Brighten Your Fall – and Your Life – with ‘Magnificat’ Classes
By Christine Corbett Conklin

As Fall officially begins and the days grow shorter and darker, it’s the perfect time to brighten your spiritual life!

Stop and think. When was the last time you attended a class, went to a lecture or read a book that deepened your Catholic Faith? (No, you can’t count those Catechism lessons in fourth grade!)

A new series of free Magnificat classes, in both English and Spanish, will begin next month at three sites around the Diocese of Yakima. The classes are designed to increase knowledge of the Catholic Faith, creed and doctrine of the Church. If wished, participants even may complete a certificate program over three years, making it possible to assist in parish ministry such as helping with Baptism, Marriage and Quinceanera preparations.

The Magnificat program is named in honor of the “Canticle of Mary” in which Blessed Mother proclaims, “my soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.” (Luke 1:46-55)

Half-day sessions will be held one Saturday per month, beginning in October and taking a break during the Christmas holidays, with a potluck lunch included. Locations are Holy Spirit Parish in Kennewick, St. Pius X Church in Quincy and St. Paul Cathedral School in Yakima. Come for an hour, stay for four hours, attend one session or all of them, as your schedule permits. Although the classes are free, an offering can be made.

To kick off the English-language series, at Holy Spirit Parish, on October 22, Father Daniel Steele will speak on “Sacraments”; Father Michael Brzezowski will discuss “Truth of Faith, Dogma”; and Steve Wilmes will talk about “Social Doctrine of the Church.” At this same site, on November 12, Father Jacob Davis will discuss “The Bible”; Father Peter Steele will cover “Apologetics & Ecumenism”; and Father Ricardo Villarreal will speak on “Mission of the Church.”

At St. Pius X Church, on October 29, Father Daniel Steele will discuss “Sacraments”; Father Michael Brzezowski, “Truth of Faith, Dogma”, and Steve Wilmes, “Social Doctrine of the Church.” Then, on November 19, Bishop Joseph Tyson will speak on “The Bible”; Father Peter Steele on “Apologetics & Ecumenism”; and Father Ricardo Villarreal on “Mission of the Church.”

At St. Paul Cathedral School, 1214 W. Chestnut Ave. in Yakima, classes will begin November 5, with Father Daniel Steele talking about “Sacraments” and Father Michael Brzezowski, “Truth of Faith, Dogma”; and Steve Wilmes, “Social Doctrine of the Church.” Then, on December 3, Bishop Joseph Tyson will discuss “The Bible”; Father Peter Steele on “Apologetics & Ecumenism”; and Father Ricardo Villarreal, “Mission of the Church.”

Why not plan now to attend one or more sessions? For a complete listing of the new series of Magnificat classes, visit yakinadiocese.org.
Dear Friends:

In his recent book titled, “Red, White, Blue and Catholic,” the author, Stephen White, makes the salient point that citizenship is not simply about what we do every four years when we vote for candidates running for public office. Rather our participation in the civil life of the country is something we do every day throughout the four-year presidential election cycle. If we wonder about the quality of candidates in public life on the national scene, we might also want to ask ourselves how we are being faithful citizens, year in and year out.

This means that our Faith grounds our choices. I hope this issue of our Central Washington Catholic gives you a sense of the rich learning opportunities to help inform our choices. We launch another year of MAGNIFICAT in Quincy, Kennewick and Yakima, providing catechetical leaders and teachers a chance to learn the basics of the Catholic Faith that they will be teaching in their catechetical and pastoral ministry.

Our annual CELEBRATION OF

Show Respect for Human Life

October is Respect Life Month, as proclaimed by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Join with fellow Catholics across the country as we pray for a new awareness of and vital respect for the sanctity of human life from conception through natural death.

Seriously consider the life issues as you vote in the coming city, county, state and national elections. Also, make your voice heard on issues such as proposed research by the National Institutes of Health, Office of Science Policy, regarding creation of “chimeras” – part-human, part-animal organisms. (See Diocese of Yakima website for more information.)

Here is one intercessory prayer offered for this month by the USCCB:

“For Catholics nationwide: That we renew our commitment this Respect Life Month to protecting human life regardless of capabilities or age; We pray to the Lord: Lord hear our prayer.”

Annual Collection Supports Missions

Parishes throughout the Diocese of Yakima will take up a special collection October 8-9 for the 90th World Mission Sunday.

“We have the opportunity to change the world through merciful acts: our prayers and sacrifices accompanying the good works carried out in Mission Churches across the globe,” said Bishop Joseph Tyson.

This annual gift, gathered through the World Mission Sunday collection for the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, supports missionaries serving in more than 1,111 mission dioceses, each of which fervently needs help to provide service and spiritual comfort for the poorest and most vulnerable, sanctifying them with the Sacraments, and offering them the Lord’s hope and peace.

“As Pope Francis reminds us in his Message for World Mission Sunday 2016, ‘Let us not close our hearts within our own particular concerns, but let us open them to all of humanity,’” Bishop Tyson added. “May you be blessed with a spirit of God’s mercy through His mission, in this Jubilee Year of Mercy and always!”

Show Respect for Human Life

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If you have been abused or victimized by a member of the Catholic clergy, please believe in the possibility for hope and help and healing. We encourage you to come forward and speak out.

The Yakima Diocese has a sexual abuse hotline for those who wish to report some incident concerning that issue as regards a bishop, priest, deacon or diocesan employee or volunteer.

