



St. Isidore Catholic Church

A Letter From Our Pastor

New Year's Resolutions

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**January/
February 2010**

427 W. Army Trail Road
Bloomington, IL 60108
630-529-3045
stisidoreparish.org

Dear Parishioners,

As we begin a new year, it is customary for individuals to make resolutions, which hopefully will be carried out during the course of the year. So many times these resolutions pertain to our physical lives, such as more exercise, dieting, better organization, etc. Sometimes they affect the mental aspect of our lives, such as reading more, attending more cultural events, etc.

Too often we forget about the spiritual part of our lives. Our souls need to be tended to. We need to make sure that we deepen our relationship with our God throughout the year.

I would like to give you a list of possible spiritual resolutions. Certainly not all of them can be done by any one person, but hopefully anyone can try several of these at one time or a number of them throughout the year.

- Attend Mass once a week over and above weekend liturgies.
- Spend a hour (or any amount of time) in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament once a week.
- Pray the Liturgy of the Hours (the Divine Office) at least once a day.
- Read and meditate on a chapter of Scripture a day.
- Take up a devotion of the Church (e.g. Rosary, stations, novena, other prayers, etc.) and pray it daily.
- Read a spiritual book once a month.
- Make a morning offering as you begin your day, then an examination of conscience as you end your day.
- Offer a prayer of blessing/thanksgiving before/after a meal.
- Take time to pray daily with your spouse/family.



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St. Isidore Catholic Church

Carta del Parróco

Resoluciones de Año Nuevo

Estimados Feligreses,

Al comienzo del año nuevo, se acostumbra hacer resoluciones, las cuales esperamos cumplir durante el transcurso de dicho año. Muchas veces estas resoluciones se relacionan con nuestras vidas físicas: como hacer más ejercicios, ponerse a dieta, tener más organización, etc. Algunas veces afectan el aspecto mental de nuestras vidas, como: leer más, asistir a más eventos culturales, etc.

Con frecuencia nos olvidamos del aspecto espiritual de nuestras vidas. Nuestras almas necesitan cuidado. Necesitamos asegurarnos de profundizar en nuestra relación con nuestro Dios durante el año.

Quisiera darles una lista de posibles resoluciones espirituales. Ciertamente no todas ellas pueden ser cumplidas al mismo tiempo por una sola persona, pero cualquiera puede adoptar varias de ellas desde el principio, o un número de ellas a través del año.



- Participar en la Misa una vez por semana, aparte de participar en las liturgias del fin de semana.
- Dedicar una hora (o cualquier cantidad de tiempo) en adoración al Santísimo una vez por semana.
- Rezar la Liturgia de las Horas al menos una vez al día.
- Leer y meditar en un capítulo de las Escrituras diariamente.
- Adoptar una devoción de la Iglesia (ex.: rosario, estaciones, novenas, otras oraciones etc.) y rezarlas a diario.
- Leer un libro de carácter espiritual una vez al mes.
- Hacer una ofrenda al comenzar el día y un examen de consciencia al terminar el día.
- Ofrecer una oración de acción de gracias/bendición antes y después de cada comida.
- Dedicar tiempo a rezar en pareja/familia diariamente.
- Como individuo o como familia, dedicar tiempo a hacer alguna forma de trabajo caritativo una vez por semana, como: visitar a alguien en un asilo de ancianos, hacer algo por un anciano amigo o vecino, etc.

No es una lista completa, pero espero les dé una idea de que las cosas pequeñas, hechas con gran amor, pueden tener un mundo de efectividad en tu vida y en la de los demás.

No trates de hacer demasiado de ninguna de ellas, sino ve poco a poco pero con regularidad, y así vas creando la base donde seguir ampliando tu vida de oración. Que disfruten mucho haciendo estas resoluciones, y vean cuantas bendiciones se volcarán en ustedes y los demás.

A ti, y a los tuyos, ¡qué el 2010 sea un año de gracias y favores de Dios!

Padre Jerry
Párroco



Responding to the Lord's Blessings: *Totie and Trini Leonardo*

When they first moved to the Chicago area from the Philippines 25 years ago, Totie and Trini Leonardo were the new people, needing help getting settled at St. Isidore. Today, their leadership helps many more Filipinos find their place in the parish.

But it was their children that led to their first involvement. “We first got involved when our kids started in school here, 20 years ago,” Totie recalls.

