

Office Hours
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Wednesday to Friday
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Family Circles - Faith, Prayer, Life & Charity

The Adult Faith Formation Commission is organizing a diocesan-wide advancement of family faith formation. Family Circles Program is a Roman Catholic-based faith catechesis exploring the fundamentals of Catholicism and the promotion of devotions. It aims to connect families through prayers and family time activities. It also endeavors to unite families to concretize belief through charitable outreach.

Families interested in joining or knowing more about this initiative may contact the Adult Faith Formation Commission or email bmjs1981@gmail.com or call 306-763-5677.

Suggested Materials:

- (1) *Beloved 2: Living Marriage* (DVD) by Augustine Institute;
- (2) *How to Resist Temptation* (book) by Fr. Francis J. Remler, C.M.;
- (3) *The Ear of the Heart* (book) by Mother Dolores Hart, O.S.B. and Richard DeNeut;
- (4) *The Curé of Ars Today* (book) by Fr. George Rutler.

For more resources: padiocese.ca or bmjsajonas.com

Scripture Meditation

Luke 14:1,7-14 22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time
Luke 14:25-33 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time
Luke 15:1-32 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time
Luke 16:1-13 25th Sunday of Ordinary Time
Luke 16:19-31 26th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Next issue's contents:

Mark 13:28-32: The Parable of the Developing Fig Tree; Getting to know a pilgrimage site in the diocese; Bible Study, Resources for faith formation, and much more...

Editors:

Sr. Mariette Bilodeau (SK, Canada), Matthew Allen Newland, PhD (QC, Canada),
Fr. Millan Sajonas (SK, Canada), and Very Reverend Maurice Fiolleau (Vicar General).

ADULT FAITH FORMATION COMMISSION DIOCESE OF PRINCE ALBERT IMDVS August 2019

Matthew 11:16-19: The Parable of the Children in the Marketplace

By Fr. Millan Sajonas

In Chapter 11 of St. Matthew's gospel, the parable of the children in the marketplace. Jesus compares Himself with John in an interesting way. Specifically, Jesus compares the attitudes of His contemporaries have toward Him with the way they regarded John the Baptist. John proclaimed a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; his ministry and life reflect an austere way of living, and stern preaching to conversion. Jesus, meanwhile, invited the wayward to come to Him with compassion and understanding. He approaches them with love and mercy; and He encourages conversion through affable ways. These methods of Jesus and John the Baptist are compared, respectively, to playing pipes for dancing and singing dirges for mourning. They employ different styles of proclaiming God's message, but both have the same goal: conversion for salvation of souls. Yet like the children in the marketplace, the public ministries of both John the Baptist and Jesus could not get favorable responses or positive reactions to their religious contemporaries. These leaders refused to accept or to understand Jesus and John's ways.

However, "wisdom is justified by her deeds." This statement affirms the good of Jesus and John's methods of conversion regardless of the unbelieving religious contemporaries. God's plan unfolds through the works of Jesus and John the Baptist to bring about conversion and salvation despite the rejection and unresponsiveness of their contemporaries. Therefore, one's reaction to Jesus and John's message will procure reward or punishment. If one is convinced, its fruit is redemption. If one refuses, its fruit is condemnation.

Throughout history, humanity has experienced God's advances to bring about salvation. Through God's agents, prophets, missionaries, and religious leaders, we have seen stern methods of conversion as well as gentle ways to acquire positive response to God's love. One may be attracted to the stricter ways or gentle methods of evangelization. However, the hope is always to bring inner spiritual transformation reflected through one's love for one's neighbor. Charitable deeds are the true result of conversion. Love is the true response to God's message.

What we hope for is to grasp the different ways that God is meeting us. We open all our senses to touch, to feel, to taste, to hear, and to see the various manners of God's advances so that we may give the proper response to Him. These moments with the Lord may be in our prayers or through our encounter with our brothers and sisters, whom we meet everyday.

Reflection Questions:

1. How would you describe your relationship with God?
2. What is your definition of conversion?
3. Would you prefer a stern condition of repentance or a more affable approach to it? Why?
4. If love is the true response to God's message of conversion, have you demonstrated it to your neighbor? How?

Getting to know...St. John the Baptist.

St John the Baptist was born in the 1st century. We know about the life of John the Baptist from the four gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and Josephus' work.

