



# Light of the World News

September 2010

Bringing the Light of Christ into the world through a comprehensive Parish Evangelization Process

## A Message From Monsignor Dan Hermes



My Dear Brothers & Sisters,

I'd like to share with you a thought about evangelization as the greatest act of charity we can give. Sounds like a mouthful -- let me try to explain.

None of us would pass by a serious accident on the highway without offering to help, calling for 911, or doing whatever we could to assist that person in need. None of us would walk by a starving child or adult without stopping to offer money for food, or trying to get help to them.

In exactly the same way, all of us are called by Christ and by our Baptism to the greatest act of love we can possibly perform--to bring others to Jesus; to share His Good News with them. I'll bet all of us know people who are floundering terribly, who are filled with sadness, emptiness, even desperation because they are "looking for love in all the wrong places." How can we see them, and see their sad plight, and say nothing? Do nothing?

You might say, "But Msgr., if I do that they'll throw it right back in my face." Maybe, but they will have heard. The seed will have been planted. You will have thrown them the life raft, and they will remember your love, your concern, and your own faith, and at some point will say, "I want some of that peace, that joy, for myself!"

There is no greater love we can give a person than to bring them to the Person of Jesus Christ and His Church. St. James in his epistle says, "If you see someone without a coat, and say to him, 'Take care, be well,' without helping him, how can the love of Christ be abiding in you?"

We could paraphrase that to say, "If you see someone struggling, trying to live their life without God and you say to them, 'Be well, have a good life,' without telling them about Jesus Christ, how can the love of Christ be abiding in you?" It's true -- there is no greater act of love we are capable of than that of bringing another human being to Jesus Christ.

God bless you and your loved ones--this Fall and always!

Sincerely, in Our Lord Jesus Christ,

Msgr. Dan Hermes

## Upcoming Retreats

### 5 New Parishes To Start The LOTW Process!

**There are 21 LOTW Retreats scheduled during the next 3 months!** Five new parishes will experience the Retreat for the first time during weekend of October 22. These include:

- New "cluster" parishes in the Rockford, IL Diocese: St. Joseph (Apple River), St. Joseph (Lena), & St. Ann (Warren)
- A new parish from the Joliet, IL Diocese: SS Peter & Paul (Naperville)
- A new Australian parish from the Diocese of Broken Bay: Catholic Parish of Lower North Shore.

The following is a list of retreats and dates. Please pray for these parishes, retreat teams and all people called to attend.

#### September

St. Edward	Shelton, WA	9/17
St. Patrick	Kansas City, KS	9/17

#### October

St. Patrick	Wadsworth, IL	10/8
Most Pure Heart of Mary	Topeka, KS	10/9
St. Rita of Cascia	Aurora, IL	10/15
Cathedral of the Risen Christ	Lincoln, NE	10/16
Our Lady of Good Counsel	Aurora, IL	10/16
Resurrection	Wayne, IL	10/16
Catholic Parish of Lower North Shore	Narenburn, NSW AUS	10/22
St. Henry	Gresham, OR	10/22
St. Joseph, St. Joseph, St. Ann	Apple River, IL	10/22
Holy Family	Rockford, IL	10/23
SS Peter & Paul	Naperville, IL	10/23
St. Jude	Joliet, IL	10/23

#### November

Mother Teresa	Topeka, KS	11/5
St. Thomas the Apostle	Crystal Lake, IL	11/5
St. Luke	Temple, TX	11/12
St. Mary	Plano, IL	11/13
St. Patrick	Yorkville, IL	11/13
St. Thomas the Apostle-Spanish	Crystal Lake, IL	11/19
St. Matthew	Topeka, KS	11/19

## “A Puddle Story” By Bernie Oberdick

As Music Director for St. Patrick’s Parish in Wadsworth, IL, I have made it a point to attend both a retreat and a continuing education course every year. In February, 2005 I was getting ready to leave for my retreat when I received a call that it had been cancelled. I had organized substitute musicians, kid carpooling, sitters etc. I was really in need of a spiritual refilling. I was “all dressed up with no place to go.”

I called Jim, a Music Director friend of mine, to whine. He immediately invited me to his parish Light of the World Retreat that was being held that weekend. Same dates and times; same distance...sounded good. “Who is giving the retreat? Who are your guest speakers?” I asked. He responded, “No guest speakers, just our parishioners stepping up to speak”. Now I’m thinking, “Ummm...I don’t think so; a whole weekend in a tiny town in Wisconsin in a small parish ...what on earth can they tell me that I don’t already know?” Jim sensed my hesitation and told me, “You might as well...your bags are packed and subs are set...just come...if nothing else you will have some good ‘away’ time.” So I agreed. How little did either of us know what his invitation and my “Yes” would lead to.