Totie was asked to help as an usher during one of the Masses, and soon became a head usher. From there, he and Trini began to do more and more to support liturgies at the parish, serving on the Worship Commission, as lectors, as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and as Mass Coordinators. Totie and Trini are now the Mass Coordinators for the 1 p.m. Mass, where they ensure that all of the liturgical roles are filled, often filling in themselves.

As natives of the Philippines, Totie and Trini are also often called upon to serve as coordinators for the many Filipino activities around the parish. Last month, for example, was the 14th Simbang Gabi at St. Isidore. An old tradition in the Philippines, Simbang Gabi is a Christmas celebration with a Mass, music, food, and a huge reception, and Totie and Trini were among those who helped start the event years ago.

They are also members of the Sacred Heart Prayer Group, another Filipino ministry. And while others now serve as facilitators for each of these Filipino activities, Totie and Trini handle the coordination at the parish level.

Through attending and presenting at Christ Renews His Parish retreats, Totie and Trini have also grown stronger in faith and more connected to the parish.

“You feel so thankful, and it really opened my eyes and brought me to greater maturity,” Totie says of his experience at the retreats.

While Totie works as an architect in Elgin, Trini, who recently retired after many years at Chase, now spends even more time around St. Isidore, helping with the Art and Environment Committee, as a money counter, and as a church cleaner.

“If she’s not at home,” Totie laughs, “then she’s at the church, doing things.”

But the time that they offer to the parish is not a painful sacrifice. Instead, it’s just their method of stewardship, the response of a blessed disciple.

“This is our way of saying thank you to the Lord for the blessings we’ve been given,” Totie says. “I feel that if I’m helping other people, then I’m responding to the blessings that the Lord has given us.”



St. Isidore Catholic Church

Catholic Schools Week: *A Time to Rejoice*

From activities like “Break a Sweat and Read,” to raising money for the poor, Catholic Schools Week gives us a chance to get excited about what God is doing at St. Isidore School.

The national Catholic Schools Week theme this year, “Dividends for Life,” will be a time to consider the importance of faith, morals, discipline and knowledge in Catholic life. St. Isidore will be reflecting on this theme, as well as expounding on it a little further to include the theme, “Our Life’s Reward.”

“Faith, morals, discipline and knowledge are all part of Catholic education, and that is our life’s reward,” says School Principal Cyndi Collins. “CSW is a time to encourage children to be thankful and appreciative for the fact that they are attending a Catholic school, due to the sacrifices that their parents make, as well as our supportive parishioners. It is a time to celebrate who we are and how we are unique in our own way.”

CSW will begin on Sunday, Jan. 31, with a kick-off Mass at St. Isidore, and close on Feb. 6. At the opening Mass, Cyndi will speak and the school choir will share their singing talents. All students will be welcome to display their art and science fair projects on the first and second floors of the Ministry Center.

Throughout the week, a creative selection of activities will take place. Highlights will feature an All-School Roller Skating Party on Thursday at 6 p.m. at Coachlite Roller Skating Rink, and on Friday, all will enjoy a round of Wheel of Wisdom, an exciting interactive question and answer activity.

At the heart of CSW will be an annual service project. This year, the students



will raise money for Feed My Starving Children, a Christian organization that helps provide meals for impoverished countries. Fundraising activities vary; one year the students sold pencils.

Catholic education is definitely something to rejoice over, especially when it comes to top-notch schools like St. Isidore.

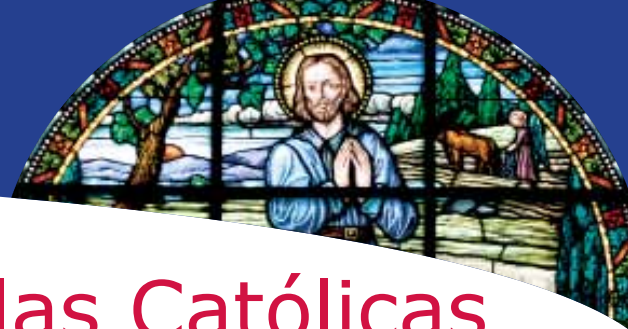
“The biggest blessing of Catholic education is that we have the ability to share our faith,” says Cyndi. “We

provide an excellent academic program for our kids but we also provide them so much more when we can work faith into everything we do and to help them see that faith is the first and foremost thing in their lives. All of our teachers teach with a Christian and Catholic understanding. Our students know they are in a Catholic school and they know it is different than public school because God is in the center of it.”

