



Campus Ministry Online

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Autumn

- Cool Air
- Falling Leaves
- Beautiful Colors
- Short Days
- Praise God

An Autumn Prayer

*We bless you,
God of Seed and
Harvest
And we bless each
other
That the beauty of this
world
And the love that
created it
Might be expressed
through our lives
And be a blessing to
others
Now and always
A. AMEN*

Is It Magic?

Recently, I was reflecting on the homily from Sunday Mass. Do Catholics really understand their faith? The homilist was challenging parents to realize that the commitments made at Baptism were not merely a formality but a life-long commitment to the faith life of their children. Reflecting on my experience of growing up Catholic I wondered how often we assume that the rituals of our faith are magical things divorced from the reality of our lives as opposed to lived realities that call us to a deeper level of relationship with our God.

We are in relationship with a God who loves us and calls us to himself. As in our human love relationships, this doesn't happen in a passive way. We need to spend time with God to know him and love him more deeply. Would we not spend time with our best friend? Wouldn't we go beyond the expected to show our appreciation and love for our friend? Would we not enjoy conversation about our hopes, dreams, fears and disappointments?

So practically, what does this mean? Do we commit ourselves to Sunday Mass attendance? Are we actively involved with praying and singing at Mass? Do we think that God will relate to us by osmosis. Is it magic? Is our conversation with God a part of our daily life? For example, do we pray- in the morning, in the evening or at meal time? Is there more to my faith than following the rules or following some of them?

Pope Benedict XVI has called for a new evangelization. We need to take the time to look at our relationship with our God and our knowledge of our faith. It isn't magic. It's a love relationship.

A Question of Life?

Brief Homily from a former All Star American Football Player, ex-Green Beret, and Millionaire turned Priest:

I have been celebrating Mass at a local parish while the pastor is away the past few weeks. Many of the readings during that time concerned the prophets and their message and trials. I was moved to reflect once again on the prophetic dimension of our Baptism in Christ-Priest, Prophet and King. Several decades ago, the great Archbishop Fulton Sheen said, "The prophetic voice of Christ has all but been stilled in the Church today." To the degree we fail in this prophetic mission, the world will sink into oblivion under the increasing weight of its sins.

In my lifetime, the United States has gone from quite a wholesome, rational, and moral country, to one that is largely decadent, irrational, and immoral. Most people seem to be hardened to it, unconcerned that we have a death wish in process.

First it was artificial contraception, then abortion, then partial-birth abortion, then infanticide (all of which have been supported by many liberal politicians at one time or another, even some running for president) not to mention euthanasia, and outright killing of the disabled and sick. Actually, it's even worse. Terri Schiavo wasn't sick. She didn't die from an illness. They killed her by starvation, a very cruel way to die.

Now it's same sex marriage (no transmission of life, no fruit of natural love) and we call it inclusive and just. It is yet another nail in the coffin of a society that is clearly dying. Every stage of life is under assault by the forces of death. From prevention of life through artificial contraception, to abortion-which is homicide by definition in each case (the taking of the life of an innocent human being), and genocide taken as a whole. Preventing life, ending life from the youngest to the oldest. We call it progress. It is a death wish, and we had better watch what we wish for. (for the end of a culture of death is death for all!)

"All that evil requires to prosper is that good men remain silent."

The hour is late. We have had years to change course. Instead, we have obstinately refused and gone from bad to worse. May God have mercy on us, and grant us the courage and strength to act in accordance with that truth. God bless you,

Fr. John Corapi

These newsletters are a service of Mater Dei Campus Ministry in an attempt to:

- 1. Share information about our Catholic faith to keep our community aware of some of the teachings of our tradition.*
- 2. Update our community of changes in understandings and rituals*
- 3. Assist parents with the faith formation of their youth.*
- 4. Provide links to sites with helpful information on faith and parenting.*

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Know Your Faith

Why Pope Benedict XVI chose his name

"I wish to speak of the name I chose on becoming bishop of Rome and pastor of the universal Church. I chose to call myself Benedict XVI ideally as a link to the venerated Pontiff, Benedict XV, who guided the Church through the turbulent times of the First World War. He was a true and courageous prophet of peace who struggled strenuously and bravely, first to avoid the drama of war and then to limit its terrible consequences. In his footsteps I place my ministry, in the service of reconciliation and harmony between peoples, profoundly convinced that the great good of peace is above all a gift of God, a fragile and precious gift to be invoked, safeguarded and constructed, day after day and with everyone's contribution.

"The name Benedict also evokes the extraordinary figure of the great 'patriarch of western monasticism,' St. Benedict of Norcia, co-patron of Europe with Cyril and Methodius.

Retreat Opportunities

Mater Dei provides a retreat opportunity for her students each year. While these are very important, they are limited to a six-hour school day. We encourage our students to take part in the much deeper retreat experiences provided by our diocese, namely the Quest and TEC retreats. Quest is a 33 hour experience for freshmen and sophomores while TEC is a 3 day experience for juniors and seniors. Both of these retreats provide a more intense immersion into real Christian living and community. **Please encourage your young person to take the time and be part of the Quest and TEC communities.** The next Quest retreat will be held at St. Teresa in Belleville on November 5 & 6. The next TEC will be in Red Bud on January 14 – 16. Applications are available in Campus Ministry.

Vocations

All of us are painfully aware that our Diocese is in the process of studying and evaluating the viability of parishes. Sadly the number of priests available to minister is growing smaller and smaller with many priests who are aging. We have been blessed with over 20 international priests who help staff our parishes. We encourage everyone to continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. We currently have several students who are considering a Church vocation. We will also have religious present at our college night available to share about their ministries. Vocations are all of our responsibility.

Helpful Websites

U.S.Conference of Catholic Bishops	www.usccb.org
Center for Parent/Youth Understanding	www.cpyu.org
Diocese of Belleville	www.diobelle.org
TEC Retreats	chairperson@bellevilletec.com
Quest Retreats	washed_up_dj@yahoo.com