



PREP News for January 2017

Happy New Year! It is promising to be an exciting year at St. Nicholas especially for our Grade 2 and Grade 7 students who will be receiving their Sacraments in the Spring. Please keep this newsletter handy so you do not miss important parent sacramental preparation meetings and other activities. In his New Year's homily, Pope Francis prayed especially for peace in the world, starting in our own hearts and homes. May 2017 be a year of peace and joy for all our parish families. If you have any questions regarding PREP, please contact Jane Waldock at 604-513-0300.

Sacramental Years

Grade 2 Events

- Feb 4th** Mandatory Parent Meeting 10am-3pm
Feb 5th Gr 2 Liturgy 10:30am Mass: Theme is: "Belonging"
Feb 12th Gr 2 Liturgy 10:30am Mass: Theme is: "Celebrating"

Grade 7 Events

- Feb 8th** Mandatory Parent and Sponsor Meeting with Mr. Chuck Luttrell 7pm in Room 4. Topic is "Talking to Your Child about Life and Sexuality". Adults only please.

!!! SAFETY REMINDERS !!!

Please park your car in a stall to drop your children off at PREP. If they are in Grades 1 or 2 or the parking lot is very busy, please walk your child into the building.

Speed limit in the parking lot is 5 kmh

Thank you for your attention to keeping our children safe on the parish property.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Children

Several older children in our parish are preparing to be baptized on Easter Sunday. If you know of a child between the ages of 4 and 16 whose parents wish them to be baptized, please contact Jane Waldock.



YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHOIR

Please Mark Your Calendars:

Practices on Sat. Jan 21 and 28 from 10-11am. Students sing at the 10:30 Mass on

Sun. Jan 29th.

Any new students are welcome to join at any time. Parent helpers are required; please let Liz know which dates you can help out with. Thank you, Elizabeth Ard liz.ard@shaw.ca



Archdiocesan Winter Institute 2017

St. Patrick Regional Secondary

Sat. Jan 21st

- *Classroom Management*
- *Listening Prayer for Children*
- *Basics of the Faith*
- *The Church and Political Life

All PREP teachers are encouraged to take part in these excellent workshops offered by the Office of Catechetics, Archdiocese of Vancouver. Contact Jane Waldock or check out the website at www.rcav.org. If you volunteer in the PREP program, the parish will cover your registration fee and carpooling can be organized.

ST. NICHOLAS YOUTH ENCOUNTER 2017

An amazing experience of encountering Christ for teens aged 15-19

When: Jan. 27 – 29 2017

Where: Camp Squeah

Contact: Kelli Piccini

778-998-2074 for more information

Pope Francis' New Year's Resolutions

MANILA, Philippines – He preaches against gossip, reminds us to finish our meals, and even tells us not to fear marriage. Described as the “world's parish priest,” Pope Francis goes beyond abstract theology, and gives us advice we can use daily. What lessons from him can we bring into 2017?

Rappler.com compiled 10 of the Pope's most memorable quotes in the form of New Year's resolutions. This is the Pope Francis list.

