



A bimonthly publication of Good Shepherd Catholic Church ~ steadfast in awakening our true being in God.

CATECHISM: NOT JUST FOR KIDS!

The "always-learning" disciple and the quest to grow in faith, know Jesus

Beyond the structured faith formation (or CCD or catechism) of childhood, many faithful Catholics may find themselves, years later, yearning for more. They admit feelings of "checking the usual boxes" or consistent patterns of practice and sacrament, yet they hold an impression that something is missing. But what?

Encounters with Jesus? A full, active and rich faith life? Fruitful discipleship? Sharing joy?

It can be different for everyone, but just as individuals strive to grow professionally, personally or physically, true spiritual growth and a deeper relationship with Jesus come only by spiritual stretching!

Digging deeper and pushing one's spiritual limits is a positive countermove to the risk

of stunted or dormant faith. It takes effort, but intentional pursuit of spiritual development encourages the "fully alive" life that God wants for his children!

Learning about our Catholic faith is the *essence* of discipleship. As followers of Christ, the *always-learning* disciple

seeks to know more, to *truly* know Christ.

The catechism is not just for kids! The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the Bible, online learning resources, workshops, books and a range of other accessible media are for everyone. Spiritual growth is at one's fingertips.

**"The Glory of God
is man fully alive."**

St. Iraneus

**SPIRITUAL
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

1.

(Story continues on page 4)

Growing

IN

V I R T U E

LIVING A LIFE OF VIRTUE AS A PATHWAY TO FAITHFUL DISCIPLESHIP

The cardinal virtue of

PRUDENCE

invites us to *"Be like Mary"* and choose good



Patience Dayton

Patience Dayton, a licensed clinical social worker and Catholic therapist in Sacramento, sees *prudence* as an "all-encompassing" virtue because "it predicts and requires the integration of other virtues," she says.

"Prudence is making the decision *to do what is most true and good in each moment*," Patience offers as a straightforward definition adding that prudence "requires discernment to determine the good and to make choices based on what is most truly good in any circumstance."

"The younger we are the more prudence we need to cultivate. Young children, for instance, are more impulsive and need more support in cultivating the virtue of prudence, as they have not had the time to develop this virtue compared to that of an adult," Patience explains.

"When you get to be an older adult, as you're growing and developing, there is a greater capacity for holiness that allows for deeper relationships, and greater alignment with your faith and value system," she says. There are greater opportunities and greater consequences, both good and bad... larger decisions, greater impacts.

But ideally, Patience believes, "as we grow, we cultivate the virtues under the guidance of healthy examples, such as parents, teachers, priests, brothers or sisters."

"Prudence—*true practical wisdom*—requires a fair and accurate assessment of what is most good, not just in an 'exchange-of-goods' sense, but in relationship to what is *most* good for us in *all* aspects, physically, emotionally, psychologically, and *especially* spiritually," Patience

conveys stressing the complexity of human nature as "persons with intellect, will, spirit, and body."

"In a secular sense, the everyday person with no religious or faith background might think of being prudent as using time wisely or enhancing professional circumstances," Patience says. "But as a Catholic virtue, it's far more than professional, materialistic or utilitarian," she says citing the "full-view" idea of a *moral balance*, physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually.

"It's choosing what is *most good, most of the time*, and ideally *all* of the time," she says emphasizing a goal of getting to a point where "we're always choosing what is good and our desires are aligned with what is good and aligned with our will."

She offers the example of eating brownies. "It is pretty easy to eat five brownies after dinner tonight and stay up until 4:00 a.m.," she proposes but then counters the thought quickly sharing how everything changes when considering the impact on an important 9:00 a.m. conference.

"It's not prudent," she suggests "because

it's going to make me feel sick, and I won't be fully on-point, present and alert." Add to that, the probability of sleeping in a bit, missing morning prayer and forfeiting any hope of being spiritually fed.

