



# *Pastor's Column*

*St. Peter Catholic Church*

*September 2, 2018, Twenty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time*

## *Parochial Year for Evangelization: September Tip of the Month*

Our Parochial Year for Evangelization continues. Our evangelization tip of the month for August was: extend the invitation. We are challenged to invite our family and friends to accept God's salvation and the new life that is offered in Christ.

Our tip of the month for September is: facilitate incorporation into the Mystical Body of Christ. We have extended the invitation to accept the salvation by our God and to receive the new life that is offered to us in Jesus Christ, and now, we are ready to propose some practical steps that will help this move forward. This means, first of all, inquiring as to a person's readiness to receive the Church's Sacraments of Initiation and then to arrange for it accordingly. We do this when and as it is appropriate and welcomed by the person whom we are evangelizing. By now of course, we have already (hopefully!) established a relationship with the person such that we are something of a spiritual mentor or sponsor; taking this to the next level, then, means inviting that person to join an RCIA program (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults). As we probably already know, what RCIA entails is a formalized, structured course of catechetical instruction on the faith and morals of the Catholic Church. Here at St. Peter, RCIA meets weekly, and the presentations and discussions are facilitated by myself and Deacon Nick Senger.

But each person going through RCIA needs a sponsor, a spiritual mentor – in other words, someone who makes this pilgrim's journey of faith along with them. That is a very practical way of going about facilitating a person's incorporation into the Mystical Body of Christ that is the Church.

Another practical means of facilitating this incorporation is actually to accompany a person in his or her attendance at Mass. Supposing that he or she actually takes a leap of faith and shows up for Mass; you can help facilitate his or her new (or renewed) involvement in the sacramental life of the Church simply by greeting him or her at the church doors when he or she arrives, by actually sitting with him or her in the pew during Mass, and so on.

And another great means of facilitating a person's incorporation into the Church: joining a Bible Study group together. Here at St. Peter, we have a Bible Study group that will meet during the day, and our evening Bible Study group will resume in the spring. Studying the Bible together is yet another great way of helping someone ease into the Church, for we are a people of the Word – and the Word is Jesus Christ, Who is revealed to us both in Sacrament and also in the written word of Sacred Scripture.

Our saint of the month, then, is St. Jerome, the quintessential biblical scholar. He famously taught that ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ. His Memorial is September 30, and so as September unfolds and his Memorial draws near, we turn to him prayer, ask for his intercession, and follow his holy example of studying Sacred Scripture so as to be strengthened in our faith in the Lord, thus facilitating our own growth in the Church as well as that of others.

- Fr. Lewis