



ENCOUNTER

Evangelization and Catechesis of Children, Youth & Families

Office for Evangelization and Catechesis
Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

Winter 2017

GREETINGS FROM THE OFFICE FOR EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS

Together **E**ach **A**chieves **M**ore! This was the motto that the principal announced on the first day of school of my first year of teaching. She was inviting us to understand that if we worked together and shared our gifts, talents and resources, and if we supported one another and operated out of a common vision, we and our students would do great things.

I have never forgotten that motto. It is one that has stood the test of time throughout my years as an educator. Whether in the classroom, as a curriculum consultant, principal, superintendent or here in my role in the Office for Evangelization and Catechesis, TEAM has served as a motivator and the inspiration for moving forward.

Together **E**ach **A**chieves **M**ore! This is especially true with this edition of *Encounter*. The success of the newsletter depends

on the contributions of numerous people from dioceses all over the country who so generously and willingly share the success stories of their work. There are stories from the dioceses of Gatineau, Edmonton, Toronto, Grand Falls, St-Jean-Longueuil, Corner Brook, St. John's and beyond, and each demonstrates the importance of working together in order to achieve a common goal.

It is in these pages and in the stories they tell that we are reminded of the words of Pope Francis: "The Church which 'goes forth' is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice." (*Evangelii Gaudium* 24)

Together **E**ach **A**chieves **M**ore!

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"Catechesis is a responsibility of the entire Christian community. Christian initiation, indeed, should not be the work of catechists and priests alone, but of the whole community of the faithful."

(*General Directory for Catechesis*, no. 220)

THE MISSIONARY SHIFT OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES – A STUDY DAY IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF GATINEAU

Recently, about 70 people from all parts of the Archdiocese of Gatineau braved the snowy January weather to gather for a day of study to help us look at how Pope Francis’s call to a pastoral and missionary conversion in the Church can be implemented in our diocese. Marie Chrétien, pastoral coordinator in the Archdiocese of Quebec, was invited to present a document issued by the Quebec bishops, *The Missionary Shift of Christian Communities*. The presentation did not shy away from the urgency of this needed shift – what is at stake is not only the existence of individual parishes, but the very capacity to continue to proclaim the Gospel in Quebec. This was not a surprise to the people in the room. This sober look at where we are as a Church in Quebec did not lead to a sense of despair, but rather a deep conviction that we are called to dig deeper into the source of our mission, the love of the Trinity, in order to proclaim the love of God in a world that is in such great need of that love. It is in this context that **Archbishop Paul-André Durocher presented a reflection on the evolution of the Church’s understanding of its mission: evangelization and solidarity (click here)**.

Participants were invited to gather in small groups to discuss concrete steps they could take to focus more on evangelization and solidarity. They were asked to start with a reflection of what Christian communities had to *stop doing*, and *what activities were not helpful*, in taking this missionary shift. This solicited great discussion. People who had never met one another were quickly able to identify the activities that they have to stop doing to spend more time and resources on evangelization and solidarity. They were able to name the need to spend less time focusing on buildings and fundraising in order to provide more opportunities for adults to grow in their faith. As one participant noted, “I hope that people can go back into

their respective milieus and ask your two questions when choices present themselves: Does it help people develop a living relationship with Jesus Christ? And does it help transform the world according to the vision of Jesus Christ? I know that I will be printing out those questions for the parish council. I will laminate them to put in the middle of the table at every meeting. It takes a concerted effort to change what we do, and part of that is putting in place a good process of ongoing discernment.”

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CAMP OSELIA – PLANTING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE

Made in the image and likeness of God, the human race has been entrusted with the stewardship of all of God’s creation. In a world where rapid industrialization is valued above all else, and despite genuine efforts to the contrary, our culture has shifted its primary focus away from the vital care we need to give our surroundings and our neighbours.