"Catholic spiritual prudence *requires* a moral balance," Patience affirms mentioning the influence of Pope Saint John Paul II's Theology of the Body (TOB) on her philosophy on prudence. As a student at Franciscan University at Steubenville pursuing undergraduate work, she fell in love with TOB and views it as an instrumental life guide and applicable to a life of virtue.

She also remembers the advice of a seminarian while at Franciscan University. "He said, '*Be like Mary*,'" Patience says recalling his direction to read the book of Wisdom, chapter 6, replacing every mention of wisdom with "Mary."

"Turn to Mary as the example of practical wisdom (prudence)," Patience recommends to perfect the virtue of prudence and avoid being caught up in the confusion of what it means to be prudent. "I'm going to choose God. Mary chose God," she says, paying forward the prudent advice.

Patience participates in Good Shepherd's Fiat Young Adult Ministry and co-presented on the topic of healthy relationships in July, no doubt touching on Catholic virtue and prudence. She most regularly attends St. Joseph Marelllo Parish in Granite Bay.

Exploring the cardinal virtues of **PRUDENCE, JUSTICE, FORTITUDE and TEMPERANCE** can form a greater understanding of all virtues and their interrelatedness. The word "cardinal" comes from the Latin word for "hinge." Cardinal virtues are also referred to as human or moral virtues.



NATIONAL Eucharistic Revival

Year of Parish Revival
June 11, 2023—July 17, 2024

Visit GSCCEG.org to learn more about upcoming events.

FATHER LEO PATALINGHUG TO VISIT GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH!

If you're familiar with Father Leo and his Plating Grace Ministry, you know that his reputation proceeds him as a sought-after priest and TV chef. With his own YouTube channel, a weekly EWTN program, books, pilgrimages and cooking demonstrations, Father Leo aims to "bring people together one meal at a time."

On **Saturday, September 30**, Good Shepherd welcomes Father Leo for a special,

adult-only dinner, cooking demonstration and talk highlighting the Eucharist – *Jesus as food for mind, body and soul*.

On **Sunday, October 1**, a free family breakfast event will take place with Father Leo giving another talk, emphasizing a future of stronger families, closer relationships and a deeper understanding of Jesus.

These Eucharistic Revival parish events serve up intentional and meaningful moments that center hearts on the nourishment found only in Jesus.

Scan the QR code to learn more about Plating Grace and Father Leo!



PLATING
— GRACE —

SEPTEMBER 9 FILM-SHOWING INVITES CONSIDERATION, LEADERSHIP IN CARING FOR OUR PLANET

Good Shepherd Parish will host an important showing of a YouTube Originals film, **THE LETTER | A MESSAGE FOR OUR EARTH**, on **Saturday, September 9**, 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. in the Father Philip Wells Hall.

Described as "touching, powerful and encouraging," the film follows five global recipients of Pope Francis' "letter" as they journey to Rome to share their experiences and challenges with climate change.

Several churches/organizations are collaborating on the event: Compassion Elk Grove, Good Shepherd's Stewardship Ministry, St. Joseph's Creation Care Team and Elk Grove's Interfaith Community.

The free event includes the film presentation and discussion afterwards. Please sign up to attend. [Visit the parish website for more information and to sign up.](#)

Join Fr. Octavio Ventura, LC on Wednesday, Oct. 4, 2023

Visiting from Mexico, Fr. Octavio returns to Good Shepherd to offer a special talk following Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on **Oct. 4**. Adoration and

confession occurs 5:45 to 7:00 p.m. Fr. Octavio's talk follows at 7 p.m. on the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Word.



TRUNK OR TREAT

This Halloween favorite returns on **Saturday, October 28** following the 5:00 p.m. vigil Mass.

Sponsored by the Office of Religious Education. Watch for donation opportunities to make this event spooktacular!





LOVE WITH ALL YOUR HEART

Elaine Stenoski:

learns & loves more about faith with powerful podcasts

"I have a deeper love of Jesus," Elaine Stenoski says with reflection, "and a deeper love of others."

