



CENTRAL WASHINGTON CATHOLIC

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JUNE 2021 *Veller*

We All Can Play A Role in Attracting Young People to Church

By Christine Corbett Conklin

Do you think that the Catholic Church should do more to draw young people into the Faith? Guess what?

“WE are the Church, the Body of Christ,” observed Joel Stepanek, vice president for parish services of the Life Teen program, an international Catholic youth ministry outreach. “We can build really great programs, ministries, buildings.” However, “the teen’s experience of the broader parish is very important,” he explained. “We need healthy parishioners, working to be healthy disciples.”

It can be a frightening world out there for young people, said Stepanek, who spoke with clergy and staff of the Diocese of Yakima earlier this month on the topic of youth and Church. Most members of “Gen Z,” as it’s called, were born between 1995 and 2010. One of their earlier memories would be of the effects of 9-11.

“It was a paradigm-shifting moment in U.S. history,” he said. “They’ve grown up in a world that is not safe, with the threat of domestic and international terrorism, school violence.” He gave the example of one Dad who bought his kids bullet-proof backpacks which could easily and quickly be converted into jackets.

“They (young people) are looking for places that are safe,” noted



Photo courtesy of Pexels-Sharefaith

Stepanek in a phone interview from Mesa, Arizona. However, many regard the Church as “intolerant,” with a loss of communication and many restrictions, while those of us who are a little older instead “see holiness as freedom.” Young people may feel that “the Church doesn’t care about the kind of things I care about.”

Teenagers also can have a very negative impression when they hear adults, in person or online, engage in irate verbal warfare over political and/or sociological issues.

“What does this say about a person who follows Jesus?,” Stepanek questioned.

And what approach do we use with young people? Adults can sometimes push teenagers and younger children away, either through a type of “transference” — trying to reshape their lives in light of past mistakes

adults themselves have made — or even by becoming overly annoyed by children who are not perfectly behaved in church, Stepanek added. Glaring at a young person does not help to welcome him or her to Church!

Instead, Stepanek recommends smiling at young people, saying “hi,” and welcoming them to Church as opportunities arise. “They want to see a community of people who are joyful and engaged, even in the midst of adversity.” Instead

of joining in angry diatribes with others, try channeling that energy into, “How might I serve my community?”

Even though we’re not “of this world,” we’re still “in the world,” Stepanek said, and we must be aware of reaching out in love to those around us. Embrace “a posture of listening and compassion first,” he advised, noting that this does not need to compromise our own principles and beliefs.

Gen Z will be instrumental in solidifying our culture “when the dust settles” from all of the current upheaval, he concluded. “They will shape (our society) for the next 20 to 30 years.”

Instead of turning from them, let’s “accompany” them as they grow and mature. “We want to reach them because of their salvation,” he stressed.

October Cornerstone Conference Seeks to Form Disciples

The Bishops of Washington State invite you to attend the virtual Cornerstone Catholic Conference on October 30. The theme of this biennial conference is “Forming Disciples for Life and Justice.” There is no cost to register and attend this virtual event. For information visit: <https://tinyurl.com/2y2mr2h3>.

Designed to be accessible to both English and Spanish speakers, this year’s Cornerstone Catholic Conference features keynote speakers in both languages. Father Robert Spitzer and Gloria Purvis will present in English, with Spanish translations available, and Father

Agustino Torres and Brenda Noriega will present in Spanish. The five bishops of Washington State also will speak on various topics during a Bishops’ Panel. Each of the speakers will conduct a question and answer session.

During the conference, attendees

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A Message from Bishop Tyson...