Camp Oselia* is a ministry of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton. We have adopted the teachings and principles of Pope Francis’s encyclical *Laudato Si’* – On Care for Our Common Home – to inspire everyone who comes to us to exercise our God-given mandate to be good stewards of the Earth.

Our new C.O.R.E. Program (Camp Oselia: Restoration Earth) is a two-and-a-half day program for students, particularly Grade 6, which was developed with resources and input from Development and Peace and the Edmonton Catholic and Elk Island Catholic School Districts.

Through the lens of our faith, we offer instruction in co-operative leadership and Church teaching on social justice, emphasizing the importance of living sustainably and collaboratively. We shed light on how our consumerist mentality affects us and our local and world communities. In addition, we still find time to engage in classic camp activities such as archery, singing around campfires, and playing a variety of sports and games. All this is done in the context of personal and communal prayer and reflection.

“For many of my students, this may have been a life-changing experience that they will not have again for a long time.”—Krista Long, Junior High Teacher, St. Catherine School, Edmonton

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* The Ukrainian word oselia means “a transitional dwelling with a view to a longer-lasting abode.”



Teachers and staff reminiscing after a session of the C.O.R.E. Program



Students and staff learning together and working in the ecological garden

FROM IRAQ TO GRAND FALLS: WELCOMING A REFUGEE FAMILY

On September 21, 2016, the first day of autumn, the diocese of Grand Falls in Newfoundland welcomed a family from Iraq who had been living as refugees in Turkey for the previous three years. The diocese had been on a waiting list for a number of years to receive a refugee family. When we were finally approved, we had only a matter of days to get ready to welcome them at the Gander airport.

Our family is composed of three people: Faner, the father; Sahab, the mother; and Laya, their two-and-a-half-year-old daughter. They arrived in a strange country,

in a strange town, in the middle of the night. They knew just a few words of English, and carried their worldly possessions in a few small backpacks.

In the four months since they arrived, the family has been taking English classes, finding jobs to supplement their government stipend, getting their drivers' licences, and acclimatizing to Newfoundland weather! Their gratitude knows no bounds. The people of their new home city, both professionals and neighbours, have welcomed this family with open hearts and open arms. Our experience has been

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so positive with this young family that Bishop Daniels has given permission to welcome another refugee family as well as sponsor members of Faner's and Sahab's immediate family. We are most grateful to have this young family among us, and our refugee committee feels blessed to be able to provide a safe environment as well as the opportunity for this family to become successful Canadian citizens.

For more information, please contact:

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UNIVERSITY-AGE YOUTH ON A MISSION: ARCHDIOCESE OF TORONTO

Totus Tuus is a summer youth program in which teams of university-age missionaries travel to different parishes to run a week-long catechetical camp for youth entering grades 1 through 12. As Pope Paul VI said, “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 41). The missionaries not only teach the Catholic faith through engaging catechesis, but by their very lives bear witness to the Gospel. They lead the youth in prayer and model for them a life lived with frequent recourse to the sacraments. Additionally, the missionaries demonstrate their fun personalities through games, songs and skits. The youth participants get to see these young adults who are on fire with love for Jesus and are joyfully serving the Church, and this sows in their hearts a desire for a dynamic faith.

As a former Totus Tuus Missionary, I have witnessed firsthand the fruits of this

program in the parishes and in the lives of the missionaries. During training, I received solid catechesis and was immersed in prayer and the sacraments. The more I learned and experienced the faith, the deeper I fell in love with God. As my love deepened, I knew I wanted to live my life for Him alone. This discovery was a decisive turning point in my life because it set me on the path to strive for holiness and be a witness to the Gospel so that others may encounter Christ. When I was on mission in the parishes, I felt an indescribable joy and peace because I knew I was doing what I was called to do. Every day since this experience, I give myself again totally to Jesus through Mary in order to more fully say “yes” to His call.