- 1. Don't gossip.** It's one of our hobbies. For Francis, it's also one of the most evil activities. The Catholic leader denounces gossip as “murder.” He feels so strongly about it that in less than a year as pontiff, Francis has preached against gossip in at least 6 different instances. He says when we gossip, we “are doing what Judas did,” and “begin to tear the other person to pieces.” “Every time we judge our brother in our hearts or worse when we speak badly of them with others, we are murdering Christians,” Francis says. “There is no such thing as innocent slander.”
- 2. Finish your meals.** No leftovers, please. Named after a 12th-century saint who lived in poverty, Francis slams a “culture of waste” that neglects the plight of the hungry. Nearly 870 million people suffer from chronic malnutrition, says the Food and Agriculture Organization. The Pope says: “We should all remember... that throwing food away is like stealing from the tables of the poor, the hungry! I encourage everyone to reflect on the problem of thrown away and wasted food to identify ways and means that, by seriously addressing this issue, are a vehicle of solidarity and sharing with the needy.”
- 3. Make time for others.** Tending to 1.2 billion members, Francis seems too busy for anything else. That is, until he calls up strangers. Or entertains a random biker. Or sends a handwritten letter to a Jesuit he has never met. The Jesuit who got the letter, Fr James Martin, says Francis inspires him “to be more generous in my own life with my time.” Martin says: “If the Pope can find time to be kind to others, if he can pause to say thank you, if he can take a moment make someone feel appreciated, then so can I. So can we.”
- 4. Choose the 'more humble' purchase.** Take it from the head of state who rides a 29-year-old Renault. In July, he warns against luxurious lives that seek “the joy of the world in the latest smartphone, the fastest car.” “Cars are necessary,” he says, “but take a more humble one. Think of how many children die of hunger and dedicate the savings to them.” The Pope preaches against materialism. “Certainly, possessions, money, and power can give a momentary thrill, the illusion of being happy, but they end up possessing us and making us always want to have more, never satisfied. ‘Put on Christ’ in your life, place your trust in him, and you will never be disappointed!” He calls for a “sober and essential lifestyle.”
- 5. Meet the poor 'in the flesh.'** Sure, we donate to charity. But this is not enough for Francis. Commitment to the poor, he says, must be “person to person, in the flesh.” Known as pro-poor even when he was archbishop, he explains more in the book *On Heaven and Earth*, which was published 3 years before he became pontiff. “It is not enough to mediate this commitment through institutions, which obviously help because they have a multiplying effect, but that is not enough. They do not excuse us from our establishing personal contact with the needy. The sick must be cared for, even when we find them repulsive and repugnant. Those in prison must be visited.” He calls for long-term commitment. “Hospitality in itself isn't enough. It's not enough to give a sandwich if it isn't accompanied by the possibility of learning to stand on one's own feet. Charity that does not change the situation of the poor isn't enough.”
- 6. Stop judging others.** In the same way he denounces gossip, Francis condemns prejudice. He reminds “intolerant” Catholics, for one, to respect atheists. “If we, each doing our own part, if we do good to others, if we meet there, doing good, and we go slowly, gently, little by little, we will make that culture of encounter: we need that so much. We must meet one another doing good.” Francis urges us “to keep watch over ourselves.” “Let us not forget that hatred, envy, and pride defile our lives!”
- 7. Befriend those who disagree.** What can we do to our worst critics? We can take our cue from Francis. In November, Francis surprises Mario Palmaro, a traditionalist who wrote the article, ‘The Reason Why We Don't Like This Pope.’ “He just wanted to tell me that he is praying for me,” says Palmaro, who is gravely ill, in an article by the Catholic News Agency. Francis does this in line with what he calls a “culture of encounter.” He says in July: “When leaders in various fields ask me for advice, my response is always the same: dialogue, dialogue, dialogue. It is the only way for individuals, families, and societies to grow, the only way for the life of peoples to progress, along with the culture of encounter, a culture in which all have something good to give and all can receive something good in return. Others always have something to give me, if we know how to approach them in a spirit of openness and without prejudice.”
- 8. Make commitments, such as marriage.** Don't be afraid to say “forever.” Francis advises the youth, for instance, not to fear marriage. The Pope says: “Today, there are those who say that marriage is out of fashion; in a culture of relativism and the ephemeral, many preach the importance of ‘enjoying’ the moment. They say that it is not worth making a life-long commitment, making a definitive decision, ‘forever,’ because we do not know what tomorrow will bring.” “I ask you, instead, to be revolutionaries, to swim against the tide; yes, I am asking you to rebel against this culture that sees everything as temporary and that ultimately believes that you are incapable of responsibility, that you are incapable of true love. I have confidence in you and I pray for you. Have the courage ‘to swim against the tide.’ Have the courage to be happy,” he says.
- 9. Make it a habit to 'ask the Lord.'** Bothered about the future? Pray, the Pope urges us especially the youth. “Dear young people,” he says, “some of you may not yet know what you will do with your lives. Ask the Lord, and he will show you the way. The young Samuel kept hearing the voice of the Lord who was calling him, but he did not understand or know what to say, yet with the help of the priest Eli, in the end he answered: ‘Speak, Lord, for I am listening’ (cf. 1 Sam 3:1-10). You too can ask the Lord: What do you want me to do? What path am I to follow?”
- 10. Be happy.** The true Christian, says the Pope, exudes great joy. He says keeping this joy to ourselves “will make us sick in the end.” So important is joy to him that his first apostolic exhortation, the first major document he wrote on his own, is titled “*Evangelii Gaudium*” (The Joy of the Gospel). “Sometimes these melancholy Christians' faces have more in common with pickled peppers than the joy of having a beautiful life,” Francis says in a homily. “Joy cannot be held at heel: it must be let go. Joy is a pilgrim virtue. It is a gift that walks, walks on the path of life, that walks with Jesus: preaching, proclaiming Jesus, proclaiming joy, lengthens and widens that path.” Francis says, “The Christian sings with joy, and walks, and carries this joy.” This joy, he reminds us, should translate to love of neighbor.

A joyful New Year to all!