



OLFF Newsletter-April/May 2023

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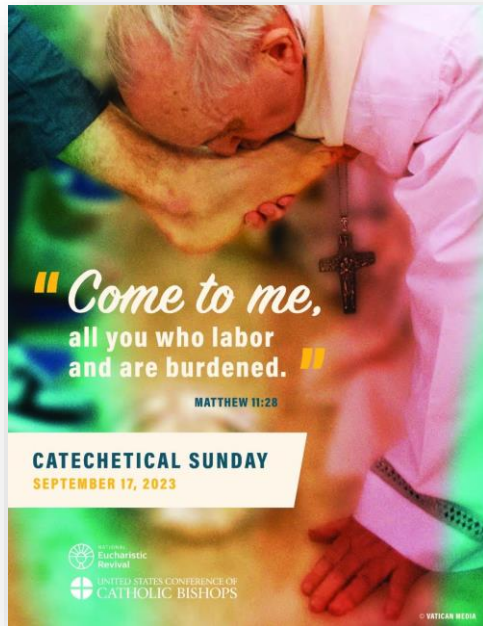
RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WEEK

Religious freedom allows the Church and all religious communities to live out their faith in public and to serve the good of all. Beginning June 22nd with the feasts of St. Thomas More and John Fisher, the USCCB invites Catholics to **pray, reflect, and act** to promote religious freedom.

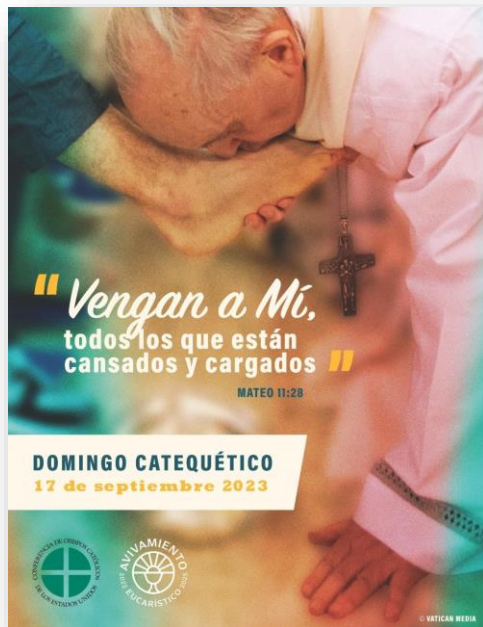
For more info and/or ideas of how you can promote religious freedom click [here](#).

Catechetical Sunday 2023 Theme Revealed!





1 - Artwork from the USCCB



2 - Artwork from the USCCB

This year's theme reminds us of the invitation we receive from the Lord Jesus to follow Him and the promise that He doesn't want to add to our burdens; he wants to lighten them.

Posters, prayer cards, certificates & commissioning service can be downloaded [here](#).



Updates/Resources

The 2023 Feast of Corpus Christi--June 11--will be the launch of the Parish Year of the Revival. The Diocese of Portland has many resources to support local efforts, including a planning framework that focuses on the Eucharist celebrated, received, adored, and lived. The diocesan website regularly updates a special resource section for parishes and individuals working to bring the revival to life locally. <https://portlanddiocese.org/eucharistic-revival-resources> Please contact Dave Guthro or Lori Dahlhoff to share ideas or resources that might make helpful additions to this page.

The USCCB's Leaders Playbook is available to animate the parish year focusing on four key areas:

1. Reinvigorating Worship
2. Personal Encounter
3. Robust Faith Formation
4. Missionary Sending

Click [here](#) to find the Leader's Playbook in English and Spanish

National Eucharistic Pilgrimage

This Year of Parish Revival is about falling deeper in love with the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and following him more closely. Mirroring this internal journey with an external one is a beautiful way to connect body and soul in the pursuit of Christ.

The National Eucharistic Pilgrimage is not one event or a road trip--it is an exciting opportunity for American Catholics everywhere to physically embody our nation's journey of Eucharistic Revival. Whether you are on the shores of Hawaii or in the mountains of Alaska, needing to stay close to home or deployed overseas, you are invited to be a part of this journey.

Click [here](#) to learn more about how you can be a part of this pilgrimage.

Catholic Youth Leadership Team (CYLT)



Why should you encourage your youth to join the Catholic Youth Leadership Team? Just ask these past participants.