He is the precursor of the Messiah. He is the son of St. Elizabeth, who is the cousin of Mary, thus, John was also the cousin of Jesus. John recognized the Messiah even while still in the womb of his mother Elizabeth. At his naming day, Zechariah proclaimed a beautiful canticle, recounting the marvelous works of God for his people and John's important role in preparing the way of the Lord.

Throughout his public ministry, John lived an austere life. He preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. At the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus, John recognized him as the lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. He baptized Jesus in the Jordan and acknowledged the importance of the mission of Jesus.

King Herod Antipas imprisoned John after criticizing Herod who married Herodias, the divorced wife of his half brother. Herod was afraid of John, considering him as a prophet but Herodias found an opportunity to kill John. He was beheaded at the request of Herodias' daughter. Afterward, John's disciples took his body and buried him.

St. John the Baptist is the only saint who has two feasts being celebrated for him; his birth on June 24 and his death on August 29. He is the patron saint of French Canada, Jordan, Puerto Rico, and many other places. He is the patron saint of the Roman Catholic Church in Debden that bears his name. Let us pray, "O Martyr invincible, who, for the honor of God and the salvation of souls didst with firmness and constancy withstand the impiety of Herod even at the cost of thine own life, and didst rebuke him openly for his wicked and dissolute life: by thy prayers obtain for us a heart, brave and generous, in order that we may overcome all human respect and openly profess our faith in loyal obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ our Divine Master." (Excerpt from the Traditional Prayer in honor of St. John the Baptist. Source: <https://www.learnreligions.com/in-honor-saint-john-the-baptist-542653>)

Are you interested to join a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land?

There is a pilgrimage going to the Holy Land from January 7 to 20, 2020. It is organized by Fr. Millan Sajonas and Biyaheng Kapamilya sa Holy Land. The theme is "**A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: This is Holy Ground.**"

For further details, visit www.kapamilyaholyland.com or <https://www.bmjsajonas.com/upcoming-activities> or call Fr. Millan at 306-763-5677/ email: bmjs1981@gmail.com

The Family, First Educator of Faith

1. God wants all men to know and accept His salvation plan, revealed and realized in Christ (1 Ti 1, 15-16). God spoke in many ways to our parents (Heb 1, 1; all OT). With the completion of the time (Ga 4, 4) He spoke fully and definitively in and for Christ (Heb 1, 2-4): the Father has no *other* Word to give us, because he gave us the *one* and *only* Word in Christ (Jn 1, 1 ss).

2. The Church has received the mandate to announce this great news to all men: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28, 19). The Apostles understood it so and carried it out from Pentecost, filling Jerusalem with the announcement of Christ, Dead and Resurrected (Ac Ch 1-5) and all the known world of the time (Book of Acts and Letters).

3. The Christian family, the domestic Church, participates in this mission. Furthermore, the *first and main* recipients of this missionary announcement for the family are their children and relatives, as is attested in Paul's Pastoral Letters and the following praxis. The saintly marriages and Christian parents of all times have thus lived it (parents of Saint Teresa of Jesus, parents of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus; so many parents of today). In the light of the *joyful experience* of the Church in the Christian societies of Europe (when family performed this teaching mission with its children) and also in the light of the very serious negative repercussions witnessed today (due to abandoning or neglecting this mission), the family must once again be the first teacher of faith in these nations – which are indeed no longer Christian – in which the faith is being strengthened and where the Church is being implanted. The parents' most important missionary preaching has to be in their own family bosom, because it would be a grave and poor example to try to evangelize others while neglecting the evangelization of our own. Parents transmit the faith to their children with the testimony of their Christian life and word.

4. The *core* aspect of this education of the faith is the joyful and vibrant announcement of Christ, Dead and Resurrected for our sins. The other truths contained in the Apostles Creed, the sacraments and the Ten Commandments are in *intimate connection with this core*. Human and Christian virtues form part of the *integral* education of the faith. (Nowadays, this fundamental background can rarely now be assumed, not even in so-called "Christian" countries and in cases when the parents ask for the initiation sacraments for their children, given the parents' religious ignorance and scarce religious practice).

(Source: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/family/documents/rc_pc_family_doc_20080415_catechesis-mexico2009_en.html)

Adult Faith Formation Commission Upcoming Events

Family Faith and Music Event: Family Love

September 27, 2019 Friday at St. Joseph Parish, Prince Albert

September 28, 2019 Saturday at St. Joseph Calasanctius, North Battleford

For further details, please visit <https://www.bmjsajonas.com/adult-faith-formation-commission>