

Our Sunday Visitor, Inc.

Parish Life!



News and resources for your parish

July 2008

Parish Life! from Our Sunday Visitor

Welcome to **Parish Life!** from Our Sunday Visitor. We've filled it with helpful hints and faith builders.

Be sure to visit our [Parish Resources pages](#). Newly updated for July, our theme this month is "getting organized"! You'll find columns by parish experts Lorene Duquin, Anne Neuberger, Kelley Renz, Woodeene Koenig-Bricker and Mary Lou Rosien written for early childhood, elementary, adult, youth, catechists, and the workplace! It's free! [Help for your parish is here now»](#)

Our [Year of St. Paul special web section](#) is now launched. Find free downloads (including a coloring book for children), prayers, Scripture, quotes, poster, and an interactive presentation. Go to www.osv.com/stpaul.

This newsletter is designed with parish leaders in mind. We'd love to hear from you as well, so please e-mail us with questions or topics you would like to see discussed in future editions: yyoung@osv.com.

Feel free to forward this email to a friend who might be interested.

Summer Spirituality

By Lorene Hanley Duquin

Most people would be shocked to hear that one of the greatest hazards of working in a parish is neglecting your own spiritual life. We spend so much time ministering to the spiritual needs of others, that very often we put our own spiritual needs on hold. For example:

- During Mass are you distracted by things that need cleaning or repair in the church?
- Do you find yourself thinking about people in the congregation? Maybe you get distracted by what one of the liturgical ministers is doing - or not doing!
- Have you ever cut short your time for morning prayer because you have so much to do in the office?
- When was the last time you read Scripture - not because you were looking for a quote for something you're working on - but because you need the Word of God to sustain you?
- When was the last time you left the office for 20 minutes of quiet prayer in church before the Blessed Sacrament?

Chances are your answers to some of the questions are not good. But don't despair! Summer is a great time to get your spiritual life back on track. Here are some suggestions:

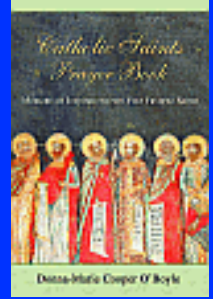
- Set aside one morning a week during the summer for spiritual reading. Even if you have to put a "do not disturb" sign on your office door, it will be your chance to catch up on the reading you've been putting off.
- Set aside an hour a day for a prayer walk. Whether you walk up and down the aisles of the church or through the streets of the parish, it will help restore you physically and spiritually.
- Set aside one weekend during the summer for a mini-retreat. Begin the morning with Mass, and then incorporate throughout the day Scripture reading, quiet time for reflection, journal writing, spiritual reading or a nature walk.

The time you spend this summer restoring your spirit will reap rewards in the fall when life at the parish begins to rev up again!

In This Issue

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Pray with the saints



Seeking inspiration from the saints? July is a month with feast days of many well-known saints: Benedict, Ignatius of Loyola, Thomas the Apostle, James, Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha. And, sometimes, finding a prayer with a favorite saint is perfect for inspiration during busy times.

St. Anne's feast day is July 26, celebrated in conjunction with her husband, Joachim. The parents of Mary, these names were sent down through the ages according to tradition, not the Bible. St. Anne is mentioned, along with 31 other saints, in "Catholic Saints Prayer Book," by Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle (OSV). The prayer to St. Anne follows: "Dear St. Anne, beautiful grandmother of Jesus,

Prayer time at both ends of the day



Integrating prayer into the everyday routine is as simple as a praising God in the morning and thanking God at night.

At breakfast, pray this simple morning offering together as a family: "Lord, we offer you this day and all that we think, and do, and say." Remind everyone that these simple words turn their entire day into a prayer.

Before bed is a good time to help children, and yourself, reflect on the day. Teach them to tell God that they are sorry for things they may have said or done to hurt someone else. Encourage them to pray for people who have hurt them.

For more suggestions on how to easily incorporate prayer in to family life, from our mini-magazine [Take Out: Family Faith on the Go, click here»](#)

What's a Jubilee Year?

Pope Benedict XVI proclaimed June 28, 2008-June 29, 2009 to be a special jubilee year dedicated to St. Paul. The Pauline year commemorates the 2,000th anniversary of the saint's birth.

