

# Pearls of Faith

SECRETARIAT FOR FAITH FORMATION & EVANGELIZATION

ORDINARY TIME 2020—ISSUE 8



## Hidden Treasures

**March 4<sup>th</sup>—1:30PM-3:30PM**  
Holy Family, West Branch

**March 10<sup>th</sup>—9:30AM-11:30AM**  
St. Patrick, Traverse City

**March 11<sup>th</sup>—2:00PM-4:00PM**  
St. Ann, Frankfort

**March 17<sup>th</sup>—10:00AM-12:00PM**  
St. Ignatius of Loyola, Rogers City

**March 18<sup>th</sup>—6:30PM-8:30PM**  
Cross in the Woods, Indian River

**March 25<sup>th</sup>—6:00PM-8:00PM**  
St. Mary of the Woods, Kalkaska

## The Baptism of the Lord, a Feast that Reminds Us of Our Mission

*By Marecellino D'Ambrosio*

The Jews were absolutely unique in the ancient world. Not only did their religion forbid them to worship any gods other than the Lord, but their prophets actually taught that the gods of other nations were mere figments of the imagination. They did not exist at all. For devout Jews in the time of Jesus, monotheism—the belief or doctrine that there is only one God—was their distinctive hallmark and was ingrained in them from cradle to grave. They recited several times a day the verses of Deuteronomy 6:4 “Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone!” So it should come as no surprise that the notion of Jesus as the Son of God was a bit hard for them to take. The Gospel of John tells us that this claim to divine sonship was one of main reasons for Jesus’ crucifixion. Hundreds of years later, Roman Emperor Constantine had to call a church council to reaffirm that Jesus was God, equal in glory and majesty to God the Father. Yet another council had to be called a few generations later to definitively affirm the same about the Holy Spirit. To this day, people from Da Vinci Code fans to Jehovah’s Witnesses ridicule the doctrine of the Trinity, the belief of three divine persons in God, alleging it was invented by Constantine. But a close reading of the Scriptures shows that the Trinity was revealed when Jesus met his cousin in the wilderness, at the River Jordan. While John baptizes his superior, the voice of God resounds over the waters: “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” At that very moment, the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus in the form of a dove. Here, for a brief moment, we glimpse the mystery of one God in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and Holy Spirit. This momentary appearance of Jesus as the Son of God, anointed with the Holy Spirit, is an epiphany. In fact, in Eastern Catholic churches, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord and the Epiphany (called “Theophany”) are the same. It is no accident that this revelation of the Trinity happened at the moment of Christ’s baptism. Christian baptism, here instituted by Christ, is essentially different than the baptism of John. John the Baptist preached cleansing from past sins and a change of lifestyle. Christian baptism certainly involves this but accomplishes much more. It joins us to Jesus, as savior and Lord, and connects us with the power of his death and





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resurrection. But since in baptism we become one with Jesus, members of his body, all that is his becomes ours. His Father now becomes Our Father, and the Holy Spirit now takes up residence within us. Baptism does not just wash away sins so that we can escape the fires of hell. It establishes an intimate relationship between us and the three persons of the Trinity. God is no longer a stern monarch, but a loving father, not just Christ's Father but Our Father. God the Son calls us no longer servants but friends. God in the Holy Spirit becomes the power within us to make us new people and brings us to the fullness of joy. The fact that baptism takes place through water is no accident either. Water cleanses, true. But it also is the symbol of birth. Are we not carried in water for nine months in our mothers' wombs? In baptism, we emerge from the waters of the church's womb to take up a new kind of life, a holy adventure that opens out into eternity. But there is another sacrament besides baptism that is instituted at this blessed event. Notice that Peter, speaking of Jesus' baptism in Acts 10:38, says Jesus was "anointed." The Greek word for "anointed one" is "Christ." And the Greek term for "confirmation" is "chrismation." Some wonder why we need the sacrament of confirmation. To some it appears to be an afterthought or anticlimactic. After all, we receive the Holy Spirit in baptism and become children of God. So what else do we get when we are confirmed? That's simple: We receive our mission and the power to carry it out. Being a Christian is not just about salvation. It's about sharing in Christ's anointing to transform the world. The mission is an essential part of the package, not an option. That's why we are called "Christians" or anointed ones. Without sharing in the mission through the special anointing of confirmation, one is not fully incorporated into the church, which is a missionary community. So the feast of the Baptism of the Lord is not only a revelation of the Trinity and our initiation into a saving relationship with the three divine persons. It is the empowering commission to bring others into the same life-transforming relationship. It is not only Christ's name day, but the name day of all who glory in the name of being called a Christian.

