



S.M.A.R.T. NEWS



Saint Mary's Active Religious Teens
Saint Mary's Parish Iowa City, Iowa February 2011
Web Site: <http://youth.icstmary.org>

Dear Friends,

We can all become negative at times. Overcoming negative feelings takes time and effort, but it can be done. The main step is to accept what God believes about each person He created.

Christian psychologist Dr. Richard Dickerson has written the following which beautifully summarizes how God looks at each of us:

Because God loves me, He is slow to lose patience with me.

Because God loves me, He takes the circumstances of my life and uses them in a constructive way for my personal growth.

Because God loves me, He does not treat me as an object to be possessed and manipulated.

Because God loves me, He has no need to belittle me with how great, powerful and important He is.

Because God loves me, He does not send down His wrath on every little mistake I make (and there are plenty).

Because God loves me, He does not keep score of all my sins and then beat me over the head with them whenever He gets a chance.

Because God loves me, He is deeply grieved when I do not walk in the ways that please Him.

Because God loves me, He rejoices when I experience His power and strength and stand up under the pressures of life for His Name's sake.

Because God loves me, He keeps working patiently with me even when I feel like giving up.

Because God loves me, He keeps on trusting me when at times I don't even trust myself.

Because God loves me, He never says there is no hope for me.

Because God loves me, He never forsakes me even though some of my friends might.

Patti McTaggart

There are, in the end, three things that last: faith, hope, and love...and the greatest of these is love... 1
Corinthians 13:13

CALLING ALL CHEFS!!!



DO YOU LIKE TO COOK? On the third Thursday of every month, join other youth from each high school and junior high as we collaborate together in St. Mary's parish hall and make four or five casseroles for the Free Lunch program. This month's "cooking class" will take place on Thursday, February 17th from 5:00-6:00PM. The casseroles created will be served the next day, Friday, February 18th, at the Free Lunch program. All youth are invited to participate!!



FEBRUARY

- 3- FEAST OF ST. BLASE - Blessing of throats
- 3 - Holy Hour for Vocations - 7PM in the church
- 13 - CONFIRMATION CLASS 7:00PM parish hall
- 17- Youth Casserole-Making for Free Lunch -parish hall 5:00-6:00PM
- 20 Teen Bible Study 7-8PM in the parish hall
- 19-21 TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) Weekend - See flyer

+++++

THANKS SO MUCH to everyone who chaperoned and/or participated in the St. Mary's sponsored City-Wide Ski Trip in January!



God blessed us with a great day and a lot of fun!

+++++

TEEN BIBLE STUDY GROUP

For Junior High and High School Youth

WHEN: Sunday, February 20th, 2011 7PM-8PM in St. Mary's Parish Hall

Come join in the FOOD and FUN of learning more about the Bible!!!

You won't be disappointed!



+++++

**"If anyone is seeking God, know that the Beloved is seeking that person much more."
St. John of the Cross**



If you think God may be seeking you to consider the priesthood or religious life, please contact Fr. John, Fr. Thom, Sr. Agnes or Patti at 337-4314. Fr. Marty Goetz is the vocation director for the Diocese of Davenport at 563-324-1911.

LIVES OF THE SAINTS

By: Joseph Malanson
Sophomore, West High School



St. Polycarp (Feast Day Feb. 23rd) – St. Polycarp was born in 69 A.D. He was one of the second generation of church leaders, being a disciple of St. John the Apostle. He was one of the few and the lucky that got to learn at the feet of Jesus' disciples. The very ones that had lived and heard Jesus's teachings directly from the Messiah became Polycarp's teachers. However, once those disciples passed away, Polycarp and other members of the 2nd generation church hierarchy were faced with new problems. Polycarp, as a holy man and Bishop of Smyrna (in present day Turkey) led the way in maintaining the true traditions and teachings of Jesus. He would always remain steadfast in his beliefs and always strived to imitate the life of Jesus.

When confronted with heretics, Polycarp was unwavering in his own beliefs and refused to recognize any part of their ideas. An example was with Marcion, the leader of the Marcionites who followed a dualistic heresy; he came to Polycarp and demanded that he recognize them as legitimate. Polycarp famously replied to the man, "I recognize you, yes, I recognize the son of Satan." However, in Christian disagreements, Polycarp was known for being respectful and full of forgiveness to all sides. At the time, the celebration of Easter became very controversial. The East, where Polycarp was from, celebrated the Passover as the Passion of Christ followed by a Eucharist the next day. The West celebrated Easter on the Sunday of the week after Passover. This issue was becoming increasingly divisive so finally, eastern Christians chose Polycarp to go to Rome and discuss the matter with Pope Anicetus. They didn't reach an agreement, but because they still had the same doctrine they ended up having Mass together the next day.

As most Christians in that time, Polycarp faced persecution from Roman authorities and others who believed in the old ways. Polycarp was a symbol of holiness and leadership and soon his life was threatened. His friends persuaded him to leave the city and he hid near a farm. For days, he spent his time praying. During this period, he received a vision showing his pillow going up in flames. Polycarp knew at that moment he would be burned alive. He moved to another farm but the authorities closed in and he gave himself up, saying "God's will be done." Polycarp even made a meal for his captors and spoke to them, simply asking for a couple more hours of prayer. He spent that time praying for everyone he'd ever known and for the survival and growth of the church he loved so much. His captors soon began to question why they were bringing this man to his martyrdom, especially because by now, Polycarp was 86 years old.

Polycarp was brought into the arena on the Sabbath, and others around him claimed to hear a voice saying "Be brave, Polycarp, and act like a man." He was given a chance to give in because of his age and denounce Christianity but he refused vehemently. He then started to pray, and the fire was lit as he said Amen. However, the fire wasn't burning him and instead simply glowed around him. In response, his captors stabbed him and only to have his blood put the fire out. The proconsul who had offered him mercy ordered that his body be burned-- only for Christians to steal his bones in order to celebrate the memory of his martyrdom. The date was about February 23, 156.

Teens Encounter Christ

Feb. 19-21

Assumption High School

Davenport

TEC is a weekend experience in Christian living, which takes a Catholic perspective on the journey of faith, with an emphasis on the Paschal Mystery of Jesus in our lives.

In TEC you experience:

- a fresh, different atmosphere, away from home or school...
- a chance to meet other young people...
- a time to reflect on your life through the eyes of Jesus...
- an opportunity for prayer and sharing with others...
- a God you can believe in, encountering Christ risen and alive!

TEC is open to high school juniors, seniors and college freshmen. It begins on Saturday at 10 AM and lasts until 4 PM on Monday.

The cost of TEC is \$55. Sometimes your parish will pay part of this. Please check with your parish to see if they offer financial help. No one will be turned away because of inability to pay.

For more information or for an application form, please see your parish coordinator of youth ministry, your pastor, or contact Pat Finan, Youth and Young Adult Ministry Coordinator, Diocese of Davenport, at (563) 888-4242 or finan@davenportdiocese.org.

Applications must be received by Monday, Feb. 7. Space is limited so apply early. Applications will be taken on a first-come, first-served basis.