

Catholic
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Renewal

Atlantic Service
Committee



Atlantic Renewal Newsletter—Sept 2021

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Inside this Issue:

- ~ Gathering the Harvest
- ~ Something Out of the Ordinary
- ~ The Art of Forming Young Disciples
- ~ Empowered to be Strong
- ~ Upcoming Events

To submit newsletter articles
or comments:

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Gathering In the Harvest

Editors Corner - - - Greg Moulaison

Are you ready to gather in the harvest? If your answer is yes, read on. The 2021 ASC Fall Conference theme is "Gathering the Wheat" taken from Rev. 14:15. "Take your sickle and reap: harvest time has come and the harvest of the earth is ripe." When I reflected on this theme, two questions immediately came to mind.

1. What is really meant by Gathering the Wheat? and
2. What is my, or better yet, our role in this?

Jesus gives us an answer to question #1 in John 4:35 where he says: "Do you not have a saying: Four months and then the harvest? Well, I tell you, look around you, look at the fields, already they are ripe, ready for the harvest!" Jesus is excited and ready to move forward to gather in the wheat (souls) for

his heavenly Father. He was excited two thousand years ago and He is just as excited today. Jesus is telling us now, in our time, that He needs our help. Are you ready to respond? Are you ready to pray and ask the Holy Spirit for assistance to overcome COVID-19 spiritual lethargy. (laziness) We are his hands, arms, eyes, ears, and voice. Reach out to Him because He is ready to receive the ripe harvest. It's time for us to move forward.

But know this, we are not alone. Yes, Jesus is calling us to action, which brings us to question #2. What is our role? Let us look at Isaiah 45:20 for a partial answer: "Assemble, come, gather together survivors of the nations." The importance of this seemingly simple Bible passage cannot be stressed enough. He is calling us individually as survivors of the nations, and also, collectively to assemble because there is strength in numbers. In both instances we are called to reach out to others in His name. He commands us to help in gathering His harvest.



In Malachi 3:10 we are given guidance on how to move forward. "Bring the full tithes and dues to the storehouse so that there may be food in my house, and then see if I do not open the floodgates of heaven and pour out an abundant blessing for you." The Lord is not only calling us to work for Him, but also with him, to achieve his goal of doing the Father's will.

Jesus is not simply standing by during this time. He is not only encouraging us, but He is also stepping in and getting involved. He reaches out and proclaims in Habakkuk 1:5.

"Cast your eyes over the nations, Look and be amazed; astounded.

For I am doing something in your own days that you would not believe if you were told of it."

We are not alone. Now is the time! A time for hope, action, holy zeal and expectant faith. God is ready for you. Are you ready to respond? Let us step out and assist in gathering in the harvest.

GOD Bless



Something Out-of-the-Ordinary

ASC Executive

You may have recognized or sensed that something-out-of-the-ordinary has been happening within and around the ASC this year. With the ASC Annual Summer Conference taking place late in the summer as opposed to its usual mid-summer, an upcoming Fall Conference in November (see upcoming events), and a new interactive email format, you may be wondering if this is all really the ASC you knew or a mis-representation; fake copy. Rest assured, it is still the ASC you trust.

The ASC executive committee has been sensing that God has been on the move over the last year and a half, and we hope you have sensed it too. In fact, we have been struggling to keep up. In 2019, as we realized that 20-20 is related to fullness of eye-site, the ASC heard a word from the Lord proclaiming that “2020 will be a year of clarity.” We never thought that the word “clarity,” the turn of 2020, and the introduction of the Covid-19 pandemic, would become connected like this. But we have certainly recognized that God has revealed to the world some hidden truths which the ASC continues to ponder.



The ASC had originally planned its 2021 Summer Conference for August 6 and 7th. Due to some technical difficulties we had to postpone the conference to a later date. (November) In the meantime, we had already had a healing workshop formed and ready to put into action, but provincial restrictions would not allow us to hold it. The recent reality of postponing the planned summer conference and having the healing workshop ready, caused us to realize that, with a little rearranging, we could hold the healing workshop as our Annual Summer Conference. So, the 2021 Annual Summer Conference held on August 27 and 28th had a theme of healing.