Thank you to all of our parent and parishioner volunteers, as well as our teachers, for coordinating our upcoming Catholic Schools Week.

“We could not be who we are without our volunteers,” says Cyndi. “They are the backbone of our school.”

This is what true education is all about – giving our time and talent to raise up saints. The blessings we enjoy at our school are too many to be counted!



Semana de las Escuelas Católicas

Un momento de Alegría

Desde actividades como “Perspira y Lee” hasta levantar fondos para los pobres, la Semana de las Escuelas Católicas nos dan una oportunidad de entusiasmarnos por lo que Dios está haciendo en la Escuela St. Isidore.

Este año el tema nacional de la Semana de las Escuelas Católicas “Ganancias para la Vida” será una época para pensar en la importancia de fe, moral, disciplina y conocimiento de la vida católica. St. Isidore reflexionará en este tema, y también profundizará un poquito más con el tema, “Las Recompensas de Nuestras Vidas.”

“Fe, moral, disciplina y conocimiento son todos partes de la educación católica, y esa es la recompensa de nuestra vida,” dice la directora de la escuela, Cyndi Collins. “SEC es una época para animar los niños a ser agradecidos y apreciar el hecho que asisten a una escuela católica, debido al sacrificio de sus padres y al apoyo de los feligreses. Es una época para celebrar quienes somos y cuan únicos somos, en nuestra forma de ser.”

SEC comenzara el lunes, 31 de enero, con una Misa de apertura en St. Isidore, y cerrará el 6 de febrero. En la Misa de apertura, Cyndi se dirigirá a todos, y el coro de la escuela compartirá sus talentos como cantantes. Se invitarán



a todos los estudiantes a mostrar sus proyectos de la Feria de Arte y Ciencia en el primero y segundo piso del Centro de Ministerios.

Durante la semana, una creativa selección de actividades tendrá lugar. Habrá una Fiesta de Patinaje para toda la escuela, el jueves a las 6 p.m., en Coachlight Roller Skating Rink; el viernes disfrutarán todos de una vuelta en la Rueda de la Sabiduría, una interesante actividad de preguntas y respuestas.

El corazón de SEC es un proyecto de servicio anual. Este año, los estudiantes levantarán fondos para Feed My Starving Children, una organización cristiana que ayuda a proveer alimentos en países empobrecidos. Las actividades de levantar fondos varían; un año los estudiantes vendieron lápices.

La educación católica es definitivamente algo por lo que

regocijarse, especialmente cuando se trata de escuelas de primera como St. Isidore.

“La mayor bendición de una educación católica es que podemos compartir nuestra fe,” dice Cyndi. “Proveemos nuestros niños con un programa académico excelente; también les damos muchísimo más cuando podemos traer la fe a todo lo que hacemos y les ayudamos a ver que la fe en lo más importante en sus vidas. Nuestros maestros enseñan con un entendimiento cristiano y católico; nuestros estudiantes saben que están en una escuela católica y que es diferente a las escuelas públicas porque Dios es el centro en ella.”

Gracias a todos los padres y feligreses voluntarios, al igual que a nuestros maestros, por coordinar nuestra ya cercana Semana de las Escuelas Católicas.

“No podríamos ser quienes somos sin nuestros voluntarios,” dice Cyndi. “Ellos son el eje de nuestra escuela.”

De esto se trata la verdadera educación – ofreciendo nuestro tiempo y talento para criar santos. Las bendiciones de las que disfrutamos en nuestra escuela ¡son muchas para poder contarlas!



The Patron of Catholic Schools in America *St. Elizabeth Ann Seton*

As the first American-born canonized saint, Elizabeth Ann Seton's entrance into history was guided by Divine Providence. Born on Aug. 28, 1774 immediately following the Boston Tea Party, Elizabeth's childhood witnessed pivotal events in the formation of our country: the Continental Congress, the Declaration of Independence, and the American Revolution. At the time of the foundation of the new Republic, in a society predominately hostile toward Catholicism, a flower blossomed that would forever change the shape of education in the United States.