"I'm a 'cradle Catholic,'" she explains unfolding her former story of "lukewarm" practice, – *that is until about six years ago*. She remembers stirrings in her heart, unsure what they were, but she had a deep desire to pray and learn more, attend Mass regularly and volunteer.

"I know *now*," Elaine shares of those stirrings, adding "it was the Holy Spirit" preparing and strengthening her to ignite and share her faith.

Her husband's serious heart attack and subsequent six-week hospital stay in 2018 tested her in extreme ways. "I was able to bring Jesus to him," she whispers detailing those somber

Elaine is retired from the Department of Corrections, enjoying every minute of daily time with her granddaughter. She is a lector, extraordinary minister of holy Communion, a home-bound minister, and active in the Cursillo movement. She also spends time helping with a family winery in Amador County.

days when she encouraged his confession, daily communion, and anointing of the sick. Before long, *both* their hearts were emblazoned with love, healing and faith.

"It all grew from there," she says of her move to begin Father Mike Schmitz's [The Bible in a Year](#) podcast upon its release on January 1, 2021.

"I just kept pressing play," she relates joyfully although acknowledging "some days were harder." Still, she studied the entire Bible gaining clarity and understanding of "salvation history, the old and the new and how everything relates."

When the availability of [The Catechism in a Year](#) podcast was announced January 2023, Elaine knew she was ready to begin another fascinating journey of learning.

"It gives me a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith... *why* it matters," she conveys already nearly 250 days "in" to the #1 podcast on Apple's charts. Elaine's unofficial advocacy speaks volumes. "It has changed my life," she insists.

"I experience everything in a deeper way," she says referring to the sacraments, Mass, confession, prayer, community, small group faith gatherings, *everything*.

"My evangelization is different, too," she adds mentioning her desire and ease to "talk about Christ" without fear. She describes defending her faith effortlessly with "peace, calm and confidence."

"The catechism is for *all* of us," Elaine says appealing to *every* Catholic to give it a read or a listen. The podcast segments are about 15 to 20 minutes and Elaine appreciates Father Mike's authentic presentation of prayer, the text of the day, discussion and commentary. Listeners can advance at their own pace without the worry

**SPIRITUAL
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

MASS ✓ BIBLE ✓
CATECHISM PODCAST ✓
ONLINE PROGRAMS ✓
READ MORE! 😊

of rigid timelines or required sequences. The podcast is free and available on a variety of platforms, including YouTube.

"It's a must," Elaine says convincingly with a motivating tip: "Just keep pressing play!"

"Taking time to read the Gospels and scripture daily is a sure way to encounter Christ," Father Michael says as he encourages parishioners with three excellent benefits that come from a faithful habit. "Beginning a routine of spiritual reading will (1) deepen your relationship with Jesus, (2) expand your self-knowledge and (3) evangelize your mind."

FR. MICHAEL'S

Top 10 Spiritual Reads to...

1. [Catholic Bible](#) - ESV Catholic Edition - Blue Hardcover with Gold Tree
2. [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#)
3. [The Joy of the Gospel: Evangelii Gaudium](#) (Publication / United States Conference of Catholic Bishops); *Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation 2013*
4. [Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home](#); *Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter 2015*
5. [Christ Is Alive](#) (*Christus Vivit*); *Pope Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation 2019*



Visit the online version of Awaken on the parish website (GSCCEG.org) for Amazon links about each book.

AWAKEN YOUR SOUL

Rich Dorricott:

turns to online Catholic learning resources to grow & know

“I like to study the faith,” Rich Dorricott says deducing that his interest may relate to years of investigative work in law enforcement. “I want to know for myself,” he adds suggesting “the more you investigate, the more you *know* Christ.”

