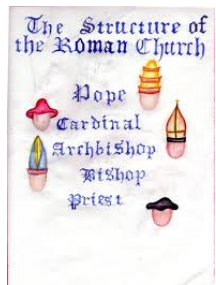


BIBLE STUDY



“ . . . [B]ut sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that be the will of God, than for doing evil.” 1 Peter 3:15-17

I used to teach six out of thirteen of the inquiry classes in RCIA and I felt like I had a pretty good handle on those topics. I did that for about five years. After a bout with burn-out and a year off, I was able to return to teaching on a lighter schedule. During that year off, I relaxed my own personal study and recreational religious reading. At the time, it felt necessary, but, after a year or so, I felt the need to pick up my Bible again. I noticed that at Mass I was seeing messages in the readings that my wife wasn't seeing. During our Mass preparation I would ask her questions like: "Did you see the Marian reference in that passage?" and often she wouldn't until I pointed it out. In all of this, I realized that I needed to dig deeper into the Word of God; and I needed to be ready and able to share Him with others who may not know what I've learned. This was really driven home to me recently.



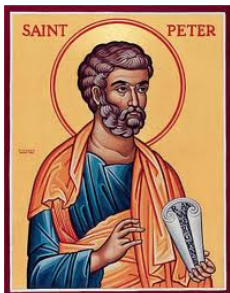
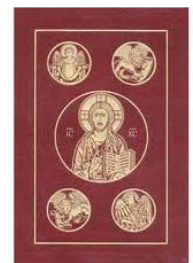
A gentleman received a strong interior desire to investigate the Catholic Church and mentioned it to a friend of his who happened to be a parishioner here at St. Joseph's. The friend mocked and belittled the hierarchy of the Church, so as to prevent him from investigating the Church that Jesus founded. Seriously? God called this man to salvation, and a member of this parish sent him away! Really? How will God deal with this parishioner at his judgment? How would you or I have answered a man who desired to become Catholic?

I don't know the name of the Catholic man who turns people away from God, but I can guess some things about him by his actions:

1. He probably doesn't love Jesus, though he may go through the motions.
2. He probably doesn't read the Bible.
3. He may not care about the disposition of his own soul or that of his friend.
4. He probably doesn't go to Mass or confession regularly.
5. He probably reads the bulletin and talks during Mass. And,
6. His parents may have spent a lot of money sending him to Catholic schools.

How can we avoid being the guy who rejects someone God has called? Read the Bible under the guidance and protective mantle of the Church, attend a sound Catholic Bible study here at our parish, and try to build your faith, not just the habit of going to church.

I'm convinced that the reason seemingly good and honest parishioners deny God is because they don't take time to search for Him; and they don't want to be mocked or teased. Reread the passage from 1 Peter 3 above, and don't bother with what others may think. Fools think it doesn't matter, but God thinks it does.



I've been reading the letters of St. Peter during lunch. The apostle reminds us of the blessings of God's love as well as the judgment that will be faced by those who don't seek Him. Today is a great day to do something to build up your faith. Don't be the guy who tears down someone else's faith!

Ed Ibarra, Lecturer



August business meeting is on Tuesday, August 3rd at 7:00 pm. Mass for the deceased members of this council is on Friday August 13th at 5:45 pm followed by adoration, rosary and confession. You will find the prayer intentions of the Brothers of this Council elsewhere in this newsletter; please pray for them as well as those who protect our freedom. God bless America!