For more information, please contact:

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A NEW ADVENTURE IN INTERGENERATIONAL CATECHESIS

The Diocese of St. Jean Longueuil, Quebec, has embarked on a new intergenerational model of catechesis. This new model, based on scripture, not only includes families with school-age children, but extends to toddlers and seniors, and indeed all members of our parish communities, thereby creating a welcoming, inclusive environment open to a lifelong experience of faith education.

The parishes of the diocese's Saint John Paul II Pastoral Unit recently had their first experience with these new Inclusive, Intergenerational Community Gatherings.

During this initial experience, participants listened to and reflected on the scripture reading from Mark 12:28-31 identifying the two greatest commandments. We then used the Blanket Exercise (Kairos Canada) to raise awareness of the story of the Indigenous peoples of Canada. All age groups learned together of the respect that Indigenous peoples have for the land, their community and their traditions. We heard of the hardship and sadness they experienced as well as the importance of listening to each other, developing healthy relationships, respecting people and tradition, and correcting past wrongs.

Following a short debriefing and a snack, participants were divided into groups according to age, where a number of age-appropriate activities and discussions took place.

It was very interesting to discover that the experience of the Indigenous people was not new to a few of the young teens. They shared their thoughts on how new ideas might be introduced while respecting existing customs and traditions. They felt that it was important to talk and to listen to others, keeping communications open. They expressed the importance of being respectful and of knowing when an apology is in order, and identified the dangers in generalizing.

Before dispersing, the group gathered together in prayer with a new understanding of the importance of respect, love and reconciliation.

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SAINTS ALIVE!

DIOCESE OF CORNER BROOK & LABRADOR

In the fall of 2016, after a comprehensive process of consultation and evaluation, a new resource was introduced to the catechetical program in our diocese. The program chosen was *Alive in Christ*, published by Our Sunday Visitor. We are now mid-way through the first year of use with this program and it is receiving great reviews from catechists and parents alike.

In preparing to introduce this resource, we decided to prepare a series of “saint cards”, one for each month of the catechetical year. The main idea was to use these cards as an attendance incentive, giving out one card each month to those in attendance and offering a prize to those who collected a complete set over the course of the year. A secondary purpose was to help children and parents reconnect with some heroes of our faith.

The resource itself does include profiles of saints in each chapter, but, given that it is an American publication, we wanted to present Canadian saints as well as saints of particular significance in our diocese to the parents and children in our programs. Thus, we have highlighted with our cards the two patron saints

of our diocese – Saint Thérèse de Lisieux and Saint Joseph – as well as Canadian Saints Kateri Tekakwitha, Marguerite Bourgeoys and Brother André. Catechists have been given the link to the CCCB Office for Evangelization and Catechesis for more information on these saints.

Most parishes are using these saint cards with great success. Children are asking for them at their monthly sessions and catechists are looking for them for themselves. One of the unexpected outcomes from this activity was the reconnecting of the generations... children, parents and grandparents talking about the heroes of our faith.

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ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S – FAMILY AND INTERGENERATIONAL CATECHESIS

The Winter 2016 edition of *Encounter* included an article from the Archdiocese of St. John's, Newfoundland, about recent catechetical initiatives started under the leadership of Archbishop Currie. On the First Sunday of Advent 2015, an exciting journey started with a new family catechetical initiative implemented throughout the Archdiocese: *Living Faith: A Family Resource*.

This family and intergenerational resource is available to people throughout the Archdiocese on a weekly basis. Certain key understandings remain at play.

There was a need to move away from school-based print textbook-type resources and create a resource that was more respectful of families and the realities of daily life – less school-centred and more suited to building, fostering and growing faith in the family. Resources needed to have a strong link to the Liturgy of the Word, the liturgical year and the life of the parish.

In this article, we would like to delve into and highlight some of the approaches being taken as we proceed through the Church's liturgical years.