- *In high school, CYLT gave me the opportunity to grow in my faith with other young leaders from our diocese and share that passion for Christ with other youth throughout the state. CYLT allowed me to understand what it means to be one family in Christ and the relationships I built with the other members are still a part of my life almost five years later. (Emily Belanger, CYLT 2013-2014, 2014-2015)*
- *It has been a great experience learning how to help put these events on, the amount of teamwork and effort put into these events is astounding. Not only have I learned a lot about leadership but I've been able to create amazing relationships with everyone on the team. It's definitely hard work but with God anything is possible. There's something truly special about CYLT and I'm so glad I was able to be a part of it in 2018/2019. (Jacob Guillemette, CYLT 2018-2019)*
- *Being on CYLT was absolutely amazing and I am so blessed and grateful for the experience! CYLT allowed me to create lifelong friendships, wonderful memories, foster lifelong skills such as leadership, and learn how other Catholics my own age were living out their own faith in their day to day lives. Most importantly, it enabled me to grow in faith and help others my age become closer to Christ. (Emily Amann, CYLT 2015-2016, 2016-2017)*

Here is what the parents have to say:

- *When our son wanted to be in CYLT, we knew it was a commitment from him and us. Having encouraged our children to be involved in their faith, we were thrilled to support him. After his involvement with CYLT, he had some great friends that shared his faith, I see in him a deep fire for his faith. - Cheryl Demerchant; parent of 2014-2015 CYLT member*
- *The time commitment for me as a parent of a CYLT member was mainly for transportation to get my daughter to the meetings or her rides to get further downstate. The time commitment for me as a parent was no more than the time commitment it takes of a parent of an athlete or a parent of teens of other extra-curricular activities. My daughter's involvement in CYLT helped her gain self-esteem and make lasting friendships with like-minded teens from all over the state. The benefits and experiences that Hannah gained from being a member of the CYLT team far outweighed the time commitment from me as a parent. - Janet Gonneville; parent of 2011-2014 CYLT member*

The application packet can be found by going to www.portlanddiocese.org/catholic-youth-leadership-team-cylt The deadline to turn in the application packet is May 30th.

Confirmation Masses for Catholic Adults & Teens







3 - All pictures taken at the 2020 Confirmation Masses for Adults & Teens

[Click](#) to register for the Confirmation Mass for Catholic Adults & Teens

Bishop Deeley will celebrate a Mass in our diocese this year for Catholic adults and teens who have been preparing to complete their initiation through the sacraments of Confirmation and in some cases, first Communion. Let us come together in prayer to support them. Dates and sites are as scheduled:

When: Friday, June 2 at 7:00 pm

Where: Holy Martyrs Church, Falmouth

Who: Bishop Deeley, hosted by Parish of the Holy Eucharist

Silver and Gold Anniversary Mass



Catholics marking milestone anniversaries are invited to participate in the annual Silver & Gold Mass celebrated by Bishop Robert Deeley on June 17th at 4pm at Holy Family Church in Old Town. This will be an in-person event. After the Universal Prayers (the intercessions), Bishop Deeley will offer a special

blessing to all married couples in the church. Those who are celebrating 10 years, 25 years, 40 years, and 50 or more years will receive special recognition in the commemorative program and slideshow.

Click [here](#) for more information or to register.

5 reasons to register for the Silver & Gold Mass

1. A milestone anniversary is a big deal! The Diocese wants to celebrate with you the beautiful years of married love that you and your spouse have lived together.
2. If you register for the Silver & Gold Mass and are celebrating a milestone anniversary you will be included in the commemorative program and the slideshow. Both are keepsakes that you can show generations and the generations to come.
3. Bishop Deeley will be the celebrant at the Mass and will offer a special blessing to married couples.
4. A chance to be an example of the beauty of the sacrament of marriage to your children and grandchildren.
5. To strengthen and empower you in your marriage now and in the years to come.

Neophyte Mass



The annual [Neophyte Mass](#) will be celebrated on **Sunday, June 18, at 10 a.m. at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception** in Portland. All are welcome and the Mass will also be [livestreamed](#).

A neophyte is a newly initiated person who is going through the final period of Christian Initiation, the post-baptismal catechesis called mystagogy. The Neophyte Mass invites the neophytes and the newly

received, along with their families and friends as well as parishioners and community members, to rejoice in their initiation together.

While the neophyte Mass is a time for the Church to celebrate its newest members, the Mass reminds all that faith is much more than reaching an achievement. It is something that must be lived. “To grow in faith is something we are all called to do. The ceremonies which took place at Easter were part of a journey of growth in faith,” said Bishop Robert Deeley. “This ongoing conversion is not just for those who have been baptized or received into the Church; it is for the whole community. Together, we grow in our appreciation of God’s work in our lives. Together, we grow in an appreciation of God’s love in our lives.”

Please [click](#) to RSVP no later than June 7 so we can prepare for the special blessing of neophytes following the homily as well as have a special gift for those who participate.