*D'Ambrosio writes from Texas. He is co-founder of Crossroads Productions, an apostolate of Catholic renewal and evangelization.*

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*“God is a ‘family’ of three Persons who love each other so much as  
to form a single whole.”*

*– Pope Francis, May 2016*



Social Justice Camp for Teens



Monday, July 27 — Friday, August 1

Augustine Center Retreat House

2798 North US 31  
Petoskey, MI 49770

“Faith in action is love. And love in  
action is service.”

— St. Teresa of Calcutta

*Just Works challenges teens in grades 8-12 to live out the Gospel call to peace and justice in their personal lives. Cost is \$250 per participant and includes all meals, lodging, and materials. Registration information is available from your youth minister or by contacting Wayne Winter at 989.732.5147.*



Diocese of Gaylord

Secretariat of Faith Formation and Evangelization

611 W. North Street, Gaylord, MI 49735

989.732.5147

[www.dioceseofgaylord.org](http://www.dioceseofgaylord.org)

# 2020-MATRIMONY PREP MODULES

The Diocese of Gaylord will be offering retreat options for the fulfillment of the Matrimony Preparation Modules required for Marriage in the Catholic Church. If you can not attend one of these sessions, please contact your home parish to see if they are offering an option, as many parishes throughout the diocese will offer these sessions for their parishioners.

## WINTER/SPRING OPTION

**When:** Feb. 8th thru Feb. 9th  
**Time:** 9:00am (Sat) to 12:00pm (Sun)  
**Cost:** \$ 150 per couple  
(This will include Meals and Lodging)  
**Where:** Augustine Center Retreat Center  
2798 N US Highway 31  
Conway, MI 49722



## SUMMER/FALL OPTION

**When:** Aug. 15th thru Aug. 16th  
**Time:** 9:00am (Sat) to 12:00pm (Sun)  
**Cost:** \$ 150 per couple  
(This will include Meals and Lodging)  
**Where:** Augustine Center Retreat Center  
2798 N US Highway 31  
Conway, MI 49722

Any Questions Contact:

**SETH PETERS**

c/o Diocese of Gaylord

611 W. North St.

Gaylord, MI 49735

989-732-5147 Ext. 3522

(231) 340-0139 (cell)

[speters@dioceseofgaylord.org](mailto:speters@dioceseofgaylord.org)

## MODULES OFFERED

**Module 2:** Theology Series

**Module 3:** Communication &  
Conflict Resolution

**Module 5:** Chastity within Marriage  
(3 & 5 are offered together )

**Module 4:** Finances & Divine Providence

**PLEASE FILL OUT THE REVERSE SIDE  
OF THIS FORM AND RETURN TO:  
DIOCESE OF GAYLORD—611 W.  
NORTH ST.—GAYLORD, MI 49735**



## *The Journey Home:* *Forgiveness and Mercy*

A Spirituality Spring Retreat

With

**Br. Michael Whitman**

What does Jesus mean when the Gospel writer has him say you must forgive 70 X 70? How do we not only find mercy but become mercy itself? These are the questions this retreat will explore as we journey through life as disciples. ***Please dress appropriately for this retreat as weather can be unpredictable, and some events will take place outdoors..***

<b>DATE:</b>	Friday, April 17th to Sunday, April 19th
<b>TIME:</b>	7:00 pm (4/12) until 11:00 am (4/14)
<b>COST:</b>	\$ 130.00 per person (Includes Lodging and Meals)
<b>LOCATION:</b>	Augustine Center Retreat House-2798-US 31-North
<b>REQUIRED READING</b>	<b><i>The Return of the Prodigal Son:</i></b> A Story of Homecoming by Henri J. Nouwen
<b>RECOMMENDED READING</b>	<b><i>Mercy in Weakness-Meditations on the Word</i></b> by Andre Louf <b><i>God's Mercy Revealed-Healing for a Broken World</i></b> by Peter Magee <b><i>Beautiful Mercy-Experience God's Unconditional Love So We Can Share it with Others</i></b> by Pope Francis and various authors.
<b>NOTE:</b>	Anyone wanting to meet for dinner before the retreat we will meet at 5:00 pm at:  <b>The Side Door Saloon</b> <b>1200 US-31 Hwy. in Petoskey</b>