Each weekly resource is similar in approach: A presentation and reflection of the weekly Sunday scriptures, followed by activities and ideas for families to share faith around these scriptures. As well, there are doctrinal links supporting the Church's life. Lastly, each week features profiles of how these scriptures and teachings are being lived in our world today and offers opportunities for dialogue and action about ways we all can bring the Good News to our world today.

As an exemplar, we will use the resource created for the 16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C, developed for use on July 10, 2016. Each week begins by focusing on the Gospel for the coming Sunday. This Gospel is about the Parable of the Good Samaritan. The Gospel is presented at the very beginning. Then a reflection is offered, highlighting some of the main messages and teachings presented to the faithful. Some are longer than others, but the emphasis is on presenting in a clear, simple and meaningful way. This week highlights the needs of strangers in our midst, God's love and human need.

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JULY 10, 2016


**LIVING FAITH
FAMILY RESOURCE**

 ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. JOHN'S

15th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Luke 10.25-37
The Parable of the Good Samaritan
Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.'
But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise.'

REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL:
In this parable, Jesus gives us powerful insight into God's love for us. We are called to share this same love, the love shown by the Good Samaritan to an unknown stranger, to the strangers living in our midst and all around our world. We are called to reflect on human needs in all our brothers and sisters and act with the response of God's merciful love.



The second page of the resource highlights some key messages in the Gospel and offers some activities that families, in their various forms in today's society, can engage in throughout the coming week.

Different activities for a variety of ages are presented. Discussions on how this Gospel applies to everyday family life are initiated through the use of activity and dialogue.

Family Activity: This week, have some conversation about a specific way we can be Good Samaritans, collectively as a family and individuals. Think of a time when we have received the great kindness and generosity of another human being. What most stands out about that experience? Toward the latter part of the upcoming week gather together to share your experiences about being like the Good Samaritan in today's Gospel.

A Page to color and display in a special place in your home.



The Samaritan stops and shows kindness to the man.
Luke 10:33

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/8926479/Good-Samaritan-Coloring-Page-Nest-Learning>

FOR MORE, VISIT WWW.RCSJ.ORG

The third page is dedicated to the Church's doctrine. Here there is a focus on what the Church teaches and an explanation of doctrine that is as plain and simple as possible. As the Gospel exhibits the motif of Mercy (and we were celebrating the Jubilee of Mercy that year), this was an opportunity to connect the Gospel to what the Church teaches about mercy. This page reflects our doctrinal connections in the catechetical process.

On the last page of the resource, we reflect on our world and how the Gospel is being lived and realized today. We connect our stories. International, national and local people, cultures and events in everyday life are highlighted here, and are illuminated to show how people of good will mirror the Good News in very tangible ways. This week, we reflect on a terrible tragedy that took place during the Second World War in our province. It is a powerful insight into being a Good Samaritan and the great impact it had on one who was victimized.

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Year of Mercy



The logo and the motto together provide a fitting summary of what the Jubilee Year is all about. The motto *Merciful Like the Father* (taken from the Gospel of Luke, 6:36) serves as an invitation to follow the merciful example of the Father who asks us not to judge or condemn but to forgive and to give love and forgiveness without measure (cf. Lk 6:37-38). The logo – the work of Jesuit Father Marko I. Rupnik – presents a small *summa theologiae* of the theme of mercy. In fact, it represents an image quite important to the early Church: that of the Son having taken upon his shoulders the lost soul demonstrating that it is the love of Christ that brings to completion the mystery of his incarnation culminating in redemption. The logo has been designed in such a way so as to express the profound way in which the Good Shepherd touches the flesh of humanity and does so with a love with the power to change one's life. One particular feature worthy of note is that while the Good Shepherd, in his great mercy, takes humanity upon himself, his eyes are merged with those of man. Christ sees with the eyes of Adam, and Adam with the eyes of Christ. Every person discovers in Christ, the new Adam, one's own humanity and the future that lies ahead, contemplating, in his gaze, the love of the Father.