Faith, fun, and fellowship combine during Totus Tuus to create a Catholic culture and to form the next generation of saints.



4 - Video from 2019. A foreshadowing of the fun that's to come this summer.

Houlton

June 18-23

Lewiston

June 18-23

Fort Kent

June 25-30

Jay & Farmington

June 25-30

Caribou

July 9-14

Scarborough

July 9-14

Bangor

July 23-28

Windham

July 23-28

Millinocket

July 30-August 4

Brunswick

July 30-August 4

Inspiration



I (Hannah) found this story on the internet and just had to share. What a beautiful message it has.

As I faced my Maker at the last judgment, I knelt before the Lord along with all the other souls. Before each of us laid our lives like the squares of a quilt in many piles; an angel sat before each of us sewing our quilt squares together into a tapestry that was our life. A quilt, of my life.

But as my angel took each piece of cloth off the pile, I noticed how ragged and empty each of my quilt squares was. They were filled with giant holes. Each quilt square was labeled with the stories of my life that had been difficult, the challenges and temptations I was faced with in everyday life. I saw hardships that I endured, which were the largest quilt holes of all.

I glanced around me. Nobody else had such squares. Other than a tiny hole here and there, the other quilt tapestries were filled with rich color and the bright hues of worldly fortune. I gazed upon my own life and was disheartened.

My angel was sewing the ragged pieces of cloth together, threadbare and empty, like binding air.

Finally, the time came when each life was to be displayed, held up to the light, the scrutiny of truth. The others rose, each in turn, holding up their tapestries. The story of each of their lives had been so filled. My angel looked upon me and nodded for me to rise.

My gaze dropped to the ground in shame. Quilt holes! I hadn't had all the earthly fortunes. I had love in my life and laughter. But there had also been trials of illness and wealth, and false accusations that took from me my world, as I knew it. I had to start over many times. I often struggled with the holes, the temptation to quit, only to somehow muster the strength to pick up and begin again.

I spent many nights on my knees in prayer, asking for help and guidance in my life. I had often been held up to ridicule, which I endured painfully, each time offering it up to the Father in hopes that I would not melt within my skin beneath the judgmental gaze of those who unfairly judged me.

And now, I had to face the truth: My story of my life was what it was, and I had to accept it.

I rose and slowly lifted the combined quilt squares of my life, with the holes, to the light. An awe-filled gasp filled the air. I gazed around at the others who stared at me with wide eyes.

Then, I looked upon the quilt tapestry before me. Light flooded the many holes, creating an image: the face of Christ. Then our Lord stood before me, with warmth and love in His eyes. He said, 'Every time you gave over your life to Me, it became My life, My hardships, and My struggles.'

'Each point of light in your life is when you stepped aside and let Me shine through, until there was more of Me than there was of you.'

Taken from: [A Story of the Quilt Holes](#)

Prayers



Pope Francis' intention for the month of April was for a culture of peace and non-violence. Let us continue to pray for a peace that starts within us and spreads like wildfire to everyone we encounter.

Jesus Christ, Prince of Peace, meek and humble of heart

Teach us to have a heart like yours

Send your Holy Spirit to our thoughts

so that we do not allow ourselves to be seduced by the culture of conflict.

May His scorching Love set our hearts on fire

and guide us to a culture of encounter,

of non-violence visible in our decisions,

in our actions, and in our caring for others.

Help us to enact ways that non-violence materializes
in our ordinary life, in thoughts, words, and actions that we address to brothers
and sisters.

Give us the courage to live a peaceful style, that seeks encounter, dialogue,
acceptance of difference, and non-violence in the face of all difficulties.

Heart of Jesus, give us a heart similar to Yours!

Amen!

Taken from: [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#)



Pope Francis' monthly intention for the month of May is for church movements and groups that they may rediscover their mission of evangelization, while placing their charisms at the service of needs in the world. In the words of our former Pope, Pope John Paul II, let us pray.....

Come Holy Spirit, come and renew the face of the earth.

Come with your seven gifts!

Come Spirit of Life, Spirit of Communion and Love!

The Church and the world needs you.

Come Holy Spirit and make ever more fruitful the charisms you have bestowed on us.

Give new strength and missionary zeal to these sons and daughters of yours who are part of various church movements and groups.

Open [our] hearts; renew [our] Christian commitment in the world.

Make [us] courageous messengers of the Gospel, witnesses to the risen Jesus Christ, the Redeemer and Savior of man.

Strengthen [our] love and fidelity to the Church.

Amen.

Taken from: [Pope's Worldwide Prayer Network](#)