Rich stresses the important connection between true, personal *knowledge* of Christ and authentic spiritual growth. The sources matter, otherwise, it can be easy to fall subject to a worldly synthesis of the Catholic faith. Citing the Venerable Fulton Sheen, Rich shares a favorite quote:

“There are not over a hundred people in the United States who hate the Catholic Church. There are millions, however, who hate what they wrongly believe to be the Catholic Church – which is, of course, quite a different thing.”

Thought-provoking as these words are, Rich points to the Venerable archbishop’s wisdom appearing further on in the article:

“If then, the hatred of the Church is founded on erroneous beliefs, it follows that the basic need of the day is *instruction*. Love depends on knowledge for we cannot aspire nor desire the unknown.”

“When you search for the ‘whys’ of our faith,” Rich surmises, we begin to awaken to “how merciful our Lord is through study.”

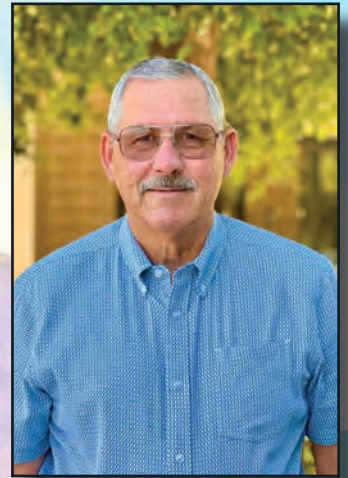
“We’re afraid,” Rich posits suggesting that no one wants to “be the sage on the stage” for fear of the response. Rejection? Denial? Or possibly, *transformation*?

As ministry co-lead with his

wife, Sharon, for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), Rich seeks to grow in faith on an ongoing basis, beyond the basics, and diving deeper into several online learning platforms.

“I recently completed the [Franciscan at Home](#) RCIA training program,” Rich shares as he prepares for a new class of catechumens. “It brought out the importance of getting the parish involved,” he says emphasizing, “We need people that know their faith.” Rich infers that *every* Catholic is a catechist at heart by virtue of baptism.

“We’re called to be missionary disciples, we’re called to be saints,” Rich says recommending the range of learning “tracks” available on Franciscan at Home, especially the “Catechist” track to expand one’s knowledge of the faith. Other tracks include *First Proclamation and Evangelization*, *Forming Faith at Home*, *Eucharistic Renewal*, *Ministry of Parenting*, and *Four Pillars*



Rich is retired from the Sacramento Police Department. A long-time parishioner, he is involved in liturgical ministries, events, Cursillo and Knights of Columbus. For years he has participated on the RCIA team and now will lead it with Sharon.

of the *Catechism*. Many are offered in Spanish, too. Franciscan at Home is free of charge on the parish website.

“What I like about the program is that you can do the modules in the comfort of your home,” Rich explains sharing how the video content offers an ease of access and time for personal reflection based on learners’ needs. He relates scripture and Jesus’ invitation to “go to your room and pray,” (Matthew 6:6) promising “it will begin to stir you.”

Rich also takes advantage personally of other paid subscriptions and books to expand his knowledge and understanding, and unravel the mysteries of faith. “When you know your faith, it gives you hope,” Rich affirms, and hope does not disappoint. ✚

EVANGELIZE YOUR

MIND

6. [In Silence With God](#); Benedikt Bauer, O.S.B., 1997

7. [Time for God](#); Rev. Jacques Philippe 2008

8. [The Shadow of His Wings: The True Story of Fr. Gereon Goldmann, OFM](#); biography by Fr. Gereon Goldmann, OFM, 2000

9. [He Leadeth Me: An Extraordinary Testament of Faith](#); Walter J. Ciszek S.J. and Daniel L. Flaherty S.J., 2014

10. [The Imitation of Christ: A New Revised Translation with Annotations](#); Thomas A Kempis (Author), John C Graham (Editor, Translator), 2023





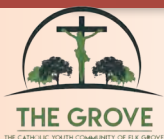
FRUITFUL DISCIPLESHIP

... blooms in every age,
in every generation,
in every movement.

