

ABIDE IN FAITH

2013 Catholic Renewal Ministry

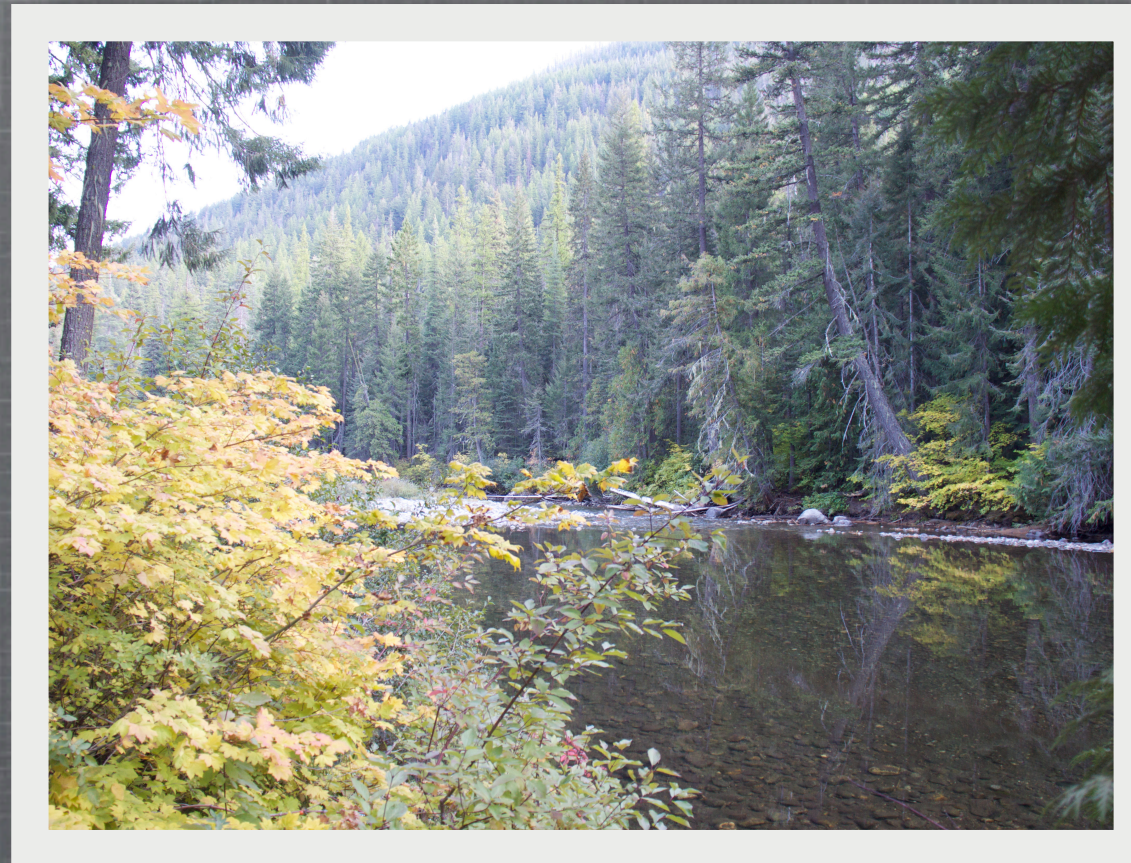


June 8, 2013

Gonzaga Preparatory School

THE PLAN

Living Life More Abundantly



“A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly.”

John 10:10

BASIC TRUTHS

Life is not governed by chance; it is not random. Your very existence has been willed by God, blessed and given a purpose! Life is not just a succession of events or experiences. It is a search for the true, the good and the beautiful. It is to this end that we make our choices; it is for this that we exercise our freedom; it is in this - in truth, in goodness, and in beauty - that we find happiness and joy.

Pope Benedict XVI

BASIC TRUTHS

Authentic love is obviously something good. When we love we become most fully human. But people often consider themselves loving when actually they are possessive or manipulative. People sometimes treat others as objects to satisfy their own needs. How easy it is to be deceived by the many voices in our society that advocate a permissive approach to sexuality, without regard for modesty, self-respect or the moral values that bring quality into human relationships! This is worship of a false god; instead of bringing life, it brings death.

Pope Benedict XVI

BASIC TRUTHS

Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who has loved me and given himself up for me.

Galatians 2:20

I praise you, so wonderfully you made me;
wonderful are your works!

Psalms 139:14

FOCAL POINTS

- God has a specific plan for each one of us. Each of us is invited to respond to God's initiative to bless us with "new life".
- We must each personally respond. While others can model faith and lead us in the right (or wrong) direction, God wants us to know Him personally through Christ and to stand firmly in that relationship.

