Breaking News!
In case you haven’t heard, NCCL memberships are now available for FREE.

Our diocesan membership now includes every PCL in our diocese. If you haven’t already done so, please take advantage of this wonderful opportunity and SIGN UP TODAY!

(Details on how to sign up are on page 5 of this Newsletter.)

May each of you have a blessed Lent and a faith-filled Holy Week!

Encourage your students, their parents, and all adult parishioners to participate in the Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil) at your parish!
The Triduum
Invite the Whole Parish!

How many parishioners attend the liturgies on Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday at your parish? Do your parishioners receive adequate kerygma and catechesis on these days? It is, after all, a commemoration of the Last Supper, Passion, Death, and Resurrection of our Lord. We are called to enter into these days called Triduum solemnly, spiritually, and (of course during the Easter Vigil) with joy!

Holy Thursday
This is the day we commemorate the Last Supper — the institution of the Eucharist. In the synoptic gospels, this was the first day of Pesach or Passover. Many Scripture scholars say Jesus enhanced this Pesach to a universal Pesach where the elements of bread and wine changed into Jesus’ Body and Blood. During the beginning of the Exodus, they slaughtered an unblemished lamb and put the blood on the boundary of the door so that the angel of death would pass over. Jesus is now the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. His blood on the wooden cross saves us from sin and death (Sheol) and leads us to eternal life.

Here is Matthew’s Gospel account:

‘Surely it is not I, Rabbi?’ He answered, ‘You have said so.’

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’ Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father.’ Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” (Matthew 26:17-30)

Actually, Matthew’s account is not the one proclaimed at the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday (even though the first reading from Exodus describes the Passover). That reading comes from the Gospel according to John. In John’s account, it is not the Passover because Passover begins on Friday, the next day. Theologically, it makes the connection even stronger that on the day Jesus died, like the Passover lambs slaughtered to save Israel, Jesus saved us.

The focus in the Gospel account is on the washing of the feet and serving one another, especially regarding the priest in his role as servant. Some faiths and cultures call this day Maundy Thursday because of the mandate of Jesus to his disciples to serve.

After the Mass, parishes have allotted time for Eucharistic adoration for parishioners.

Some people begin a fast from now (after the Mass of the Last Supper) until after the Easter Vigil – to pray and reflect upon the passion and death of our Lord, and to keep the holiness of this time. Here is what the US Bishops say about this Paschal Fast:

“If possible, the fast on Good Friday is continued until the Easter Vigil (on Holy Saturday night) as the ‘paschal fast’ to honor the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus, and to prepare ourselves to share more fully and to celebrate more readily his Resurrection.” (US Bishops)

Good Friday
Good Friday we commemorate the passion and death of our Lord. It is a time for quiet reflection and parishes bring opportunities to the faithful for
a communion service and Veneration of the Cross.

Many parishes have their liturgy at 3:00 p.m. In addition, there are some evening opportunities as well.

As mentioned, the fast which began on Holy Thursday night continues (one full meal can be taken and two small meals). In addition, the faithful are to abstain from meat.

The liturgy consists of the following:

- The Liturgy of the Word where the priest(s) and assisting ministers come in silence and make a full prostration before the altar. Readings from Isaiah and Hebrews are proclaimed. The Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ according to the Gospel of John is read in parts with the assembly participating. Next is a reading of a series of prayers, orationes sollemnes— which are prayers for the Church, the Pope, the Clergy and laity of the Church, those preparing for baptism, the unity of Christians, the Jewish people, those who do not believe in Christ, those who do not believe in God, those in public office, and those in special need.

- The second portion is the Veneration of the Cross, where the crucifix is displayed, and each person comes up to kiss or touch the cross of Christ.

- The third portion of the liturgy is the receiving of Eucharist. Nothing is consecrated on that day, but consecrated hosts (the Body of Christ) from the Mass of the Last Supper can be distributed at the end of this liturgy.

In addition, parishes offer opportunities for the Stations of the Cross either outside or inside the Church.

**Holy Saturday and the Easter Vigil**

On Holy Saturday, there is no Mass celebrated until the Easter Vigil at sundown. It is a solemn and prayerful day. In some places, such as Poland, there is a blessing of the foods to be prepared for the Easter meal.

It is encouraged for adults, if they are able, to continue the fast that began on Thursday night after the Mass of the Last Supper. People can break the fast after the Easter Vigil with a celebratory meal. This is called the Pascal Fast.

At the Easter Vigil, this Mass begins with the lighting of the Paschal Candle from the Easter fire. Then the priest or deacon chants, “Christ Our Light” as he processes in with the Paschal Candle and others light their own individual candles. Then up to seven readings from the Old Testament are proclaimed. Then the lights come on, the bells are rung, and the Gloria is sung. The reading from Paul’s Letter to the Romans is proclaimed. Then the Alleluia is sung and the Gospel story of the Resurrection is proclaimed. Mark, Matthew, or Luke’s account of the Resurrection is proclaimed—depending what Cycle we are in. This is the central idea why these Gospels were formed in the first place—and even why the letters of Paul were written. Jesus rose from the dead, conquered sin and death, and rose to life. Jesus brought us salvation from sin and its consequences. Jesus is Lord, the Risen Lord!

