



# From the Heart

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## OUR 20<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

They say, “Time flies when you’re having fun.” It certainly must be true, as this issue begins the twentieth year of *From the Heart*. We still have some of our original team, Jim Kowalski and Rich Stephens have been part of the newsletter since Issue 1, and over the years we have had the benefit of many wonderful writers and editors.

Articles from first, Fr. Flynn and now Fr. Donnelly, have always been an inspirational and informative part of the newsletter. Sr. Pat is also doing a regular feature for us, adding to our spiritual growth, along with our regular columns.

Dennis McLaughlin, Dina Carella, Diane Tomas, Ernie Swanberg and Irma Rilling have been regular contributors for years, and we have recently added Bill Calabrese and Dom Narducci to our core writing staff. We always welcome articles submitted by other parishioners or committees to keep the newsletter vibrant.

We could not produce *From the Heart* without our current editors, Dolores Matzen, Deb McGrath and Jean Brickey, and Selena Carella, our graphic designer. Editors Geraldine Fox and the late Kathleen Jansen, along with Magdalene Schuster’s original artwork, got us started in the early years of the newsletter. We thank them all for years of hard work and dedication.

Our distribution team, whose many names can be seen in each issue have been the backbone of our committee. We could write and edit all day, but if no one sent the newsletter out, all of our efforts would be wasted.

We, the staff and editors of *From the Heart*, would like to extend the invitation to all in our parish family to become part of the fun of producing this periodical. If you enjoy writing, we certainly can always use good writers. I know the editorial staff can always use help, and for an evening of a little work, good conversation and lots of laughs, come to one of our distribution meetings. Contact me, Katherine Pavone, at 264-6599 if you would like to join our team.

Thanks to our loyal readers, for all your kind comments and helpful suggestions and to those who have helped create this newsletter. Over the years, many others have also contributed in various ways to the newsletter. Please know that all your work is much appreciated,

With your help, we will try to keep *From the Heart* a ministry that continues to highlight our faith and our wonderful parish—maybe for another twenty years?

*Katherine Pavone,  
Managing Editor*

Vol. 20, No. 1  
February 2009

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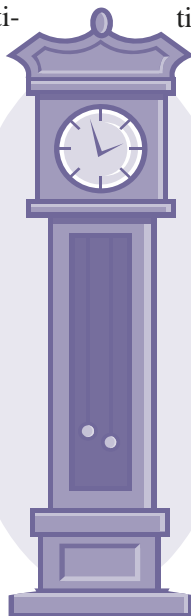
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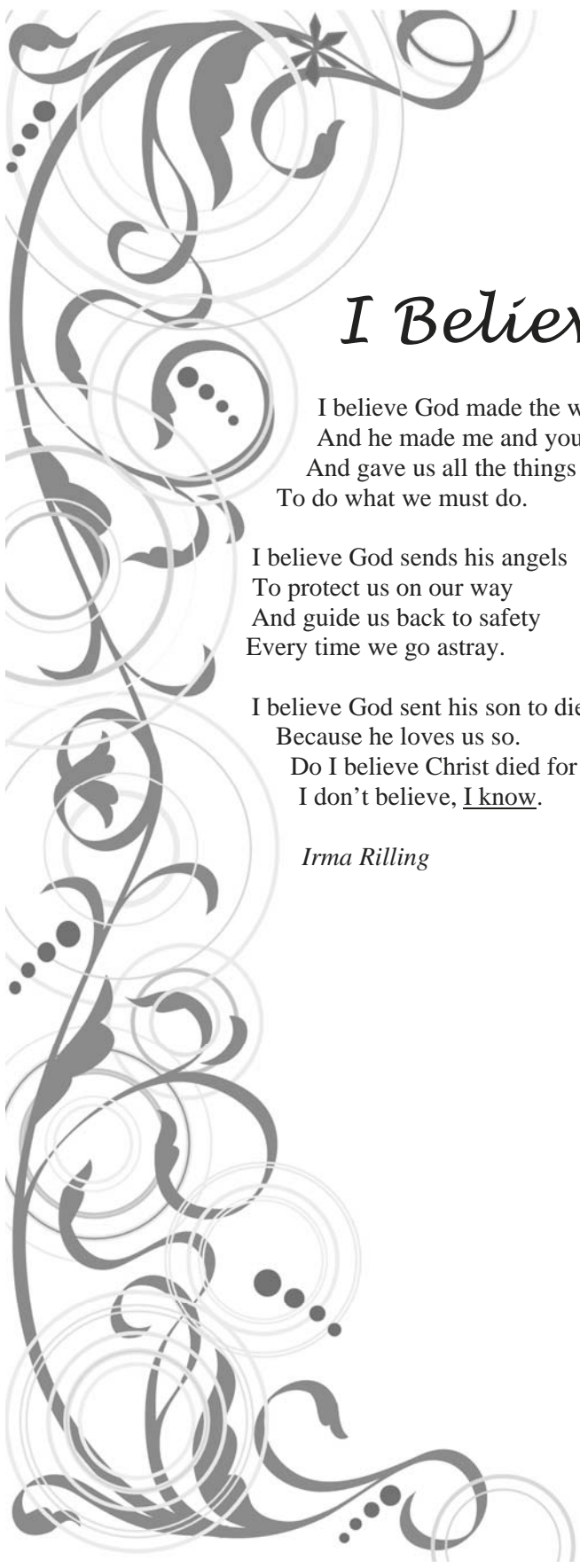
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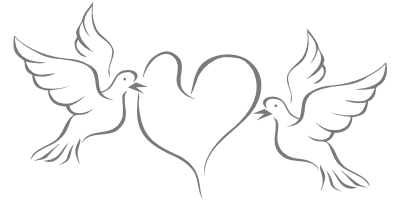
## *I Believe*