Well, I showed up with a HUGE chip on my shoulder. I sat politely, but in my head I was criticizing everything. The talks were simple & filled with material I already knew. The shepherd groups were quaint but not “life changing.” The food was good and the people were very kind, but I couldn’t wait for the weekend to be over. . .

. . . Then came the end of Mass and it happened. As over 200 people with candles came into the church 1 by 1 to surround me with their love, light, & prayer, I finally got it! It wasn’t about increasing in knowledge, but in love. It was about knowing Jesus in my heart, not just in my head. And suddenly all those people became the loving arms of my God engulfing me in love - more love than I have ever felt! I was overcome and crying uncontrollably. Then I saw the crucifix above the altar. I knew right then that Jesus had given his life for me! I knew it in the depths of my heart; with my whole being.

I sat there unable to stand, sing, or even talk (a first for me). I was a sobbing puddle in the front pew of a church surrounded by people who had only just met me, but were tending to me and helping me as if I were their sister. At 47, I finally understood God’s love! My heart broke open and I felt God’s love for me personally. . . My God sent His Son Jesus to die for me! And He sent all of my brothers & sisters to be signs of Christ’s love for me!

1 John 4:16 tells us that those who dwell in love dwell in God. I am at home now with the Lord: face to face with the truth that God loves me; heart to heart with my Savior-Brother Jesus; embraced by my Friend & Guide the Holy Spirit. I am God’s beloved daughter. He is madly in love with me! What I could never comprehend in my mind now overwhelms my very being. . . pass the tissues, I’m going back into “puddle mode.”

## LOTW & Our New Parish By Mary Zachariasen

Mother Teresa of Calcutta Catholic Church was established in July, 2004 to serve residents of the North Topeka community in the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas. As with any new parish, the immediate challenge was to build community (as well as a building!). In May of last year, our prayers were answered in a special way.

At the invitation of our Bishop, Archbishop Joseph Naumann, our Pastor, Fr. William Bruning, and 12 parishioners from Mother Teresa parish attended a Light of the World Evangelization Leadership Retreat. Wow! What an experience that was! The Holy Spirit awakened in all of us a renewed love for the Lord and a desire to share that with the rest of our parish family.

Approximately 100 people from Mother Teresa Parish have now attended one of the two retreats we’ve had since May 2009 with similar results, and although the gifts received from the Holy Spirit are varied according to individual needs, they are manifested similarly. We have seen an increase in daily Mass attendance and Confession, and we have also seen an increased desire to serve those in need, both in our parish community and the community in which we live. In bringing us closer to the heart of our Lord, Light of the World has brought us together as the local “Body of Christ.” We are not merely fellow parishioners, but truly *brother and sisters!*

It is my hope and prayer that all Mother Teresa parishioners, and all my brothers and sisters everywhere, come to know and live the love of Christ through the Light of the World Evangelization Process, and in turn bring the true Light of the World to all mankind.



### From the Directors: Mike & Lori Pacer

Dear Friends,

Msgr. Hermes re-echoes the challenge of Jesus to proclaim the Good News to all. If this seems daunting, perhaps it is because we are not properly prepared to do so. Obviously, the first step of preparation is to live as lovers of Jesus. We must receive the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation regularly, pray and study our faith daily, and call upon the power of the Holy Spirit. There is, however, also a practical step we must take. We must prepare our personal witness.

All good evangelizers living in the “trenches” (i.e. home, school, work, etc.) are ready to give a 3 minute witness at the “drop of a hat.” The form is simple: (1) I was; (2) God did; (3) I am. What was your life like before you truly embraced a personal relationship with your Living Savior? How did God act in your life to convert your heart? What is your life like now that you strive every day to make Jesus the Lord of your life? This is not proselytizing, but a loving, humble sharing of yourself and your Lord. You are not imposing, but proposing the ultimate truth – the saving power of our awesome God! You will win hearts and souls for Jesus. . . through love!

Your servants in Christ,

*Mike & Lori*

P.S. Remember, not a second over 3 minutes. If their heart is moved, they will ask for more. A lot more.

P.P.S. For extra credit, we challenge you to also prepare a 30 second testimony (also know as the “elevator witness” because you can “cast the net” before the elevator doors open on the next floor).

For information regarding Light of the World Evangelization Ministries, please check out our website: [lotwem.org](http://lotwem.org) or contact Mike Pacer [mpacer@lotwem.org](mailto:mpacer@lotwem.org) or Lori Pacer [lpacer@lotwem.org](mailto:lpacer@lotwem.org). LOTWEM Newsletters are published tri-annually.