The ASC Executive has also started using a more interactive email system that allows the reader to gain better and faster access to links where they can quickly find the information they need or easily register for an event. With this new email system there is also a new email address (asc@betweenthehearts.ca) for all our communication regarding events. This new email address is affiliated with our new website. The email address, asc@ccrsatlantic.ca, is still active for other correspondence that's required for day-to-day business. We hope you will find this new system friendly and more convenient. Please feel welcome to give your feedback. We believe that these out-of-the-ordinary signs are in God's providence. What happens during our planning is in the control of the Spirit of God and we are at his service.

Fr. Mark Cherry, at the 2020 ASC Annual Summer Conference (Livestream), asked the question, “Are you ready? Are you ready for what God is going to do?” The theme of that conference was “It is Harvest Time.” This year's ASC Fall Conference theme is “Gather the Wheat.” As you can see, we are continuing this theme of the harvest. We know that God is always doing a new thing and we must be ready to recognize and follow what he is doing. We believe he is gathering humanity to himself and we will need to be ready to receive them and guide them to faith in the Savior. Registration is now open for this Fall Conference. See our website.



Come! Lord Jesus. Come! Holy Spirit.

The Art of Forming Young Disciples **Ethel Cunningham (Co-Editor)**

When parish leaders are asked to identify a group under-served by parishes today, we often hear in response, "It has to be the youth." In this time of uncertainty, it is important that laity step out in



faith and take more responsibility in forming youth, not only within our church settings, but in our own homes as well. We are all called, no matter what age or role in life, to be Disciples of Christ through the sharing of our gifts and knowledge. Certainly, parental assistance and guidance is necessary in motivating children, but it is the combined efforts of clergy, parents, and the youth themselves that will harvest the most fruitful formation.

Technology, has a significant power to shift Christian values and moral thinking to that of worldly influence. We find ourselves in a battle where Christian culture is fighting against societal culture. This worldly culture attempts to condition our minds, through false words and actions, to follow self-fulfilling logic. The truth of God's commandments, and His word, are being rejected. This group of young people are searching for answers to questions about themselves and their Catholic faith. Parish members need to combine their efforts to hear them and find a new approach in preparing youth for the future.

As I see it, there are 6 Fundamentals in Forming Young Disciples (to have and to be):

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| 1. Understanding | 2. Belonging | 3. Transparency |
| 4. Guidance | 5. Critical Thinking | 6. Self- Actualization |

As facilitators, we must first address the need for more personal interaction with youth by having one-on-one conversations with them and providing a safe setting where all voices can be expressed and heard without judgment. Meeting outside the church premises in small groups of five or less may empower a more cohesive group, and a more productive outcome.



Regarding the teaching component, it is essential to reinforce the complete picture of Christ in the Church (tradition and basic truths of the Catholic Catechism) while still allowing for objectivity and discussion. Emphasizing the development of a personal relationship with Jesus is of utmost importance. Encouraging youth to read scripture, receive the sacraments, and live the Beatitudes and Ten Commandments can make a significant change in their life. Our greatest influence on them is our own faith walk and actions.

In conclusion:

With collective Spirit-lead mentorship, training, support and encouragement, we can then, confidently, pass on the leadership mantle to the youth of our church.

Empowered: To Be Strong (or weak?)

David Webster

Over the past couple years, the ASC has been sponsoring an event for men called; Empowered: Catholic Conference for Men. This event is in its third annual conference with success in gathering men from around the Maritime Provinces with the intention to empower them in their faith, family and community. (See upcoming events) The theme chosen for the 2021 conference, “Strength”, is taken from Judges 6:14. This story of Gideon inspires me to ponder what sort of man I should strive to be...a strong man, or a weak man? Since I am of this gender, I believe I can be bold enough to say that men spend a lot of time working on and/or thinking about their discipline, confidence, courage and strength in order to be the man of God we desire to be for our families and communities. These attributes are certainly required to feel as though we are doing, and fulfilling, our part in our community work and in our effort to protect those we love and have responsibility for. Strength brings boldness and fearlessness.

