

What is the mission of Jesus Christ?



Adult Faith Formation

Marge Virnig
651-247-0995
virnigma@comcast.net

This month's focus is an interesting one that seemed pretty straightforward, but after I posed it to several people and got several answers, I did what any 21st Century person would do ... I Googled "Jesus." Here is a sample of responses to the question, *What is the mission of Jesus Christ?*:

- • Jesus came to do God's will.
- • Jesus came to set the captives free.
- • Jesus came to make us disciples.
- • Jesus came to reconcile us to God.
- • Jesus came to establish a church.
- • Jesus came to create unity.
- • Jesus came to give us an example of how we are to live.
- • Jesus came to finish God's work.
- • Jesus came to make us happy.
- • Jesus came to die for our sins.
- • Jesus came to preach the Good News.
- • Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost.
- • Jesus came to glorify God.
- • Jesus came to tell us the truth.
- • Jesus came to proclaim the Kingdom of God.

Hmmmm. What do you think? How will you respond? Without analyzing which of these are goals and which are action plans, Advent is a good time for reflection and discussion about what this mission is and how we - as individuals, families, and Church - live into and out of it. It matters because we are baptized.

Adult formation opportunities during Advent

Saturday, December 3 is movie night right after 5:00 Mass. This month's feature is **Chocolat**. Join us for pizza, movie and some conversation/reflection afterwards.

Wednesday mornings 10:00—**Visio Divina** with artwork from the St. John's Bible. We will also form a Tuesday night group if this is of interest to you. Contact Marge at virnigma@comcast.net or 651-247-0995 to register.

Tuesday, December 6 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Our own Fr. Mike will lead the **Annual Retreat Day at St. Rose of Lima**, 2090 No. Hamline. The focus is "*Be Who You Are and Be That Perfectly Well.*" Registration forms are in the Link. The Cost of \$20 will include breakfast, lunch and a great presentation.

Friday, December 16 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. **Taize Prayer** at St. Paul's Monastery. Taize prayer uses simple chants based on the Scriptures and periods of silence to create an environment for encountering the mystery of God. Walk ins are welcome and there is no fee. What a great way to step back from the busy-ness of the season. 2675 Benet Road, Maplewood, MN. 651-777-8181.

Youth News

Tim Skinner

612-998-0772

tim@stceciliapsm.org

Peer Ministry

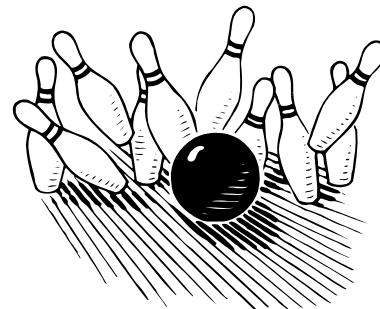
Attention High School Youth: Peer Ministry will be meeting at 6:15 p.m. on Sunday, December 11th in Fellowship Hall. See the website for more information.

Youth Group

Calling all 6th-8th graders! On Sunday, December 18th St. Cecilia's Youth Group will get together at 6:15 p.m. During this time of Advent, we prepare to celebrate the present joy of Christmas, the feast of Christ's birth. Join us for a night of fun and reflection of how Jesus is preparing our hearts for his joy!

Bowling

Let's Bowl! We will be bowling on Saturday, December 17th at the Gopher Spot on the U of M St. Paul campus. We will have the lanes reserved from 6:30-8:00 p.m. For those needing rides we will meet at St. Cecilia's at 6:15 p.m. to depart. The cost will be approximately \$5 per person. Don't forget to bring a little extra for the snack bar. We will return to St. Cecilia's by 8:15 p.m. for parents to pick up. Please RSVP to Tim via email tim@stceciliapsm.org or call (612) 998-0772. Adults are needed for rides and to chaperone. Please let Tim know if you can help.



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Mary Pat Roberts & Annamary Boler

651-644-4502

One of the components of Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is prayer. We speak of the prayers that accompany gestures at Mass – the sign of peace, the offering, the epiclesis, adding a drop of water to the wine, the washing of hands and the sign of the cross. The children decorate “prayer cards” to accompany most presentations during the year and then take them home. These are intended to be included among the choices for their family prayers. We have three celebrations during the year – Advent, the Easter Vigil and Pentecost – in which we include traditional prayers. Presentations include Bible passages that we repeat as prayers. For example, during Advent we present Isaiah’s prophecy: “The people who have walked in darkness have seen a great light.” Because we speak of light as a symbol often during the year – candles at Mass, Baptism, the Easter Vigil – the children usually know this prophecy by heart at the end of the year.

When children are first introduced to the atrium, we talk about how it is a sacred space, a place where children and catechists can speak and listen to God. The atrium is their place to be with God in a special way on Sundays, just as their parents have that space upstairs. We speak quietly, and move slowly and carefully, because listening works best in the quiet. I spoke last month about children in relationship with God, and about one child’s prayer. It is easier for children to pray both out loud and quietly in their hearts when time in the atrium is unhurried and peaceful.

Twenty-four children are registered for the atrium this year, and approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of those attend each week. No matter how quiet and focused the children are, the atrium is still a busy place because of the number of children working in a relatively small space. And so quiet for speaking and listening to God is difficult to find. That is one of the reasons we opened a second section of the Good Shepherd program last week, during the 5:00 pm Mass on Saturdays.

I treasure this season of Advent. I look forward to the anticipation, silence and reflection that accompany this time. We hope that our children will more easily find a place for quiet with smaller numbers of children in the atrium at one time. And we hope that you will find peace during this blessed season as well.

Mary Pat Roberts and Annamary Boler