FOCAL POINTS

Despite every difficulty, delay and contradiction caused by the limits of human nature, by sin and by the Evil One, the Church knows that all the forces that humanity employs for communion and participation find a full response in the intervention of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of man and of the world.

The Church knows that she is sent forth by him as "sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of all the human race"(11).

Despite all this, then, humanity is able to hope. Indeed it must hope: the living and personal Gospel, *Jesus Christ himself, is the "good news" and the bearer of joy* that the Church announces each day, and to whom the Church bears testimony before all people.

The lay faithful have an essential and irreplaceable role in this announcement and in this testimony: through them the Church of Christ is made present in the various sectors of the world, as a sign and source of hope and of love.

Mission of the Lay Faithful (Christifideles Laici) #7

GOALS FOR THE RETREAT

- ✎ To rediscover our core dignity as children of God.
- ✎ To shed anything that is hindering us from living life abundantly.
- ✎ To deepen our relationship/friendship with Christ.
- ✎ To receive a deeper outpouring of the Holy Spirit who makes us feel our God given dignity and to live in true freedom.
- ✎ To “fan into flame” the desire to share Christ with others, especially when we must sacrifice to do so.

A GREAT EXAMPLE

To come to know God—the true God—means to receive hope. We who have always lived with the Christian concept of God, and have grown accustomed to it, have almost ceased to notice that we possess the hope that ensues from a real encounter with this God. The example of a saint of our time can to some degree help us understand what it means to have a real encounter with this God for the first time. I am thinking of the African Josephine Bakhita, canonized by Pope John Paul II. She was born around 1869—she herself did not know the precise date—in Darfur in Sudan. At the age of nine, she was kidnapped by slave-traders, beaten till she bled, and sold five times in the slave-markets of Sudan. Eventually she found herself working as a slave for the mother and the wife of a general, and there she was flogged every day till she bled; as a result of this she bore 144 scars throughout her life.

A GREAT EXAMPLE

Finally, in 1882, she was bought by an Italian merchant for the Italian consul Callisto Legnani, who returned to Italy as the Mahdists advanced. Here, after the terrifying “masters” who had owned her up to that point, Bakhita came to know a totally different kind of “master”—in Venetian dialect, which she was now learning, she used the name “*paron*” for the living God, the God of Jesus Christ. Up to that time she had known only masters who despised and maltreated her, or at best considered her a useful slave. Now, however, she heard that there is a “*paron*” above all masters, the Lord of all lords, and that this Lord is good, goodness in person. She came to know that this Lord even knew her, that he had created her—that he actually loved her. She too was loved, and by none other than the supreme “*Paron*”, before whom all other masters are themselves no more than lowly servants. She was known and loved and she was awaited.

A GREAT EXAMPLE

What is more, this master had himself accepted the destiny of being flogged and now he was waiting for her “at the Father's right hand”. Now she had “hope” —no longer simply the modest hope of finding masters who would be less cruel, but the great hope: “I am definitively loved and whatever happens to me—I am awaited by this Love. And so my life is good.” Through the knowledge of this hope she was “redeemed”, no longer a slave, but a free child of God. She understood what Paul meant when he reminded the Ephesians that previously they were without hope and without God in the world—without hope because without God. Hence, when she was about to be taken back to Sudan, Bakhita refused; she did not wish to be separated again from her “Paron”.

A GREAT EXAMPLE

On 9 January 1890, she was baptized and confirmed and received her first Holy Communion from the hands of the Patriarch of Venice. On 8 December 1896, in Verona, she took her vows in the Congregation of the Canossian Sisters and from that time onwards, besides her work in the sacristy and in the porter's lodge at the convent, she made several journeys round Italy in order to promote the missions: the liberation that she had received through her encounter with the God of Jesus Christ, she felt she had to extend, it had to be handed on to others, to the greatest possible number of people. The hope born in her which had "redeemed" her she could not keep to herself; this hope had to reach many, to reach everybody.

from Saved In Hope (Spe Salvi) by Pope Benedict XVI # 3

TASK FOR THIS EVENING

- Do you feel loved as a child of God?
- What things / people / past hurts are dragging you down and need to be lifted to the Lord for healing?
- Pray tonight for a deeper relationship with Christ and the ability to feel and know His love and to share it with others.

THAT'S HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU

BY KATHY TROCCOLI

I died for you
I'd do it all again if I had to
To show you what you really mean to Me
I cried for you
I hung on the cross so you wouldn't have to
I made a way to set your spirit free

CHORUS:

That's how much I love you
That's how much I want you
I gave up my own life that you might live
That's how much I love you
That's how much I want you to see
You are My child and you mean so much to Me

I gave you the stars
The sun, the moon, yes I went that far
So no matter where you go you think of Me
The mountains fair
The beautiful oceans are there
To remind you that I can satisfy your every need

CHORUS