The scene is captured within the so called *mandorla* (the shape of an almond), a figure quite important in early and medieval iconography, for it calls to mind the two natures of Christ, divine and human. The three concentric ovals, with colors progressively lighter as we move outward, suggest the movement of Christ who carries humanity out of the night of sin and death. Conversely, the depth of the darker color suggests the impenetrability of the love of the Father who forgives all.

From: <http://www.im.va/content/gdm/en/giubileo/logo.html>

GOOD SAMARITANS

A TRUE STORY

FROM NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR



An excerpt from Chapter 1: The Story – Dead Reckoning <https://www.mun.ca/mha/polluxtruxtun/>

On February 18, 1942, the American naval vessels USS Truxtun, USS Pollux, and USS Wilkes were due to arrive at a large military base at Argentia, Newfoundland. Only the Wilkes made it. The other two ships went aground on the jagged rocks off Newfoundland's south coast in a ferocious winter storm. Giant waves pounded the vessels and eventually broke them to pieces. The Truxtun was trapped in Chambers Cove and the Pollux about one and a half miles west at Lawn Point. The Truxtun was carrying 156 men and the Pollux 233.

For hours, these men fought to survive in the driving sleet, howling wind, and bitter cold of the North Atlantic. With their ships breaking up beneath them, they first had to cross the raging ice-cold seas that separated them from land. Then they had to travel over miles of snowy wilderness to reach the nearest inhabited buildings. A great number of men spent all night outdoors, huddled wet and cold in caves or under clumps of trees. Many drowned or froze to death. Of the 389 officers and enlisted men on board the two vessels, 203 died.

But 186 lived. They survived because of their own determination, resourcefulness, and courage – and also because of the tremendous heroism displayed by the residents of St. Lawrence and Lawn who travelled to the wreck sites through blowing snow and spent hours hauling men out of the ocean, pulling them over icy cliffs, bringing them to a nearby mine, and then into their own homes. The rescuers and their families bathed the numb and semi-conscious survivors in warm water, gave them what little clothing and food they had, and nursed them back to health.

Although one of the worst disasters in United States naval history, the story of the Pollux and Truxtun is not just about death and anguish. It is about human courage, generosity, transcendence, and bonding. The local townspeople risked their own lives to save strangers in imminent danger and in the process forged intimate relationships that would not only span the decades, but would also dramatically change the lives of some survivors.

A striking example is Lanier Phillips, a black sailor aboard the Truxtun who was the victim of severe racism while growing up in Georgia during the 1920s and 30s, and also while enlisted in the US Navy. To this day, Phillips credits the kindness and respect he received from the white people of St. Lawrence with changing his life and giving him a newfound sense of self-worth. He says it motivated him to fight racial discrimination in the United States and to become the first black sonar technician in the US Navy. Today, Phillips is widely recognized as a civil rights role model. Although many lives were lost as a result of the two shipwrecks, 186 were saved, and at least one was changed for the better, with profound and far-reaching results. For more about Lanier Phillips' story please visit a three part series on: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkbkBBtAYI>



Photo Credit Top: www.townofstlawrence.com

Each week we connect digital links for our people to explore. The link embedded in this article tells the story of this tragedy and its effects on numerous people. Visit the article at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JkbbBbTaYI>.

Each week brings with it a new resource. We have made great strides with audio and visual resources embedded within the resource. As well, all of our resources are archived by week on our Archdiocesan web page. Visit us at www.rcsj.org.

Archbishop Currie has asked that the weekly resource go out to everybody in the diocese, and particularly that it be attached to parish bulletins.

We are also pleased that as of October 2016, our resources are available digitally by subscription. We have a growing list of subscriptions – locally, regionally and internationally. People receive an email on Fridays with the current resource for the week.

Please feel free to subscribe using the following link: <http://www.eepurl.com/cimD0L>.

In this forum, we reach people and share where they are via the digital age. People receive weekly resources on their smart phones and tablets, and often share using the same forum.