I believe God made the world,  
And he made me and you  
And gave us all the things we need  
To do what we must do.

I believe God sends his angels  
To protect us on our way  
And guide us back to safety  
Every time we go astray.

I believe God sent his son to die  
Because he loves us so.  
Do I believe Christ died for me?  
I don't believe, I know.

*Irma Rilling*



## **Attention Youth G.I.F.T. Participants**

**F**rom the Heart is looking for youth writers. G.I.F.T. participants would be most welcome, as well as any young adults who have something to say in regard to faith and life at Sacred Heart.

Please contact Katherine Pavone at 264-6599 if you can help us.

### *From the Heart*

**Managing Editor:** Katherine Pavone  
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**Layout:** Selena Carella  
**Photos:** Jean Brickey

*New members, ideas, and Ask Father questions are welcome throughout the year. Please contact the parish office, 264-5071, or Katherine Pavone at 264-6599.*

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Once heard someone say that we Catholics “do death well,” referring to our Catholic funeral rites. I must say that I agree. Death is a very complex and often frightening experience. I believe that we “do death well” because we have something with which to approach death: our faith in Jesus and what Jesus reveals about death. Our faith does not make death go away or take its pain away, but it helps us to experience it without being destroyed by it.

Sometimes people avoid talking about death because it frightens them or perhaps they have not yet experienced the death of someone they love. At Sacred Heart we try to respond to this real part of life through of our faith.

- Our pastoral staff wants to be available to the dying and their families before death occurs. We visit them, listen to them and hopefully bring comfort and support. This may include bringing the Eucharist and/or the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. We encourage families to contact us *before* the dying person becomes unconscious so that they might have the advantage of talking and of receiving the comfort of our Church. I know that some families deliberately wait until the person is unconscious so as not to “frighten” the loved one, but believe me, it is much more frightening when family members deny the approaching death or refuse to talk with or even listen to the person about it.
- Whenever we get the call that a parishioner has died, Sr. Pat or I try to visit with the family as soon as possible to show the support of the parish and offer the assurance of what we believe about death. We also help the family prepare the funeral liturgy in accordance with Church guidelines and personal preferences.
- We encourage people to plan to have a wake to allow them some time to absorb the reality of their loved one’s death and to receive the consolation and support of family and friends. Sr. Pat or one of the deacons leads a brief Scripture service at the wake. During the ser-

vice, they normally invite anyone to share a memory or story about the person who has died. It is a very powerful prayer as a result. We offer our daily chapel for wakes of parishioners.



- The funeral service may be either a Mass or a Scripture service. Our use of white vestments, hope-filled Scripture texts, music and prayer, baptismal water, incense and the tall Easter candle all are meant to express and emphasize our belief in the resurrection, that is, that death is not the end of life for the one who has been faithful to God and God’s way. We urge fami-

lies to have family members or friends do the readings, place the pall or white covering on the coffin, bring up the gifts and even offer a brief eulogy. Our Extend-a-Hand Committee will also offer a light reception in the hall for any parishioner.