Dear Friends:

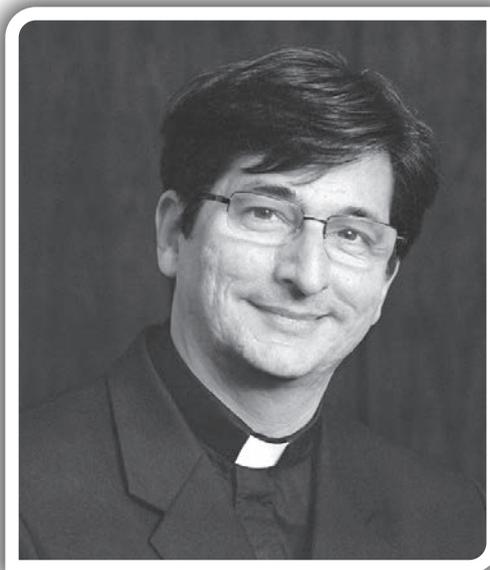
The summer pause is upon us. And it is much needed. We have come through a bruising election this past year. We have dealt with conflicting views around masks and vaccines tied to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have deep divisions in the English-speaking side of the Church all across the United States. Our current issue of the *Central Washington Catholic* invites us to pause.

Our "Saints of Summer" quiz invites us to consider those who have gone before us bearing the light of Christ in times perhaps even more challenging than ours. Our youth have been particularly affected. On Holy Saturday, our seminarian Danny Sanchez worked with youth leaders from the lower Yakima Valley on a retreat. There were 85 youth. For many, this was the first real social gathering they had been to for quite some time. I asked a high school sophomore what his high school experience was like. He said he did not know. He had not yet spent a full day in a high school building. Half of his high school has been remote learning via Zoom. How do we practice a religious pause in the midst of such challenges?

One of the key moments this summer for me was spending time in the H2A worker housing at the old Fairbridge Hotel here in Yakima. H2A workers are legal temporary workers from Mexico. They may spend anywhere from four to ten months here. They are away from their families. They are also away from the support of their local parish and faith communities. The H2A system may not be perfect. But it does allow for our many agricultural employers to have a steady work force and not try to guess who has legitimate documents and who does not.

For a few weeks, the seminarians of the Diocese of Yakima, Father Jesús Mariscal and I were able to live with the workers, in a sense embedded in their lives. We would get up early in the morning. Our religious sisters from Mexico would arrive from their convent early, too. We would greet the workers as they left for packing plants and orchards. We would remind them of the opportunities we offered to nurture their Faith and develop their lives.

On Mondays, the religious sisters teach prayer, spirituality and sacraments. Tuesday is English as a Second Language. A volunteer who teaches at Davis High School and is a member of the St. Paul Cathedral choir comes over. On Wednesday, there is Mass. Thursday, we have Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament and time for



Bishop Joseph Tyson

confessions. Friday is Bible Study. Saturday is generally movie night – something from FORMED in Spanish. Sunday afternoon, we have a chance for folks to go to the mall and shop. On Sunday night, there is Mass as well.

Of course, the big questions do not go away. What to do about Catholics in public life who do not support the Church's public policy on abortion and other important issues? How do we build back our parish communities in the aftermath of COVID-19? How do we support our people socially and economically who have suffered losses as a result of the COVID-19 shutdowns?

But the summer pause gives a chance to back off the big questions. Ideology can be replaced by simple pastoral care. Parishes can become less self-referential and more mission-centered. I am so grateful for the many ways the parishes in the Wenatchee Valley lean out to our itinerant and migrant communities in Monitor and at Brender Creek in Cashmere. I am grateful for the way the Yakima-area priests are bending their parishes outward in mission to all the parishioners, including our H2A workers.

I am grateful for the many ways parish leaders are personally contacting and checking in on parishioners they have not seen. I am grateful for the bridge building that occurs between parishioners of different opinions and across our language and cultural lines. I am grateful for the simple pastoral care that still occurs day by day across the parishes here in Central Washington.

In an address to us bishops here in the United States June 16, Archbishop Christophe Pierre told a charming story of going on walks with his sibling and his dad.

His dad would say to them, "if you want to walk fast, you will be alone. But if you walk together, you will walk farther."

This ties very closely to Pope Francis and the upcoming synod in Rome on "synodality." The disciples of Emmaus walked together. They were deeply discouraged about the death of Jesus. Not only were they walking the wrong direction – away from Jerusalem – but they were disoriented spiritually. Our own times of trouble and division are not unique. One only needs to read the letters of St. Paul to the Corinthians to see a Church deeply divided.

The Book of Hebrews, often attributed to St. Paul as well, notes: "Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings; for it is well that the heart be strengthened by grace..."

