 year time span. On **July 22nd from 2-3 pm** and on **July 26th from 7-8pm** the OLFF staff will be hosting a gathering to share with pastors and parish leaders the catechetical plan.

You can join either gathering in the OLFF meeting room on Lifesize <https://call.lifesizecloud.com/982044> or call +1 (877) 422-8614 extension 982044

In addition, OLFF will also discuss the pathways for catechist certification as well as how to track and record your required 20 hours of professional development.

We highly encourage you to mark these dates on your calendar **and** attend one of these meetings as doing so will better inform your ministry within the parish.



Please continue to pray for the 75+ people who are participating in the Echoes of Faith Emmaus Edition online learning program. They will be diving into a module on Prayer & Spirituality in August.

Do you want to join this journey of faith on the road to Emmaus?

The OLFF team has decided for the remainder of 2021 to onboard new participants at the beginning of each module. Participants must register through their parish, and the registrations must then be forwarded to Hannah Gonnevillle no later than a week before the opening gathering for the module. Participants registering in July will begin with the *Prayer and Spirituality* module along with those in the first cohort of the Echoes of Faith Emmaus edition program. Those who opt for the Self-Paced track will have –18 months to complete the modules depending on when they enroll.

Click [here](#) to see the full calendar or contact Hannah Gonnevillle for details about how to submit registrations from the parish (individual must work through a parish or Catholic school to register for the program).

If you have questions about Echoes of Faith please feel free to email echoingfaith@portlanddiocese.org and one of the OLFF staff members will respond back as soon as possible.

50 Couples Celebrate Milestone Anniversaries during the Silver & Gold Mass



The Silver & Gold Mass is a celebration of the gift of Christian marriage which establishes a holy covenant among a man, a woman, and God himself. The bishop said it is important to celebrate marriage because it is the relationship of a man and a woman, as husband and wife, that gives rise to new life.

On June 19th the Basilica of Saints Peter & Paul was filled with couples celebrating milestone anniversaries. "On this beautiful day we gather together to celebrate God's love for us in the Eucharist. There are many things that we celebrate, but today principally we mark the beauty of marriage in our midst with this Silver & Gold Mass which remembers those wonderful anniversaries of 25 and 50 years of marriage and all the years in between and beyond. We want to lift up in thanksgiving to God this gift of love which is the source of life," stated Bishop Deeley.

[Click](#) to read full story online

1st World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly on July 25th



Pope Francis has declared July 25th the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. The theme for the day comes from Matthew 28:30 which says "I am with you always." A message from Pope Francis explaining the purpose of the day is available on YouTube. The day the U.S Conference of Catholic Bishops has curated a few free resources to commemorate the day including a [prayer service](#) that can be used in homes, social media posts about Jesus' grandparents, [Saints Anne and Joachim](#). Other ideas and activities for celebrating the day are available at no cost from the Vatican in [English](#), [Spanish](#), and [French](#). Sadlier Publishing has also put out a few activities (in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) to help families make the most of the day and special time with grandparents. Join with the church around the world in celebrating the reality that "there is no retirement age from the work of proclaiming the Gospel and handing down traditions to grandchildren (Pope Francis).

Walking with Families Across the Diocese



From the Directory for Catechesis, 239

Early childhood, or pre-school age, is a definitive time of discovery of religious reality, during which children learn from their parents and their environment of life an attitude of openness or of aversion and exclusion toward God. They also learn their first bits of knowledge about the faith....In this context one should not underestimate the value of putting the main feasts of the liturgical year to good use.....Rather than catechesis in the proper sense, at this age it is a matter of first evangelization and proclamation of the faith.

Ponder

Does our parish provide opportunities for young families to gather together as small faith communities? When and where?

What kind of encounters with Jesus could we facilitate for our families?

Are there parents or guardians whom we could invite to inspire and help organize these events? Who are they and how will you invite them?