Next the holy water in the baptismal font or pool is blessed. Any elect (former catechumens) are then baptized by pouring or immersion. Then they will receive Confirmation, the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Later on during the Mass, they will receive the Eucharist to complete the Sacraments of Initiation.

Some parishes have a celebration after the Mass for the newly baptized and those who entered into full communion (those who were already baptized). Some who enter into full communion could have come in the Church on another Sunday, if they were ready for Confirmation and the Eucharist. However, even for them, it would be appropriate to participate in the Easter Vigil and the celebration afterwards.

Since the readings are different on Sunday morning, everyone is welcome to participate in that liturgy as well! Some parishes who have unbaptized elect, reserve their entry into the Church at the Easter Vigil, whereas the candidates who are coming from another faith tradition, and those already baptized, are received into full communion on Easter morning (Confirmation and Eucharist).

If you start the invitations now, I believe you will have a full house by the time of the Triduum. After the Triduum, make sure you have some time for students and their parents to talk about the experience of the Triduum, what we call a mystagogical reflection on the experience. And hopefully, these new people will come back next year to experience the Triduum again!
Parish Catechesis Question
How are you going to invite students, parents, and parishioners to the Triduum? Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil?

Upcoming Opportunities

PCL Gatherings
9:00 gather; 9:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Thur, March 22  Fundamentals of the RCIA by Luisa Negret and Twyla Satterthwaite; sponsored by Pflaum – Diocesan Pastoral Center; please RSVP by Wednesday, March 21 at noon.
Thur, April 19  Curriculum Day–sponsored by the Diocese - Diocesan Pastoral Center, Beaumont
Thur, May 12  sponsored by Loyola Press at the Diocesan Pastoral Center, Beaumont

Parish Visits
Bryan has been on the road starting in July for some parish visits. He can visit on the day of your Faith Formation. Or he can also do visits with pastors and catechetical leaders. Please arrange a time that you can invite him to your parish by contacting him via email: breising@dioceseofbmt.org or calling his office at 409-924-4323. He will not get to all places during the catechetical year, but he would like to get to all regions of the diocese.

What will happen with these visits? The following are some possibilities: an observation of your faith formation during the time of instruction, perhaps an in-service with your catechists, or even a catechetical presentation – guest catechist for adults, youth, or children.

CEMI Courses and Confirmation Preparation for Adults
Upcoming course offerings are found at https://www.eventbrite.com/o/diocese-of-beaumont-evangelizationcatechesis-7578878365

RCIA in the Diocese of Beaumont
TeamRCIA rescheduled their Making Disciples Institute for Friday, April 13, and Saturday, April 14, 2018 at the Church of St. Jude Thaddeus in Beaumont. This training is free! Additionally we hope you will invite your pastors and deacons to the Clergy Day for the RCIA, which will be held from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm on Friday, April 13, 2018. Of course, your pastor, priests, and deacons are welcome to attend the extended training as well. For further information and to sign up: https://www.dobgifts.org/events/making-disciples/

University of Dayton’s Virtual Learning Community for Faith Formation (VLCFF)
Cycle 2: March 4 – March 24, 2018 (3-Week Seminars)
(Registration: Opens Jan 17, 2018; Closes Feb 28, 2018)

- Catholic Identity and Culture
- Catholic Teaching on Chastity, Family Life, and Human Sexuality Education
- **Designing a Parish Catechetical Plan** (Bryan will facilitate; please sign up soon!)
- **Mercy**
- **On Bended Knee**
- **Overview of the GDC and NDC**
- **Theological Reflection: Key to Connecting Faith and Life**

**Religious Education Safe Environment Compliance Reminders**

Any DRE, youth minister, catechist, adult(s) helping with youth ministry, or anyone who may be in a ministry where minors are present is **required** to be in total compliance with safe environment protocol.

To be in compliance, one must have attended in person a Protecting God’s Children (PGC) session. After 5 years from the initial training participation, a rectification is required. This can be done either through the diocesan website online module, or by attending another in person PGC session.

If you have any questions regarding Safe Environment Training, you may contact the diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator through the following information:

Paul J Thomas  
pthomas@dioceseofbmt.org  
409-924-4315

Remember to abide by all the deadlines for Safe Environment. Thank you!