Jubilees, or holy years, are a tradition drawn from the Old Testament, which describes years of Jubilee that occurred every seven years. Just as the seventh day of the week was reserved for rest in honor of the Lord, so was the seventh year (see Lv 25:1-13 and Ex 23:10-11). Special jubilee celebrations also took place every 50 years, during which debts were forgiven and land was returned to its ancestral owners.

Since the 14th century, the Church has celebrated holy years every 25 years. They are special times dedicated to pilgrimage and prayer to help Catholics become closer to God.

There are many liturgical moments unique to jubilee years, including the opening of the Holy Door, a large bronze door to the right of the main entrance of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome that remains open only during the holy year.

In addition, popes can decree the observance of other holy years dedicated to a particular person, sacrament or theme, such as the Marian Year of 1987-88 and the Year of the Eucharist in 2004-05. The Year of St. Paul is such a year. Sources: **Catholic Parent** (January/February 2000 issue) and the Catholic Encyclopedia.

For more on the Year of St. Paul, see our special web section devoted to St. Paul. It includes an interactive presentation with St. Paul stories, his journeys, and a quiz. Be sure to visit www.osv.com/stpaul.

mother of the Blessed Mother, please pray for me to deepen my prayer life and love for God. Ask God to grant me the graces that I need most. Please show me the way to your daughter, Mary, who will indeed lead me to Jesus. St. Anne, pray for us and for all who invoke your aid. If it is in God's holy will, please grant me (here mention your request). Amen."

- From "Catholic Saints Prayer Book" by Donna-Marie Cooper O'Boyle (OSV). [Order it here»](#)

A Call to Action!



Pope Benedict XVI's words during his historic visit to the United States in April are still resonating with Catholics around the country. OSV has the resources you need to keep the energy going in your parish. Our pamphlet, Witness to Christ, points out: "The Pope had two clear goals for his visit: To "be a source of renewal and

A Steward Reflects ...

By Julie Kenny

In Chapter Four of "Stewardship: A Disciple's Response," by the U.S. bishops, called "Stewards of the Church," the bishops write, "Sound business practice is a fundamental of good stewardship, and stewardship as it relates to church finances must include the most stringent ethical, legal and fiscal standards."

What does this mean for anyone who serves in parish leadership? It means being open and accountable on all parish matters, hosting open forums to obtain parishioner input, and reviewing critical decisions past all committees. At the very least, an "annual report" is published informing parishioners about the activities of various ministries, number of parish baptisms, marriages, confirmations and other sacramental data, and outlining the parish financial situation. Mailing the annual report to all households within the parish insures all are notified.

Does your parish produce an annual report? Does it only include financial information? Are all ministries of the parish held accountable for their funds? When parishioners trust the parish is being a good steward of all their gifts, they are inclined to increase those gifts!

Email your stewardship comments or questions to Julie at jkenny@osv.com.

hope for the Church in the United States," and to "strengthen the resolve of Catholics to contribute ever more responsibly to the life of this nation." The pamphlet goes on to focus on the six action steps given to us by the Pope.

he most interest. [Click here to order»](#)



NEW from Our Sunday Visitor and Scott Hahn!

Faith Charts: The Bible at a Glance

This is a 6-panel, laminated, "cheat sheet" for the Bible: what it is, who wrote it, how to read it, the books of the Bible, where to find..., and more!

An irreplaceable resource for all ages and all stages of familiarity with Scripture.

Just \$7.95 plus S&H.

[Order here»](#)

Parish Life! Resources

Our Sunday Visitor's website offers monthly articles on early childhood education, elementary education, adult formation, spirituality at work, youth ministry that inspires and help for catechists. [To see the latest, click here»](#)

Quick Links

www.OSV.com

Parish leaders' resources

Q&A with Dr. Joseph White

7 Steps to Becoming Financially Free Small Group Study Program

New VBS program: Great Bible Reef

Register to win free programs and materials for YOUR parish

Let us know what you think!

We hope you've enjoyed our Parish Life! newsletter! Let us know what you think--we appreciate your comments, questions, suggestions, and requests! Email York Young: yyoung@osv.com.

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