

St. Augustine of Canterbury R.C. Church

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SAINT AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY VISION

Completed September 30th, 2010

CORE IDEOLOGY

CORE VALUES

Humility
Love & Truth
Family & Community
Responsibility & Commitment
Tradition

CORE PURPOSE

To foster the personal & spiritual growth of our youth & their families in accord with Catholic teachings & Tradition in order to encourage their active participation in parish life and in Jesus' mission

ENVISIONED FUTURE

BHAG

(Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal)

By 2020, out of love for the Eucharist - become a bustling, vibrant and growing youth ministry

VIVID DESCRIPTION

- Youth are on fire for God.
- They are actively involved in our parish along with their families and the faith community.
- Church ministries are overflowing with youth volunteers as they engage in different works of mercy and love.
- They are actively involved in different leadership roles within the parish and beyond its walls.
- 100% of our youth are seeking God's purpose in their lives and are attending Sunday mass weekly as they witness daily of God's love.

Youth Ministry Vision Statement Defined

Members of the Youth Ministry Advisory Committee have defined the vision statement for youth ministry after 10 months of deliberation. Completed on September 30th 2010, youth ministry hopes to achieve these goals in collaboration with the lay faithful.



Inset are some of the members of the advisory committee: from right to left --- Fr Dominic Yuen (spiritual advisor), Jocelyne and Rick Kehler, Heather Burgess, Janelle Wilts, Jennifer & Marc Potvin, Rod Ferris



Inset are some of the members of the advisory committee: from left to right --- Paige Kasprick, Fr Dominic Yuen (spiritual advisor), Breanna Silversides, Janelle Wilts holding daughter Eleanor, Rick & Jocelyne Kehler, Jennifer Houlihan, Jeff Phillips, Henry and daughter Marycia Sieklicki

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEYS

Members of the Youth Ministry Advisory Committee designed youth ministry surveys to determine the top 5 needs of our high school and middle school youth as well as young adults. They designed three surveys: one for youth in high school, another for youth in middle school and lastly for adults, parents and young adults (18+). The surveys were conducted during the Youth Ministry Sunday on November 27 & 28, 2010 during all weekend masses for the First Sunday of Advent. The following week, surveys were given to the middle school students studying in Saint Augustine's School.

A total of 39 surveys were gathered from the high school students, 88 surveys from the middle school students, 122 young adult surveys for adults aged 18-39 years, 361 adults 40 and above and 84 surveys from parents of youth in Grades 6-12.

Results of the surveys will be published in the winter e-newsletter.



Advent Family Get-Together 2011

FUN! A word to describe the Advent Family Get-Together. There were games, lots of dainties, an Advent family service and Advent wreaths and prayer guide for families to take home.

Many thanks to our Advent Family Get-Together 2011 organizers: Lucinda Carels, CWL Representative Pam Stacy, Heather Dickson, Youthleader Hope Dickson, Darryl & Kimberley Schaeffer, Kent and Natasha Van Den Berghe, Youthleader Simon Lee, Jojo and Aimee Pasapaorte, and Gerard & Laura Bohrn.





"Zak, the Tree-climbing Taxman"

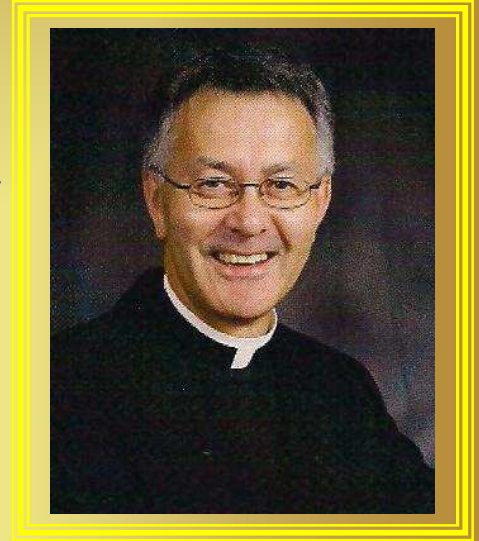
The evangelist Luke presents the account of An instantaneous conversion of the tax collector Zacchaeus. God's grace led him to a moment of conversion. The account describes how Jesus recognized Zacchaeus for exactly what he was, a lost sinner in need of a Savior, and how God's grace worked in Zacchaeus to lead him from idle curiosity to repentance, conversion and restitution.