**PGC Trainings**

**Protecting God’s Children for Adults**

- **Tuesday March 6, 2018 @ 6:00pm**
  - Location: Catholic Pastoral Center, Beaumont
  - Facilitator: Paul J Thomas
  - Registration Contact: Joseph  
  - 409-924-4309

- **Saturday April 14, 2018 @ 9:30am**
  - Location: Our Mother of Mercy Library, Beaumont

**Adult Faith Formation**

**Word on Fire**: Bishop Robert Barron adult faith formation series - [https://www.wordonfire.org/](https://www.wordonfire.org/)

Check out the new resource of Word on Fire during Lent:  
[https://engage.wordonfire.org/about](https://engage.wordonfire.org/about)

**Formed.org** is a subscription service by parish that includes adult faith formation offerings, movies, and podcasts, and ebooks:  
[https://formed.org/](https://formed.org/)

**ACTS**

To find out about upcoming ACTS Retreat and Activities: [https://beaumontacts.org/](https://beaumontacts.org/)
Facilitator: Margaret Denson
Registration Contact: Margaret
409-454-7127

Interested in a Bachelors or Masters
in Theology
St. Thomas University in Houston:
https://www.stthom.edu/Academics/School-of-Arts-and-
Sciences/Undergraduate/Theology/Index.asp.

National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL) Membership
All PCLs are now members of NCCL! Check out the Web site: www.nccl.org. For information on the national conference (Chicago: May 30-June 2, 2018), go to www.nccl.us.

NCCL Membership

Instructions for Activating Membership Profiles

Follow these step-by-step instructions for full Diocesan membership access to the largest professional catechetical organization in the nation!

Instructions for PCLs ONLY: UPGRADED DIOCESAN MEMBERSHIPS ONLY

Step 1. Click https://www.nccl.org/product/individual-membership/, verify (1) membership is indicated. Then click Join/Renew.

Step 2. This is the Cart page; verify that the correct membership type is in the cart (Individual Membership). Apply the special PCL coupon code “beaucl”. Click Update Cart and then select Proceed to Check Out. Here is where you will begin to create your membership profile. Create a username and password (hint: strong passwords are preferred). Click Place Order.

Step 3. Once logged in, go to your profile and complete all fields.

*Here are a few very short videos that will assist you in this process as well as how to navigate the site and edit your profile: https://www.nccl.org/videos/

**If you already have an active NCCL membership, simply log in and renew using the instructions above.

Sharing Our Journeys
Sharing Our Journeys:

At this year’s NCCL Conference, the Environment Committee invites each parish and diocese to share examples of how you invite others to *Walk With Christ*. Each day will highlight a different aspect of that theme: **Encounter, Accompany, Proclaim**. We would like to showcase moments from all across the country - and beyond. The photos will be captioned and printed, arranged, and placed on easels throughout the conference.

Therefore we invite you to:

- Email one or more photos that illustrate any of these themes: please note the theme for each photo.
- Include a caption that indicates location and what is taking place.
- If you are willing to be contacted for follow up questions, please include your name and email.

We will also make these photos available digitally after the conference. Make sure you have obtained permission rights necessary according to your diocesan requirements.

Email to Leisa Anslinger: leisa@catholiclifeandfaith.net

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**Asking the Right Questions**

by: Twyla Satterthwaite

Recently some of our staff attended a conference in Corpus Christi. One of the presenters, Jim Merhart, spoke about choosing to be happy. He said, “Never ask a question that you do not have input into the solution.” In other words, do not ask questions when you cannot affect the answer. Questions such as, “Why does she always do that?” or “Why do they seem intent on doing that?” only bring you frustration because you cannot change another person. The only person you can change is yourself.

Jim gave us a handy tool that you can find at [www.InquiryInstitute.com](http://www.InquiryInstitute.com). The CHOICE MAP is a visual guide to choosing the right questions to achieve growth and happiness. According to the diagram, when we ask the wrong questions we go down the path to the mud pit of anger and despair. Asking the right questions
leads us to solutions and win-win situations.

RCIA training tells us that the formulation of the Gospel question is the most important part of *Breaking Open the Word*. Questions that invite an encounter with the Gospel lead to true conversion. These questions are reflective in nature. “What do you think of what Jesus said?” “How do you feel about that?” “In what areas of your faith life are you challenged by what Jesus did or said?” These types of questions lead people to a self-examination of their relationship with Jesus and not just memorizing information. Conversion is then able to happen.

When Martha confronted Jesus and blamed him for the death of her brother Lazarus (John 11: 17-27) Jesus asked Martha a question. “Do you believe that I am the resurrection?” he asked. This question led her to make a profession of faith in Jesus as the Messiah.

The art of questioning begins in ourselves. Asking ourselves meaningful questions is a way to personal growth. “Why do I feel that way?” “What is my basic belief about that?” Looking into our souls with loving questions instead of guilt or blame will lead us to true healing.

As ministers, we listen to others. A good listener does not have all the answers, they just hear what the person is saying and would perhaps asks probing questions. When people come to us with superficial opinions, we can ask questions to help them discover a new way to look at the issue. These questions can lead the person to see things from a different angle. The right question can lead to a fuller understanding of the situation.

In Matthew 7: 7-8 Jesus tells us, “Ask and you will receive.” Have courage and ask yourself the right questions. Use the CHOICE MAP as a tool to avoid the mud pits of despair and take the more difficult path up the mountain to a new vision.