(888) 276-4490
St. Joseph-Marquette Retreat Builds Community and Faith

St. Joseph-Marquette Catholic School in Yakima began the school year with a morning retreat, bringing together middle school students in a spirit of community and Faith-building.

Ninety-seven students participated in the September 1 event, which included a presentation on the life of St. Teresa of Calcutta by Father Felipe Pulido, pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Yakima.

Students learned of the life of Saint Teresa, who was canonized September 4 in Rome. They came to better understand how she lived out the virtues of faith, hope and love, and the significant role that prayer played in her life. Students then discussed how they, too, could practice the living faith modeled by this remarkable saint.

To begin putting their lesson into practice, the group went out into the community later in the day, to assist with various projects for the good of others. They sorted food at Northwest Harvest (see above photo) and also made sandwiches for the hungry, among other efforts.
Coming Events...

The Beginning Experience’ Retreat Planned
Anyone trying to cope with being widowed, separated or divorced is invited to attend a weekend retreat, October 28-30, at Immaculate Heart Retreat Center in Spokane.

“The Beginning Experience” is designed to serve individuals of all faiths, offering techniques for developing healthier family relationships, and dealing with the pain and anger of loss.

For more information, contact Marlene at (509) 534-1797.

Renew Our Culture Through Mary
Increase your devotion to Mary and learn how to better imitate her by attending a Schoenstott Marian Conference, November 18-20, at St. Joseph Church in Kennewick.

The conference will focus on renewing our culture by becoming “missionaries with Mary” in daily life. This can involve activities as simple as prayer, forming a rosary campaign and/or talking with others in apostolic outreach.

Bishop Robert Vasa of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, California, will offer the opening Mass.

The registration cost, through October 5, is $50 per person, $90 per married couple, or $10 for a high school student attending with a parent. Further details on registration and hotel discounts are available at www.pnwconference.com or by calling Deanna at (541) 667-8537, Marge at (541) 567-3805 or, for Spanish, Martha at (509) 366-6440.

Mass for Deceased Priests Scheduled
Mark your calendar now for the annual Mass for Deceased Priests. The Mass is scheduled for 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, November 22 at St. Paul Cathedral in Yakima.

This is a wonderful opportunity to pray for the souls of the many dedicated priests and bishops who have faithfully served the Diocese of Yakima through the years.

Holy Land Tour Set for February
All are welcome to join a 10-day Holy Land Catholic Tour scheduled for February 13-22, 2017, and led by Deacon Mikhail Alnajjar of Christ the King Church in Richland.

The pilgrimage will include visits to the place of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River, the Dead Sea, Jericho, Bethlehem, the hills of the Beatitudes, Jerusalem and numerous other sites.

For a tour brochure and additional information, please send your home address and request to Deacon Alnajjar at: dmikhail925@gmail.com.

Celebration of Faith To Honor ‘Champions of Catholic Education’

Six parishioners from across the Diocese of Yakima have been named as Champions of Catholic Education, with awards to be presented at the Celebration of Faith event, October 8 in Yakima.

Pamela Leseman of Ephrata, Emily Appert of Yakima, Sylvia Billing of Kennewick, Mike and Anne Concienne of Grandview, and Belia Sanchez Torres of East Wenatchee are the award winners to be honored at next month’s gathering at the Yakima Convention Center.

Father John Shaw and Father Bill Shaw of White Swan, longtime priests of the Diocese, also will be recognized for their tireless devotion to Catholic education during this annual event sponsored by the Central Washington Catholic Foundation.

Leseman, who has devoted 22 years of service to St. Rose of Lima School in Ephrata, will receive the St. Thomas Aquinas Award which recognizes a benefactor of Catholic education. Among her accomplishments, she has helped to develop the school’s annual auction which now raises more than $100,000 per year.

Appert and Billing each will receive the St. John Baptist de La Salle Award which honors Catholic school educators. Appert is in her ninth year of teaching at St. Joseph-Marquette School in Yakima, where she has transformed the middle school religion program, involving students in everything from prayer and Latin chants to community service projects. Billing, who has taught at St. Joseph School in Kennewick since 1979, is a dedicated professional who regards her work as her vocation, encouraging Faith development and participating in many school events during and outside of school hours.

The St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Award will be presented to the Conciennes and Sanchez Torres as education leaders. The Conciennes have been teaching religious education at Blessed Sacrament Parish in Grandview for 33 years, since they were married at the church. They began a Confirmation preparation ministry their first year of marriage which has grown to include 50-80 youth each year. Sanchez Torres will be honored for guiding the religious education program at Holy Apostles Church in East Wenatchee for 14 years. She also is a Family Advocate at Lewis and Clark Elementary in Wenatchee.

The Fathers Shaw will be recognized as special honorees for their combined service in some 24 parishes throughout the Diocese of Yakima. In line with their dedication to Catholic education, they have been active in Native American Ministry, pro-life advocacy and offering of the Traditional Latin Mass, in addition to many other endeavors.

The Celebration of Faith, which also will feature a talk on the legacy of Catholic education by Father Patrick Howell, S.J., of Seattle University’s Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture, is open to the public.

A reception begins at 5:30 p.m., to be followed by dinner and the program. Admission is $100 per person, with proceeds providing tuition assistance for students attending Catholic schools, financial support for parish religious education programs, and Catholic college scholarships.

For more information or to register, visit www.cwcatholicfoundation.org or call (509) 972-3732.