Elizabeth Seton was born into a wealthy Protestant family in New York City. Her life, although materially blessed, was not without suffering. Elizabeth's biological mother died when she was only three, and her younger sister, Catherine Josephine, died at the age of two. A spark of faith, however, was visible even in her early childhood. When questioned about her sadness concerning her sister's death, Elizabeth simply responded: "Kitty is gone up to heaven. I wish I could go there too."

Elizabeth grew into a beautiful woman, courted lavishly by handsome young men from prominent New York families. At the age of 19, she met a charming New York financier, William Seton, and the couple was wed in 1794. They remained in high society until her father-in-law's passing, which left them to care for William's seven younger siblings, along with three children of their own. Consequently, the Seton finances crashed.

The couple traveled to Italy, and it was here that William's health failed him, and he died in December 1803. Providentially, Elizabeth was left in the company of a strong Catholic family where she witnessed the practice of the Faith. In a letter to her sister, Elizabeth wrote: "My sister dear, how



happy would we be, if we believed what these dear souls believe, that they possess God in the Sacrament, and that He remains in their churches..."

After an eight month stay, Elizabeth returned to America, where she began to investigate Catholicism more deeply. She was besought by Protestant friends who hoped to dissuade her. At this time Elizabeth prayed repeatedly: "If I am right, Thy grace impart, still in the right to stay. If I am wrong, oh teach my heart to find the better way."

In 1805, after much interior struggle, Elizabeth became Catholic. Abandoned entirely by her family and friends, she resolved her financial difficulties through teaching.

In 1807, Elizabeth was invited to establish a Catholic school for girls in Baltimore. The task was daunting and Elizabeth labored feverously, explaining that "from half past five in the morning until nine at night, every moment is full—no space even to be troubled." After winters spent in continual hardship and sacrifice, the school flourished and, within years, Mother Seton planted the seed from which sprang the parochial school system (along with hospitals and orphanages).

Before her death in January of 1821, she was the active mother of five (although two of her daughters died young) and the spiritual Mother of a full-fledged religious congregation known as the Sisters of Charity of the Americas. She was canonized in 1975 and her feast day is celebrated on Jan. 4.

Thanks to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, the Catholic parochial school system remains vibrant and active. From Jan. 31 to Feb. 6 we celebrate Catholic Schools Week. We are thankful for the sacrifice of this loving wife, devoted mother, foundress, and All-American saint.



The Basics of Catholicism

Touching Jesus Through the Church

Touching Jesus Through the Church covers the Catholic distinctives most commonly misunderstood by non-Catholics and Catholics alike. This 8-session DVD series is presented by Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio, former professor of theology at the University of Dallas. Each video session lasts 35 minutes and will be followed by a question and answer session facilitated by one of our deacons or priests. New as well as life-long Catholics will find answers to key questions about the Church. For more information contact Deacon John at 630-295-8351 or jfreund@stisidoreparish.org. There are no charges or fees.



When: **Saturday Mornings at 9:00 a.m.**

Where: **The LINK** St. Isidore Youth Center

78 Stratford Drive (the drive around Stratford Square, next to the Bedding Experts)

- January 9th** Talk 1: Who Needs the Catholic Church?
- January 16th** Talk 2: Baptism-Gateway to Life
- January 23rd** Talk 3: Confirmation-Empowered to Serve
- January 30th** Talk 4: Personal Prayer-Pathway to Joy
- February 6th** Talk 5: What is the Mass?
- February 13th** Talk 6: Getting More Out of the Mass
- February 20th** Talk 7: Keeping a Pure Heart
- February 27th** Talk 8: Mary and the Saints

St. Isidore Catholic Church

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427 W. Army Trail Road
Bloomingdale, IL 60108
630-529-3045
stisidoreparish.org

New Year's Resolutions continued from front cover

- As an individual or a family, take time once a week to do some form of charitable work, such as: visit a shut in or nursing home, do some work for an elderly friend or neighbor, etc.

This is not an exhaustive list, but hopefully it gives you an idea that the small things done with great love that can make a world of difference in your life and the lives of others.

Do not try to overdo any of these, but build up to doing them on a regular basis, thus laying a reasonable foundation upon which to build. Enjoy doing these resolutions, and see what a blessing they are for you and others.

To you and yours, may 2010 be a year of grace and favor from God!

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Fr. Jerry Simonelli
Pastor