Pray

Children pray with their families Church community by using their own words and gestures. Parents and guardians can facilitate the beginnings of their children's prayer life by setting aside designated times and gestures for prayer such as the sign of the Cross, prayer before meals, and prayers at bedtime

Practice

Use a verbal/non-verbal communication model to convey the following messages:

- ***We Belong***

My family loves and cares for me. My family and the people at our church are part of God's family. We go to church together to thank God for all we have

- ***We Believe***

God made everything. God made each of us and all of creation. God loves us. He came to earth as Jesus, as a human person. Jesus is God, our teacher, and our friend.

- ***We Respond***

All good things that we have are gifts from God, which we take good care of. We are nice to all of God's people. We work and play well.

Abide: Youth Ministry Days of Reflection



Save the dates for these high school youth days of reflection that will take place across the Diocese:

- ABIDE South--**October 30th** at St. John's Hall in Brunswick
- ABIDE Mid-State--**October 31st** at St. John's Church in Bangor
- ABIDE North--**November 7th** at St. Mary's in Presque Isle

More details and a link to the registration page(s) will be shared in future issues of the OLFF newsletter.

And the St. Timothy Award goes to.....



- Cecilia Guerra of Good Shepherd Parish
- Jude Mosher of Parish of the Precious Blood
- Paul Bonner of Parish of the Precious Blood

Congratulations to all those who received the St. Timothy or Companions on the Journey Award. Please pray for each of the recipients as they begin a new chapter of their lives and embark on new and exciting endeavors.

Young Adult Summer Gathering





THE DIOCESE OF PORTLAND IN COLLABORATION WITH
PARISH OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST ARE PROUD TO
PRESENT:

YOUNG ADULT CATHOLICS IN MAINE SUMMER GATHERING

FMI CONTACT:
hannah.gonneville
@portlanddiocese.
org or call
(207)-773-6471

When: Saturday, August 7th from 1-3pm (with the option of attending the 4pm Mass at St. Gregory's)

Where: 24 North Raymond Rd., Gray, ME 04039

What: Come together for an afternoon of fun outdoor games, and socializing with other young adult Catholics in Maine. **The event is BYOB&L--bring your own non-alcoholic beverages and lunch.**

Inspiration



One of my favorite topics to talk about is holy friendship. If given the opportunity I could probably talk about friendships all day. Holy friendships enrich our lives and help strengthen our faith. When I think about the friendships I have now, I can't help but feel that I have been so blessed. When I think of holy friendships, I think of the scene in Mark 2:1-12 where some people bring a paralytic man before Jesus to be healed. They will stop at nothing to bring this man before Jesus, so they make an opening in the roof and lower the paralytic man down before Jesus. How many times have I been that paralytic, stuck on my mat of discouragement, grief and despair? And how many times have my friend's prayers carried me through difficult times? How many times have my friends been like the paralytic man's friends brought me before Jesus and pleaded for my healing and hope? I'm inspired by that image every time I think about it and I can only hope that I have also been the one carrying someone else who is stuck on their mat that needs healing, that I have had enough faith to play a small part in that person's healing and restoration of wholeness.

Inspired by the holy friendships in my life I was led to write a litany of friendship in which I thank God for one characteristic that each of my friends have that I see and admire in them. I pray it every so often and every time I do I end in a place of gratitude for the people that the Lord has put in my life and how they have impacted my life. I encourage you to try creating your own litany of friendship.

-Hannah



O Merciful Lord,

I've been feeling a bit empty and far from You.

I'm weary from the struggle.

Renew me, O Lord, help me

May I be the new wine in new wineskins

May I be the fresh page upon which You write.

I seek a more spacious place in my walk with You.

Break down the old in me,

the hardness and build up the new in me.

Bring me to a deeper place of rest,

where Your power and Spirit are

Make room so I can breathe.

Show me what happens when I surrender myself to You.

May I rejoice with a strong heart.

Give me a clear voice to speak God's love to all.

I'm not there yet O Lord, but I want to go.

Take me there with You.

Renew me.

Set me free.

In Jesus name,

Amen!

Adapted from: [Prayer for Anxiety](#)