



## *Pastor's Column*

*St. Peter Catholic Church*

*February 4, 2018 ~ Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

### *Parochial Year For Evangelization: February Tip of the Month*

Our Parochial Year for Evangelization continues. Last month, January's tip of the month for evangelization was: know yourself and your setting. What are my gifts and talents, my faults and failings, my strengths and weaknesses? And how will these help me (or hinder me) in my endeavors to be a faithful, joyful disciples of Jesus Christ and an effective evangelist?

February's tip of the month is: witnessing to life and including God in our vocabulary. The Lord reminds us that He is the Way and the Truth and the Life (Jn 14:6); and so, witnessing to life is witnessing to the Lord, and an easy way of witnessing to the Lord is to be not afraid to mention the Lord in conversation, to speak of God and actually use the words "God," "Lord," and "Jesus" in the vocabulary of our daily vernacular.

Showing visible signs that our faith is alive, that our conviction as disciples of Jesus Christ is real, and that we do in fact love God – *that* is attractive. And we do this by ensuring that our words, our behaviors, our choices in life all testify to a life lived in joyful accord with the Gospel values and the newness of life – a life in Christ Jesus – in which and in Whom we believe.

We need to be aware, to be not afraid, and to have the saintly, Christ-like confidence that it is *not* against the law to speak about the Lord and His marvelous works in our daily lives. We bring Him up in a casual way in our everyday conversations. We acknowledge Him as the great Giver of all good gifts, the One Who answers prayers, the One Who guides the course of our lives when we submit to His all-loving plan. And do not speak flippantly or irreverently but actually *mean* it whole-heartedly when we say things such as "Thank God," "God willing," "I pray that...." We let people around us know that we believe in a God of love, mercy, and truth, a God to Whom they, too, can (and *should!*) draw near in times of trouble – indeed, at *any* time.

Our saint of the month for February is actually a pair of saints – brothers, in fact, who lived and worked in the 9<sup>th</sup> Century: Saint Cyril and Saint Methodius. Their shared Memorial is February 14, and they were so unafraid to speak of the Lord in their daily speech that they actually invented a whole new language so as to speak of God and share God with people in a land not their own; that land was present-day Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Bohemia, and southern Poland), and that language was the Cyrillic Alphabet, which this day is a basis for modern Russian, among other languages.

The brothers were monks in a monastery until they were chosen, in the midst of political turmoil, to lead evangelization missions in Eastern Europe. Their first task was to invent a language that would allow them both to teach the people in the ways of Christian faith and also to unite them as a common people. Much of the Bible and an entire liturgy was composed in Cyrillic, and before he died in 869, St. Cyril was blessed to see their liturgy approved for worship by Pope Adrian II.

Thankfully, not all of us are called upon by God to invent a whole new language so as to let God be known to others; but even so, we *are* called upon to evangelize. And so, in summary, our February tip of the month is witnessing to life and including God in our vocabulary, and our saints of the month are the brothers Sts. Cyril and Methodius.

~Fr. Lewis