From my email inbox and from the individual conversations I held with each priest individually for a half hour as well as from the deanery conversations with the priests this spring, I am deeply aware that so many of you reading this have sharply different views. This is more the case among our English speakers than our Spanish speakers. My hope and prayer for all of us is that we can pause this summer. We can consider the saints who have gone before us. We can imitate them by the way we walk with each other even in the midst of spiritual and social tensions. We can meditate and stay close to Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever.

With every best wish and blessing,

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima

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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.

October Cornerstone Conference Seeks to Form Disciples *Continued from page 1*

will choose two faith-centered workshops to attend — one in the morning and one in the afternoon.

Workshops will be presented in both English and Spanish. Topics include Catholic Social Teaching; COVID-19: Lessons Learned and Future Opportunities; Faith in Action: Advocacy and Faithful Citizenship; Youth Ministry; Parenting and Pregnancy Support (PREPARES); and Pro-Life Education. Workshops will also include a live question and answer session.

Additionally, the conference will feature two musicians: Martín Valverde and Pedro Rubalcava.

To access the conference, please register: <https://tinyurl.com/45th7y8f>. While there is no cost to attend this virtual conference, attendees are invited to make a donation to assist in covering expenses. Those making a donation of \$75 or more will have first online access to keynote addresses and workshops immediately once the conference

concludes. Otherwise, workshops and speakers will be accessible to all 60 days following the conference on the WSCC YouTube channel, available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yupcjr9e>.

While we will not be conducting a large-scale gathering for the conference this year, parishes and other groups are encouraged to gather locally in small groups for viewing.

During the conference, there will also be opportunities to visit

numerous exhibits virtually to learn about faith-based organizations and sponsor organizations. The conference will conclude with a live-streamed Mass from St. James Cathedral in Seattle.

The Cornerstone Catholic Conference is organized by the Washington State Catholic Conference (WSCC), the public policy voice of the five bishops of Washington state. The web address is: www.wacatholics.org.

Will You Help Our Local Food Bank?

St. Vincent Centers Food Bank in Yakima has an urgent need for volunteers.

The food bank, a program of Catholic Charities Serving Central Washington, has been supporting families who are struggling to put food on the table, for decades. Over the past year, the number of people using the food bank has increased and more volunteers are

needed.

The food bank is open Tuesday and Friday mornings and is staffed by individuals, families and college students who give of their time to help others. For more information on volunteering, visit <https://catholiccharitiescw.org/services/involvement/volunteer-opportunities> or call Becki Lambert at 509-965-7100, ext. 1196.



Celebration of Faith 2021
Saturday, October 9th, 2021

More information coming soon.

Check out our website for the Spring Newsletter and to learn more about upcoming events at:
<https://cwcatholicfoundation.org>



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How Many of the 'Saints of Summer' Can You Name?

By Christine Corbett Conklin

During the summer months, the Catholic Church honors many saints with solemnities, feast days and memorials. Following are just a few of these. How many can you name, from resource information provided through catholic.org? The answers follow, at the end.



Do you know who this is?

June 24. This day we honor the son of Elizabeth whose birth was proclaimed by an angel. He was the “voice crying in the wilderness preparing the way” for the coming of Jesus.

July 1. Born in the 1700s, this saint became a Franciscan priest. He is known for establishing missions in California, and teaching Native American converts to farm, raise cattle and do arts and crafts.

July 6. This young Italian woman died a martyr, refusing to submit to a cruel physical attack. She forgave her attacker before she died and the man later repented for his actions and became a lay brother.

July 14. Our first Native American saint, this young woman converted to

Catholicism and went to a community south of Montreal. She lived a life of sacrifice, prayer and devotion. Her case for sainthood was advanced through a miraculous cure of a Washington State boy.

July 22. Jesus cast seven demons out of this woman when He met her. She likely watched the crucifixion from a distance along with the other women who followed Christ during His ministry. She was

the first witness to His resurrection. In 2016, Pope Francis raised her celebration from memorial to feast.

July 26. This couple was promised by an angel that they would have a child: the Blessed Virgin Mary. They raised their daughter to have a love and devotion for God, and are role models for parents.