Our resource is continually evolving. Over the past year, we have numerous teams of writers who have helped create and contribute to our catechetical initiative. It continues to be built throughout the

Archdiocese as teams work collaboratively to teach using the liturgical years of the Church and the Gospels.

Besides being used in our parishes, our resource is used throughout our chaplaincies (seniors' homes, hospitals and health care institutions, prisons, prayer groups and others).

We receive very positive feedback about this initiative. Our people find it aesthetically pleasing, simple in approach, user-friendly for all types of families, and respectful of the learning needs of families in our fast-paced society.

It is our hope that it will be of service to faith-sharing groups, groups of friends, parish scripture study groups, those engaged in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, those engaged with preparing for sacraments, Liturgy of the Word with Children, and other communities.

In a future edition of *Encounter*, we will update you on resources we are exploring for use in our parishes to complement our catechetical initiatives.

Blessings to all,

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CROSS-COUNTRY INITIATIVES SET TO SUPPORT CATHOLIC SCHOOL TUITION PAYMENTS

Schools and school boards from across Canada have carried out plans to support the Canadian Catholic School Trustees' Association (CCSTA) Toonies for Tuition initiative.

For the past three years, the Conseil scolaire catholique du Nouvel-Ontario (CSCNO) has been holding a one-day blitz for the Toonies for Tuition campaign during Catholic Education Week, specifically on World Catholic Education Day.

This year, CSCNO plans to engage its Student Senate in promoting the 2017 campaign. The Student Senate is composed of the President of the Parliament of each of the school board's nine high schools, as well as their two Student Trustees. CSCNO's Director of Education, Lyse-Anne Papineau, is calling upon the Student Senate members for their leadership in identifying strategies for the Toonies campaign. They have expressed a keen interest in being part of the 2017 campaign « Solidarité pour la scolarité » at CSCNO!

Meanwhile, at St. John Elementary School in Perth, Ontario, staff and students donned sports jerseys and hats in late November to support a Toonies for Tuition fundraiser. Each participating student was asked to donate \$2, and the school raised \$300. Then the Victoria Northumberland and Clarington Catholic District School Board in the Peterborough region hosted a Toonies for Tuition fundraising day on December 2.

TURNING TOONIES INTO TUITION

The money raised by these fundraisers goes directly to the CCSTA Endowment Fund. Each year, the Endowment Fund provides financial support to families living in provinces where Catholic schools receive partial or no government funding, and families are left to cover tuition costs if they wish to send their children to Catholic schools. The Endowment Fund receives applications every year to help cover some of those tuition fees.

Newfoundland Catholic schools receive no government funding. As a result, the Endowment Fund has a deep connection with families in Newfoundland to help make their children's Catholic education dreams a reality. Here is a testimonial from a student who benefited from the Endowment Fund:

“Financially, I could not afford tuition. This year is something special for me because for this academic school year, I received bursary support. That makes me so thankful to my school and for all of those people who support the bursary program, because the bursary program is not just financial support, it's something that opens the door to a brighter life in the future of many people.”

To learn more about CCSTA Toonies for Tuition, visit www.ccsta.ca.

For more information, please contact:

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THE EMMAUS LENT AND HOLY WEEK ONLINE VIDEOS

These beautiful 3- to 5-minute image and text video reflections are inspired by the Gospels for Lent and Holy Week. We also have a very special video prayer experience of the **Stations of the Cross**.

Please see the samples below:

- Adult Lent Week 3
- Children Lent Week 2
- Youth Lent Week 1

For a subscription to these Lent and Holy Week online videos, which includes access to our entire Emmaus online video library of over 130 prayer and meditation videos for adults, children and youth, please follow the link below or contact our office for immediate access.
<http://liturgyritualprayer.com/videos>

For more information, please contact:
Emmaus Productions Ministry
Email: emmauscanada@emmausproductions.com

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MISSION OF REDEEMER MINISTRIES