



Pastor's Column

St. Peter Catholic Church

August 5, 2018, Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Parochial Year for Evangelization: August Tip of the Month

Our Parochial Year for Evangelization continues. Last month, we were given TWO tips of the month for July, given that we had missed June on account of Peter's farewell message to us that we published for the bulletin.

July's two tips of the month were: sharing your faith story and presenting the "Christ-event" or kerygma without fear or hesitation, with great love and humility. And our Saint of the month was St. Mary Magdalene, the "Apostles to the Apostles" who was joyful and unafraid in sharing the kerygma, the story of the Risen Lord, with the Apostles.

And now, our tip of the month for August: extend an invitation. We are challenged now to invite our family and friends to accept God's salvation and the new life that is offered in Christ. He is the only Savior of the world, and we can invite others to accept and receive Him by making an explicit commitment to Him, by joining them in prayer and guiding them through the prayer experience, by inviting them to confess their sins to a priest, and by encouraging them to ask Jesus to become the Lord of their lives. We might even dare now to invite them to a Church event or a prayer service, such as a weekday or a Sunday Mass, or a presentation for adult faith formation, or the parish's Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) class, or some other appropriate means of furthering the work of conversion that is already beginning in their lives. In all of this, we strive to facilitate their incorporation into the Mystical Body of Christ that is the Church.

One profoundly effective means of achieving this (albeit counter-intuitive) is to invite them to a Holy Hour of Eucharistic Adoration. Counter-intuitive, given that the Eucharist is just about the most Catholic thing there is, and when people do not really know how to pray, the prospect of enduring one full hour of silence in Eucharistic Adoration can seem rather daunting. But we must remember that our role in all of this is limited: we can only invite; we can only encourage, we can only propose. But in the end, it is Christ Who does the hard work. And if our faith is strong that Christ is really, truly present in the Eucharist, then bringing others to Him in Eucharistic Adoration is the very best thing that we can do as we set out to win souls for Him.

Our saint of the month is St. Claire of Assisi, whose Memorial is August 11. With regard to the power of the Eucharist in winning and saving souls for Christ, there is a very famous, powerful Eucharistic Miracle attributed to her. In the 12th Century, the brutal forces of Frederick Barbarossa were marching through the Italian peninsula on their way to Rome in defiance of the Pope's moral and temporal authority. One of the final fortresses needing to be overcome between Barbarossa and Rome was the town of Assisi. His forces besieged the city and began scaling the walls at the church San Damiano, where St. Claire's cloister was situated. Lacking military strength, the sisters were defenseless, but St. Claire took the Eucharist that was exposed for Adoration and mounted the walls of the cloister just as the invaders were nearing the top, and the Lord took over: the invaders recoiled in terror and fled, and all without even a single weapon being used against them.

If the Lord in the Eucharist can accomplish *that*...then certainly, He can accomplish a great deal of conversion miracles in those who go to Him to pray.

The Eucharist, of course, is confected in the Mass; and so, inviting others to join us at Mass can never be a bad thing. Here then, in conclusion, are six ways to get the most out of Mass:

1. Be on time. Arrive at least ten minutes before Mass begins to dial down your busy mind.
2. Sing...even if you are out of tune. Never worry about having no talent for singing, most people do not, but as St. Augustine famously said: "Those who sing pray twice."
3. Give God your full attention. After all, God only asks for one hour of our time any given week, so spend that hour in loving attention in the presence of the Lord at Mass.
4. Call your Mother. Ask Mother Mary to intercede for you during Mass. Pray to her for guidance and strength.
5. Pray business class. Sit near the altar if you can. It will help you to pay attention.
6. Mother Church wants *you!* Help out if you can. Be a lector, an altar server, an usher, a greeter before Mass begins, an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion.

- Fr. Lewis