August 4. This French priest realized that many of his countrymen were “ignorant or indifferent to religion” due to the French Revolution. A “champion of the poor,” he spent many hours hearing confessions and preaching to bring people back to God, drawing thousands of pilgrims.

August 14. A Polish priest, he promoted devotion to the Virgin Mary,

influenced by a vision of her at a young age. He formed the Militia Immaculata and worked for conversion of sinners and “enemies of the Church.” He sheltered refugees of World War II, was arrested by the Gestapo and volunteered to face death by starvation, taking the place of another man.

August 15. This day marks the end of the earthly life of our most revered saint, making it very clear that she would be welcomed in Heaven!

August 23. Born in Peru, this saint was named Isabel Flores de Olivia, but came to be known by a nickname for her beauty. She led a life of chastity, piety and prayer, often performing acts of penance and sacrifice.

August 27 and 28. These two saints offer inspiration for parents everywhere. After years of “wicked living and false beliefs,” he had a sincere conversion and went on to become a bishop and lead a holy life. His transformation is often credited to her many years of prayers for him, after being told by a bishop that “the child of those tears shall never perish.”

ANSWERS: June 24, St. John the Baptist; July 1, St. Junipero Serra; July 6, St. Maria Goretti; July 14, St. Kateri Tekakawitha; July 22, St. Mary Magdalene; July 26, St. Joachim and Anne; August 4, St. John Vianney; August 14, St. Maximilian Kolbe; August 15, Assumption of Mary; August 23, St. Rose of Lima; August 27 and 28, St. Monica and St. Augustine.

Make Space in Your Lives for Gratitude and Joy

By Caitlin Bootsma, Consultant to Virtus

When times are tough, expressions like “the glass is half full, not half empty,” or “stay on the sunny side,” can seem trite. Yet, much of the time, it is true that we can choose joy, even amidst very real struggles.

This shift doesn’t happen automatically, but here are a few ways to start making space for gratitude and joy:

- Acknowledge what is bothering you: This may seem counter-intuitive, but pretending to yourself that nothing is wrong won’t actually lift your spirits. Once you acknowledge the problem, then you can focus on what you can change.

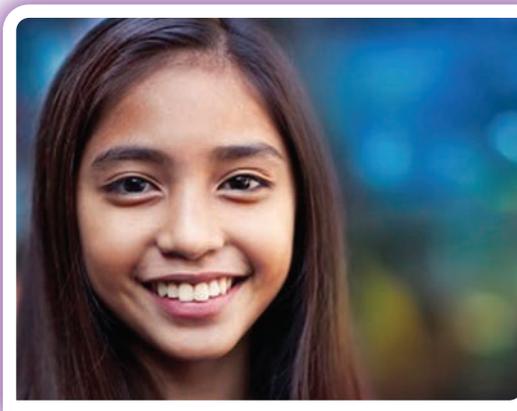
- Commit to life-giving daily habits: What little actions make you feel alive and hopeful? Maybe it’s a short walk around the block. Perhaps it’s a perfectly brewed cup of coffee and a few minutes to read. Or, standing up and stretching from your desk and walking to the mailbox. Whether it’s taking a relaxing nightly bath, watching the sunset, or playing a song on the piano, making

space for something that gives you joy is an important part of a daily routine.

- Express gratitude: Take time to write down what you are grateful for, or make it part of your family dinner routine.

Recognizing the good things doesn’t erase the bad, but it does give us a wider perspective on life!

- Be intentional about media consumption: It is possible that a certain news channel or social media is contributing to your unhappiness? Assess what media you usually consume each day—from podcasts to news articles—and decide what serves your life and



Focus on the good.

what you’d be better off without.

- Spend time in community: Which people, initiatives or things are most important to you? Spend time with family, friends, and the Lord because you love them. Even if all you can manage right now is a quick walk with a family member or friend, or a carry-out food date with

your spouse, these are opportunities to reconnect to the most important people in your life.

These small changes can have big ripple effects. Together, we have the opportunity to choose joy!

Note: Virtus provides safe environment training materials to the three dioceses in Washington State as well as to many church organizations throughout the United States.