But something strikes my heart when I look at this story of Gideon. Here is a man who questions what part God really plays in the life of the Israelites. Left in exile, they were afraid of, and felt powerless against their enemy, the Midianites, because their God who brought them out of Egypt and gave them a land of “milk and honey” seemed to have left them in their misery of captivity. But then, an Angel appears to Gideon proclaiming that God is with him. Gideon completely ignores the fact that the Angel calls him a “Valiant Warrior.” He practically laughs it off by retorting rudely, “Excuse me?”

Gideon expressed little faith that God cared about their situation by questioning the Angel, “If God is with us, why is all this (Exile and oppression) happening to us? And where are all the miracles which our ancestors used to tell us about?” In all this doubt, Gideon didn’t see himself as a believer in God’s intervention, much less as a Valiant Warrior. But listen to what God speaks to him through the Angel. “Go in this strength of yours and you will rescue Israel from the power of Midian!”

Hold it! Wait! Can you repeat that? Gideon is expressing his frustration and doubt in God, but God calls this strength and gives him a rescue mission to free a nation? Gideon sees his family as part of the weakest clan of Israel, and himself being the least among his family. Gideon saw very little within himself that warranted a mission such as this, let alone to be considered a Valiant Warrior. He didn’t even know if he could believe that God would want to do anything about it. He was just a lowly lay-person struggling to survive in the midst of their enemy. But somewhere in all of this, God saw great strength! Why?

I think God saw great strength in the character of Gideon for the simple reason that Gideon knew he was weak. Gideon knew that he could not fulfill the mission without the hand of God breaking down obstacles and barriers before him. God saw this humility (weakness) in Gideon and knew Gideon could not, and would not, take any credit for the completion of the mission. God knew Gideon would be like clay in his hand. This was the very reason God chose him. Gideon’s weakness became his strength.

Then, what about me? Should I be striving for more discipline, confidence, boldness and strength? I believe I should! But not for personal gain. I need to become more disciplined in my reliance on the Lord. I need to be more confident that God is with me...always. I need to exercise more boldness in defending truth and uprightness. I need to rely on the strength of the Lord, more so than my own. I need to become more aware of the moments that the Spirit of God is urging me into unknown areas of the work of Christ Jesus. Then, as John the Baptist says in John 3:30, “He must become greater and I must become less.”

Upcoming Events:

September 25-26

The Halifax/Yarmouth Archdiocesan Service Team (AST) has scheduled a retreat focused on the life of St. Peter to be held at the Between the Hearts Renewal Centre. Fr. Phil Thibodeau and Ethel Cunningham will facilitate. The retreat is limited to 45 participants and the registration fee is \$75.00 (includes meals and lodging).
Call Jean at 902-465-4206.

October 23 / 2021

Empowered: Catholic Conference for Men will hold their 3rd Annual Empowered men's conference at St. Peter Church, Dartmouth. Keynote speakers are Deacon Larry Worthen and Scott LeBlanc. A personal testimony by Brian Pettigrew. The theme is "Strength" taken from Judges 6:14. The event will be livestreamed with a limited number of participants on-site. There is no registration fee, but a free will offering is encouraged. Visit empoweredccfm.ca to register.

November 5 and 6th

A live-streamed ASC Fall Conference is scheduled at the Between the Hearts Renewal Centre with keynote speakers Peter Herbeck and daughter Racheal Herbeck. The theme of this conference is "Gather the Wheat into the Barn" continuing the theme of "Harvest" from the 2020 Summer Conference. Racheal will have a special address for young adults. See our website to register: betweenthehearts.ca

Young Adult Event

You have likely seen in the past two Newsletters that we have been planning an event dedicated for young adults. We had planned to get it off the ground this fall, but circumstances have delayed this. We are now very optimistic that we will have this event off the ground this coming spring. For any young adults reading this, check out our Fall Conference details on our website. Rachel Herbeck is one of the key-note speakers and will be addressing younger people in her presentation. Plan to register for this conference for a sneak preview of what's to come.

Between the Hearts Renewal Center



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