



Diocese of  
Green Bay

## Adult Faith Formation News

Parishes: Holy, Fully Engaged, Alive!

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### UPCOMING EVENTS



#### ***Hospice Nurses and Heaven:***

- When: December 9, 2013
- Where: St. Bernard's Parish, GB
- Time: 6:30pm

#### ***Right on Target:***

- When: December 10, 2013
- Where: St. Joseph's Parish, GB
- Time: 6:30pm

### 2014: "Faith in Our Future Awards"

Don't miss your opportunity to apply for the 2014 "Faith in Our Future" Awards! The application for the adult faith formation grants will be due February 15, 2014.



Parishes are invited to submit their creative ideas for their adult faith formation programs to the diocese. The aim is to showcase Gospel-inspired catechesis and evangelization for adults. As Pope Francis said, "Whenever we make the effort to return to the source and to recover the original freshness of the Gospel, new avenues arise, new paths of creativity open up, with different forms of expression, more eloquent signs and words with new meaning for today's world." (art.11, *Evangelii Gaudium*) And if your parish is forging a new and promising path, we'd like to know about it!

For the "Faith in Our Future" Awards application form, the criteria for assessment and outline explaining the purpose of the grant, please visit the Adult Faith Formation section of the Diocese of Green Bay website by clicking [here](#).

### ***Hospice Nurses and Heaven***

- When: December 11, 2013
- Where: St. Bernard's Parish, Appleton
- Time: 6:30pm

### ***Fallen-away Catholics: Rekindling the Light*** (part III):

- When: December 18, 2013
- Where: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, GB
- Time: 6:15pm

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## **QUOTE OF THE MONTH:**

"Mercy always goes before our good works, and obtains for us the grace to accomplish them. Never did the Saints reflect upon their own merits in order to strengthen their confidence in God; on the contrary, they were deeply impressed with this teaching of the Divine Master:

'When you shall have done all of these things that are commanded you, say: We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which we ought to do.'

The more holy they were, the more humble they became. In their humility they saw the perfection to which they had not yet attained. Far removed from the presumptuous sentiments of the proud Pharisee, they discovered nothing in themselves that could arouse confidence; but they sought and found it in God, the immovable foundation of their hope.

## **Fr. Robert Barron comments on why Catholics Leave the Church:**

Some of you may have missed it, but in 2012 Fr. Robert Barron comments on why Catholics leave the Church based on a recent survey that was published in *America Magazine*. The article is entitled, "Why They Left".



Some of the reasons, Fr. Barron goes on to say, the Church cannot do much about. For instance, Catholic doctrinal teaching on the sanctity of marriage and contraception cannot change in order to accommodate new cultural trends of belief.

However, there were three specific *stated* reasons why people left the Church that can be accommodated:

1. Bad customer relations: They were treated poorly by a representative of the parish.
2. Sermons that do not answer the questions people have. Here, Fr. Barron says it is important to bring the questions people have and the answers we provide as closely together as possible.
3. Too many members of the parish go unnoticed. This is evidenced by the fact that when they leave and stop coming to Mass, no one asks why...no one notices.

For more, go to Fr. Robert Barron's website, Word on Fire, by clicking [here](#).

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## **WHAT TO DO WITH ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS: SOME GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

The season of Advent and Christmas provides a host of opportunities for adult faith formation groups. With a little creativity and boldness, biblical themes that correspond with the Advent wreath candles and the

This plank upheld them. Let it likewise encourage you. And let it give your wearied soul new life."

-Fr. De LeHen, *The Way of Interior Peace*, 1888

## December's Articles:

- [\*Christmas Hardships for St. Joseph\*](#)
- [\*What You May Not Know About Christmas\*](#)



liturgical readings can be applied to real life situations. By doing so, familiar rituals can become something more than just an annual religious devotion. Indeed, they can have a real practical effect in people's lives.



For instance, each of the four Sundays of Advent are symbolized by a candle with corresponding biblical figures, virtues and fruits of the Spirit:

- ***The First Sunday of Advent:*** The candle of hope, also called the prophecy candle. The particular focus is the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph etc.) who longed for the day of the Messiah.
- ***The Second Sunday of Advent:*** The candle of peace, also known as the Bethlehem candle. Here, the particular focus are the prophets who foretold the birth of Jesus.
- ***The Third Sunday of Advent:*** The pink candle of love, also known as the Shepherd's candle. The Shepherd's, like St. John the Baptist thirty years later, announced the coming of Jesus Christ.
- ***The Fourth Sunday of Advent:*** The candle of joy, also known as the Angel's candle. Like the Shepherds who heard glad tidings from angels, the Blessed Virgin Mary was asked by an angel if she would become the mother of the Messiah.
- ***Christmas:*** The Christmas candle, of course, symbolizes the long awaited birth of Christ.

There are adult bible study groups in the Diocese of Green Bay that will study God's Word and then together, as a group, will set out to do works of charity for the poor. Along the same lines, the Advent and Christmas seasons are good opportunities to couple adult catechesis and evangelization with some meaningful service to those who are in need.

This is what Pope Francis means by the "implications of the incarnation." (cf. article 262, *E.G.*) By supplementing action to prayer and study we avoid the temptation of offering a "privatized and individualistic" spirituality.



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**Please support the Bishop's Appeal. Thank you!**

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