Reflection on the Word

by Rev Fr Dominic Yuen, Parish Priest

The Gospel takes place in the town of Jericho. A wealthy, commercial town in the Jordan Valley. There were two major highways in Israel and one passed right through Jericho. Hence, Jericho was one of the great tax centers of Palestine and its tax collectors were rich and notorious.

Zacchaeus was chief tax-collector in Jericho. He was probably very wealthy and had few friends. Because the tax collectors extorted sizable amounts of interest, in addition to the taxes fixed by Rome, they were despised by their own townspeople. Zacchaeus would have been considered a traitor, a thief and an outcast.



It was Passover time, which meant that tens of thousands of Jewish pilgrims were coming down from Galilee and arriving at the toll booth in Jericho to pay their taxes. Jesus also made this trip, coming from Galilee in the north, to Jerusalem in the south, by way of Jericho. Since Jesus had become famous by that time, people passing through the customs house at Jericho wanted to see him. Naturally, Zacchaeus was curious to see the new rabbi from Nazareth who, people said, welcomed tax collectors and sinners as his friends. In order to get a better look at Jesus, Zacchaeus climbed a sycamore tree, which has a short trunk and wide branches. Jesus noticed him, told him to come down and asked him to take him to his home. So, off they went, a sinner and the Son of God.

By entering Zacchaeus' house, Jesus gave back to its owner the dignity that he had lost and restored his self-image. He gave him a new life. By making no demands on Zacchaeus, Jesus gave him a feeling of acceptance and a new direction for his life. During the banquet, Zacchaeus made the solemn announcement of his repentance and committed himself to doing justice by sharing his wealth, that is giving half of his possessions to the poor, and by making reparations --- fourfold to the defrauded.

Zacchaeus did not make this offer to win Jesus' approval, but to show his gratitude. This was a strong indication of his conversion and affirmed the quality of his faith. So Jesus said that salvation had come to Zacchaeus and also to his entire household. We noticed that Zacchaeus was not saved in isolation. His entire household benefited from his conversion.

Zacchaeus reminds us that Jesus continues to call the strangest people from the strangest places; even from a sycamore tree. He sees the potential in us despite our bad thoughts, our broken promises, our lack of prayer and faith and despite our resentments and lusts. He alone can set us back on the straight path and make us true sons and daughters of Abraham.

"How did Jesus do this?"

By showing Zacchaeus unconditional love which changed his life.

How often do we want people to change first, and then we will show them love. Sometimes we have the temptation to withhold love from people whom we consider sinners. But, just as Jesus loved the notorious tax collector, opportunist and thief Zacchaeus, so He expects us to love others who cause us grief. I am not saying that we should overlook the faults and shortcomings of others. For instance, I am not saying that parents should allow their rebellious teenagers to do whatever they want. A parent is certainly prudent if he or she withhold money, the family car, computer use, and so on. But not love. Love is more than things and should never be withheld.

Obviously if someone is on the road to certain ruin, we have an obligation to do all in our control to set them back on the right path. Love insists that we do this as well as accept them.

Saint Catherine of Siena refers to this as "protective love". Present the truth in love as we are told in Saint Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. None of us, including myself, enjoys correcting someone. But to leave a person in a sinful situation is not protective love.

It is certainly easier not to say anything, to not create any waves, to be politically correct, than it is to address an immoral situation.

But protective love looks beyond the present to the eternal state of your loved one's soul.

This is what Jesus did when he met Zacchaeus. He did not see a rich, notorious tax collector. He saw a person whose eternal soul was in jeopardy and Jesus entered into a close relationship with him, in order to save Zacchaeus.

Jesus was successful. Zacchaeus had an immediate conversion and change of direction.

So, the Christian disciple is asked to change and to change frequently. If Zacchaeus could, and did change his outlook and direction, so can you and me.