PLEASE USE REVERSE SIDE OF THIS FLYER TO REGISTER

# *The Journey Home: Forgiveness and Mercy*

A Spirituality Spring Retreat

With

Br. Michael Whitman

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ANY SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS: \_\_\_\_\_

ROOMING PREFERENCE: \_\_\_\_\_

**REGISTRATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED UNTIL FRIDAY-APRIL 10, 2020**

(LATE REGISTRATIONS CAN NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR THIS EVENT)

Please fill out this form and return to: **THE CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES**

**611 W. NORTH STREET**

**GAYLORD, MI 49735**



## The Origin and Foundation of Christian Baptism is Jesus

*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*

The Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—are the foundations of the Christian life. “Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the ‘sacraments of Christian initiation,’ whose unity must be safeguarded” (CCC, no. 1285). We begin with our study of Baptism in this chapter and will treat the other two Sacraments in the following ones

*Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In accordance with the Lord’s will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church herself, which we enter by Baptism.— CCC, no. 1277*

In his dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus taught that Baptism was necessary for salvation. “No one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit” (Jn 3:5). After his Resurrection, Jesus met with the eleven Apostles and gave them the commission to preach the Gospel and baptize, telling them, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved” (Mk 16:16). The word baptism in its origins is Greek and means “immersion” and “bath.” Immersion in water is a sign of death, and emersion out of the

water means new life. To bathe in water is also to undergo cleansing. St. Paul sums up this truth when he says, “You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead” (Col 2:12). The origin and foundation of Christian Baptism is Jesus. Before starting his public ministry, Jesus submitted himself to the baptism given by John the Baptist. The waters did not purify him; he cleansed the waters. “He comes to sanctify the Jordan for our sake . . . to begin a new creation through the Spirit and water” (St. Gregory Nazianzen, Liturgy of the Hours, I, 634). Jesus’ immersion in the water is a sign for all human beings of the need to die to themselves to do God’s will. Jesus did not need to be baptized because he was totally faithful to the will of his Father and free from sin. However, he wanted to show his solidarity with human beings in order to reconcile them to the Father. By commanding his disciples to baptize all nations, he established the means by which people would die to sin—Original and actual—and begin to live a new life with God.

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# Upcoming Events



## **Ecclesiology: What is Church? (T-200)**

**February 22, 2020**

In this course, participants will study the Catholic Church as presented by the Second Vatican Council. It will explore the Mystery of the Church, the people of God sharing the prophetic and priestly roles of Christ. It will lead the participant to discover—more clearly—their own responsibilities and roles.

## **Liturgical Ministries (L-800)**

**March 7, 2020—Part I**

**March 21, 2020—Part II**

This two part course will explore the diversity of ministries within the Body of Christ. By examining the history, ecclesiology, and pertinent documents; one can better appreciate the role that each person plays within the worshiping assembly. Finally, the course will address practical matters of each liturgical minister's training.

## **Contemporary Moral Issues (M-110)**

**April 25, 2020**

This course will explore current social issues in relationship to Church Doctrine and Catholic Social Doctrine. Stem cell research, abortion, conscience clause, matrimony amendment, global climate change, just war theory, immigration, and capital punishment are just some of the topics discussed.



**SHINING CHRIST'S LIGHT**  
S U N R I S E   T O   S U N S E T

## **Center for Catholic Studies**

The Center for Catholic Studies was founded in June 2003 under the guidance of Bishop Patrick Cooney. The Center offers eight areas of certification—Parish Catechist, Parish Youth Minister, Parish Catechetical Leader, Coordinator of Youth Ministry, Liturgical Coordinator, Christian Discipleship, Permanent Diaconate, and Catholic School Teachers Through a partnership with the Virtual Learning Community of the University of Dayton online, students can also earn certificates in Adult Formation Leadership, Foundation for Leadership in Ministry, Social Justice, Youth Ministry, Marianist Studies, Catechesis, and Spanish Catechesis. These classes are offered to those who are pursuing certification tracks or those who just want to take a class for fun. The Center has finished its revision and now offers an updated *Certification Catalog*. Within this catalog are the requirements for all certification tracks, descriptions of all center courses, and courses for our new subjects. For more information visit [www.dioceseofgaylord.org](http://www.dioceseofgaylord.org) or contact Tammy Boylan at (989)732-5147 or e-mail her at [tboylan@dioceseofgaylord.org](mailto:tboylan@dioceseofgaylord.org).