Learn about how the parish seeks to inspire
and bridge generations while sharing Jesus
Christ in a personal and focused way.



The Grove Youth Ministry



Antony Ta
Director, The Grove
Catholic Youth Ministry

Good Shepherd Parish, united with St. Joseph and St. Maria Goretti parishes of Elk Grove and Mission Church of St. Vincent de Paul in Rancho Murieta, all welcomed **Antony Ta** as the new director of [The Grove Catholic Youth Ministry](#) in June.

"I'm hoping to make it an intergenerational ministry," Antony says of The Grove as he assumes leadership of the well-established middle school and high school ministries.

Serving three parishes and more than 150 youth and young adults, the potential is immense to intentionally connect generations and create opportunities for learning, fun and meaningful dialogue.

"The Grove seeks to provide a space that's welcoming," Antony explains stressing that youth and teens should "come as they are" to explore the Catholic space

with others and "see how God is calling them to a fuller, richer life." He speaks of these young faithful parishioners as "protagonists" of their own faith, and "seasoned," older adults on the *other* side of the bridge as "adult mentors" accompanying youth on "the journey they're investing in ... their relationship with Christ."

"I see The Grove collaborating with the various programs in the parishes," Antony notes recognizing The Grove as *part* of a larger community and the ultimate goal of fostering a seamless, mutual and interactive experience of missionary discipleship learning and growing together.

"It's an entry point," Antony suggests indicating how The Grove can serve to launch youth and teens into the next stages of spiritual development and form them in such a way that every generation claims "ownership" of their faith.

Antony says the 2023-2024 calendar includes the Friday and Sunday meetings for middle school and teen groups rotating between parishes as in the past. The Grove also plans to have retreats, service projects and events.

"We want to add small faith groups and 'life nights,'" Antony says noting the new components will bring more opportunity for adult mentoring and "exploring life and how Christ is involved." From dealing with taxes to changing tires, Antony imagines these exchanges on "adulthood" can be instrumental in bridging generations.

BRIDGING



A SUPERS spanning time, space for love

The study of generations and the differences between them. In the early 1960s, the experiences of young people marked the beginning of social science labels to identify Gen X and Gen Z. It makes sense then that in the church family, we need new approaches and solutions, albeit without ignoring different experiences. The charge of youth and young adult ministry today — to support and facilitate a solid foundation for a future.

"I'm a big proponent of the idea that everyone in the parish is a youth minister," Antony affirms with an appeal to join The Grove youth ministry. Every generation can contribute wisdom and model community, dialogue, service and prayer.

Antony invites inquiries to serve as youth ministers and adult mentors. Email him at groveyouthministry@gmail.com.

An illustration featuring a stylized bridge in the upper left corner. Below it, a large, orange, textured profile of a human head is shown in silhouette. Two small figures, a man and a woman, are walking across a blue bridge that spans the width of the head's profile. The background is a light orange color with some white clouds.

GENERATIONS

STRUCTURE Space & generations of God

them have been a cultural focus for at least 60 years. seemed significantly at odds with older generations. To unify the silent generation, boomers, Gen X, millennials, Gen Z, the focus should be on shared experiences, values, and traditions across the generations. This is the challenge and the goal: to build bridges across the generations, girder it with shared experiences and continued learning and spiritual development.

One of the most natural bridges linking teens to the “next” part of their spiritual journey is [Fiat Young Adult Ministry](#). As part of the “superstructure” spanning and encouraging generations, Fiat is housed in The Grove ministry organizationally while retaining program autonomy and content design for its participants.

Four co-leads plan and coordinate ministry meetings and events throughout the year for young adults between the ages of 18 and 39. Fiat aims to help participants “embrace their faith and grow in spiritual maturity,” according to co-lead **Theresa Maalouf**.

Theresa shares how the age range spans the decades defined as Millennials and Gen Z including people who are “trying to build a better relationship with Christ and find community and friendship.”

