

# The FIAT

The FIAT Newsletter

November 2010

## Purgatory: Learning and Practicing Hope

By Jared Staudt



**W**hy does the priest give us a penance after our sins are forgiven? Even after God forgives us we have to make amends for what we have done. There is a difference between the guilt of sin and the (temporal) punishment due to that sin. This distinction can be seen after David's infamous sin (killing Bathsheba's husband and taking her for his wife) when the prophet Nathan confronts him and he repents. Nathan assures David that his sin has been forgiven and yet he still says that the sin must be punished (2 Sam 12: 1-14).

Sin has consequences in our own lives and the lives of others that must be dealt with. An alcoholic can receive forgiveness, but the effects and tendencies of his sin remain. Imagine someone who broke a window and receives forgiveness, but still needs to repair the window. We can make reparation for our forgiven sins through penance and through indulgences by which we draw upon the treasury of the merits of Christ and of the Saints. But what if we do not atone for forgiven sin in this life? This is where purgatory enters in.

### "Why does the priest give us a penance after our sins are forgiven?"

There are only two final destinations for human beings: Heaven and Hell. Purgatory is a place where souls who have died but still have not made reparation for the temporal punishments due to their sin prepare for Heaven. All souls in purgatory will go to Heaven when the effects of sin on their souls have been purified by the fires of purgatory. St. Paul talks about this fire in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15: "Now if any one builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw -- each man's work will become manifest; for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire."

What does this mean practically to us? We should do our purgatory on earth. Teresa of Avila described the fires of purgatory as being similar to the pains of Hell, except for the hope of Heaven that awaits. If we do penance and perform works of charity we not only make reparation for our sins now (and thus avoid purgatory), but we also merit an even greater share of glory in Heaven. Prayer, penance, and sacrifice free us from our attachments to sin and focus us more on God to prepare us to enter Heaven more swiftly and directly. It is also important to remember that we can obtain indulgences not only for ourselves but also for those who have departed before us, so that they can see the face of God more quickly.

Dr. R. Jared Straudt is Academic Dean and Assistant Professor of Theology and Catechesis at the Augustine Institute. He and his wife Anne and their three children are a Saint Mary Parish and School family.



### At a Glance

#### Parish Wide Youth Ministry Meeting

**Hear about the new vision and direction for Youth Ministry in the parish—all invited.**

Sunday, November 7  
6:30pm in Marian Hall

#### Bonfils Blood Drive

Sunday, November 7  
Marian Hall  
8:30am—12:30pm  
Register at 303-363-2300

#### Book Fair & Family Night Out

Wednesday, November 10  
**Tattered Cover:** 9am—9pm  
**Cold Stone Creamery:**  
5pm—8pm

#### Veteran's Mass and Brunch

Sunday, November 14  
10:30am

#### November Book Club

**Mary: God's Yes to Man**  
**(Redemptoris Mater Encyclical)**  
Wed, November 17  
7:00pm in Ave Maria Hall

#### Advent Wreath Sale

Sat—Sun, November 20—21  
In the vestibule after Mass

#### Altar & Rosary Fall Bake Sale

Sat—Sun, November 20—21  
Marian Hall—after the  
Masses until noon on Sunday

#### Family Hour of Adoration

Every Sunday at 4:00pm  
in the Adoration Chapel

## Saint Leo the Great and Union



St. Leo meets Attila the Hun

Why practice virtue at all? What is the point of choosing daily to train and discipline our desires? Are we merely aiming to become “better people” or “self-disciplined” – a vague spiritual fitness regimen?

Resoundingly, “NO!” The object of all virtues is to bring us into union with God, through Jesus Christ our

Lord—closer to Him who contains and bestows on us all the happiness that can be enjoyed in this world. We live for the praise of God’s glory. Our good choices lead us more and more deeply into union with the heart of Jesus which in turn strengthens us to serve those around us.

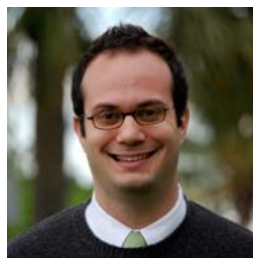
How do we daily deepen and open ourselves to this virtue of union which spreads its influence over all the other virtues and helps us to overcome every temptation, eradicate every imperfection, and preserve our peace of heart? How do we conform our will to God’s will and surrender our will to His?

Our Saint for the month, St. Leo the Great, gives us an example of a life lived in this union with God and conformity to the Divine will. Saint Leo was born in Italy at the dawn of the chaotic fifth century. The Roman Empire was collapsing. Attila the Hun and other barbarian tribes were invading. Heresies plagued the Church – even the Incarnation of Christ was questioned. Saint Leo became Pope in 440 during these challenging times.

Saint Leo surely prayed with the Psalmist, “With all my heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commands.” (Psalm 119:10) Strengthened by this union with God, he met Attila at the gates of Rome and stopped his advance, he upheld the doctrine of the Incarnation of Christ, and he fostered Church unity. The Church joyfully calls him “Great” and “Doctor of the Church” when his feast is celebrated every November 10.

In our own time, there is chaos throughout the world and confusion in the hearts of many about who God is and what it means to be in union with Him. As Catholic Christians, we must daily ask God for the grace of the virtue of union with Jesus our Lord. It is only through this union that we will have anything to give to our families, our friends, our broken world.

## Youth Ministry News



Director of Youth Ministry  
Everett Fritz

Dear Parents,

Praised Be Jesus Christ! My name is Everett Fritz and I am the new Director of Youth Ministry at St. Mary Catholic Parish. I am excited to be serving in this wonderful community at St. Mary’s and there are big things in store for youth ministry on both the high school and junior high levels.

I have spent the last seven weeks gathering information about the parish in preparations to build up youth ministry at the parish. Fr. Alvaro and Jim Beckman of the Augustine Institute have also been working together for the past eight months to prepare St. Mary’s for significant growth in youth ministry. With preparations nearing completion, I am excited to announce that we are going to be presenting a new vision for youth ministry at St. Mary’s.

I would like to invite you to an **ALL- PARISH MEETING** on **Sunday, November 7 at 6:30 pm** in Ave Maria Hall. I will be making a series of **BIG ANNOUNCEMENTS** regarding youth ministry in the future at St. Mary’s.

The meeting will address changes in youth ministry that will affect School families, Religious Education families, Confirmation preparation, high school students and parents. The agenda for the meeting will cover the challenges of ministering to youth culture and our need for youth ministry, the series of steps that we have taken in preparation over the last eight months and the new vision for youth ministry (THE BIG REVEAL) and the timeline for implementation.

Please come and join me for the meeting on November 7. I look forward to sharing our exciting news with all of you.

In Christ,

Everett Fritz, Director of Youth Ministry  
720-283-4729

What is FIAT? FIAT (Faith In Action Team) is a school organization sharing spirituality in daily living and in becoming leaders that follow Christ. Fiat is a Latin word that means, “let it be.” Just as Mary, Joseph and Jesus said “yes” and accepted their earthly missions, let us strive each day to accept God’s calling for us in our lives. FIAT is a group for all parents of St. Mary’s School! Read this newsletter aloud with family, use the suggested resources and spread the faith! Any questions or comments can be e-mailed to Meg D’Costa at [odc234@aol.com](mailto:odc234@aol.com).