“Fiat helps fill the gap between high school ministry and parish life,” she says alluding to a feeling *in-between* education and vocation. “We try to provide a space where young adults can learn more about their faith without fear of judgment,” she adds commenting that many seek answers and conversation among their peers who might be “cradle” Catholics, returning Catholics or new converts to Catholicism following RCIA.

It’s a critical juncture, Theresa confirms as young adults straddle the generational divide in pursuit of friendship and support. She also details how Fiat’s ministerial model differs from that of traditional youth ministry.

“We try to bring in resources that are beyond ourselves,” Theresa says distinguishing their roles. Fiat invites clergy and religious, and other Catholic professionals like lawyers and mental health practitioners to speak on various topics in a Catholic context.



Fiat Young Adult Ministry



Theresa Maalouf
Co-Lead, Fiat Young
Adult Ministry

“This is a group trying to deepen their formation and knowledge in order to grow in virtue, break bad habits, and grow spiritually,” Theresa clarifies.

Fiat’s association with The Grove allows them to “give back,” and offer intergenerational support as they live out their missionary discipleship. Many Fiat participants serve on The Grove’s core team and volunteer to serve and mentor youth in their faith journeys.

“The average Fiat participant makes a conscious effort to be a part of the Church, seeking more than basic catechesis or obligations,” Theresa observes. Fiat is on one end of that bridge greeting and guiding youth but, on average, most Fiat members are in their 20s and single, and therefore still crossing bridges themselves. Theresa notes these young adults may not always live in Elk Grove or attend local parishes. That is why Fiat works to foster a larger, county-wide outreach for its program knowing that those who drive an hour and a half to hear a speaker may someday land at Good Shepherd and start a family here.

The idea is to nurture and develop Catholic roots, respect geographical roots and bridge generations—*facilitating leadership and handing on the gift of faith*.



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Practice the faith ...

THE MAGAÑA FAMILY
*Sacred moments
in the kitchen, at the table*

Awaken
THE SOUL

Joel and Rosie Magaña and their four children consider their time gathered around the table to share a meal a sacred moment.

"We are grateful for the time that God allows us to spend with one another," Rosie says with heartfelt sentiment and awareness of the special "time to experience God's love at the center of our family." They all agree that mealtime — *their time for breaking bread together* — is a time to set aside distraction and unite in conversation and togetherness. Their schedules are busy with three of their four children balancing college and their youngest in high school. But they commit to waiting for each other and sitting down to eat together more frequently than not.

"Ever since our children were very little, we taught them to pray together as a family before meals," Joel offers outlining the elements of their blessing before they eat.

"We begin by bowing our heads in reverence for God, we praise God for the abundance of food we have at our table, we give thanks for the hands that prepared the meal, we make sure to pray for those who are less fortunate, and we ask God to nourish us physically and spiritually," Joel explains adding how they conclude their prayer with the sign of the cross.

During the meal, "We share stories about our encounters throughout the day," Rosie begins and further describes a dinner hour spent reflecting on how God works in their lives. She lists the plentiful fruits of their mealtime.

"We use the time to encourage, teach one another and bond... in love and laughter," she

says but also conveys how as parents, they take time to "listen to the needs" of their children, reinforcing family support, putting God in the center of their experiences and assuring one another of prayers.

Rosie notes special holiday traditions centered around meals and food and the essence of gratitude ever-present.

"At Thanksgiving, after prayer, we go around the table saying what we're thankful for," Rosie says describing a sometimes-emotional scene as family members express the highs and

lows of the year and how God has worked in their lives through those times. "These moments allow us to express our trials and hardships," she mentions underscoring the value of opening hearts and healing through individual experiences *together*. At Christmas, they join with other families in celebrating the Mexican Posada tradition, praying the rosary, worshipping and singing, and taking turns hosting dinner, hot chocolate and Mexican bread.

All are "sacred moments in our eyes," Rosie says, *from God and for God*.