- At the graveside Sr. Pat or one of the deacons concludes with prayer and blessings.
- While the presence of the body at the funeral and its burial afterwards is the preferred form, cremation has been allowed in the Church since 1963. Cremains may be brought to the Church for the funeral service.
- Since the grieving process continues long after the funeral itself, we offer several opportunities for comfort, care and healing. In addition to the opportunity for family members to meet with anyone on the pastoral staff for pastoral conversation about this experience of death, we have a nine-week program called New Day, or an ongoing monthly group meeting.

I believe that at Sacred Heart we “do death well,” and I hope that whenever you and your family experience death you will take advantage of our pastoral care and ministry. May God bless you with peace!

*Father Joe*

# Quo Vadis?

One of the ministries I am part of is the Resurrection Choir, a small group of men and women who pray and sing at the many funeral Masses at Sacred Heart. Some say, "Isn't it depressing?" No, it is not. We consider it a privilege to assist in a small way. Often we come away with many beautiful thoughts and impressive reflections given by the family and friends. Words such as love, kindness, sacrifice, good deeds, suffering, faith and heaven are spoken at these services.

One of the words I want to write about is heaven. I admit as I get older I think more about heaven and everlasting life. Families of the deceased often say they know their loved ones are in heaven with God. Being a faithful daughter of the Church and wishing to cause no harm, I refer to an excellent source, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* as my reference.

When Fr. Joe asked the children during Mass, "How do you get to heaven?" One child responded, "You have to die." Since no one has returned except Christ in the Resurrection (and sights of Elvis Presley) we rely on scripture. St. Paul was given a glimpse of heaven and exclaimed, "no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him." St. Paul who received the "good news" from Christ himself lived the rest of his life spreading the

news of the Resurrection.

The Church gives the dying Christian these words of assurance, "May you return to your Creator



who formed you from the dust of the earth...may you be at home with God, Mary, the Virgin Mother and all the angels and saints..." At the moment of death each person is given a particular judgment and we shall be judged on our love. According to the Catechism,

those who die in God's grace and are perfectly purified see him face to face. Most of us, I imagine need some purification, and the Church calls this period of purification, Purgatory. In the Old Testament Judas Maccabeus made atonement for the dead that they "might be delivered from their sin."

From the beginning the Church has honored the memory of the dead and offered prayers on their behalf. God, who gave his Son for our salvation, does not want anyone to perish but to come to repentance. A prayer the priest says during Mass is "...save us from final damnation and count us among those you have chosen." We are saved through the grace of God.

The Last judgment will be the hour when all are judged both alive and dead when the Son of Man will come forth. "All you have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:29)

At the end of time, the Kingdom

of God will come in its fullness. Then the just will reign with Christ forever, glorified in body and soul, and the material universe itself will be transformed. God will then be "all in all" (1 Cor 15:28), in eternal life.

In this last statement, we see that God is the Creator of heaven, earth, the universe, our bodies and souls and all that is "seen and unseen." Isn't it worth it to live a good life imitating Christ by loving God and our neighbor for whatever time we have on earth? A life lived this way is also a happy life even with its trials, but the crown is life everlasting, which we cannot even begin to fathom.

*Dina Carella*

## • NOW AVAILABLE •

A complete listing, description, and contact information for all Sacred Heart parish ministries and services is on the website: [sacredheartchurch.info](http://sacredheartchurch.info)

Or, if you prefer, you can pick up a booklet from the Parish Library with the same detailed information.



"The Church lives in the parish."  
*Communities of Salt and Light*  
National Conference of Catholic Bishops

# Changing Seasons, Transforming Lives

It seems like only yesterday that we were exchanging gifts, opening presents, decorating a tree and singing carols. It seems like only yesterday that towns and homes reflected the joy and the light and the festivity of another season, Christmas. It seems too soon to be entering a season of ashes, of penance and repentance...the decorations are hardly put away, the gifts are hardly used.

Yet now is the time, says St. Paul. This is the moment...the trumpet sounds, a fast proclaimed. Come back to me with all your heart, says our God.

We celebrated the joy of God's greatest gift to us at Christmas—Emmanuel—God with us. Now we are invited to accept and use this gift—to deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ and to invite Emmanuel into our hearts to transform our lives and our world.

The plan for Lent is not so pretty...prayer, fasting, almsgiving. And it doesn't come with instructions. It comes with an invitation: Return to God with your whole heart. God wants you and me for God's very self. God desires to be part of our lives, to be part of our decision-making, our choices, to be more deeply connected to us, to dwell within us.

So let's make a plan. Let us take a moment each day to STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN.

Let us STOP and open our hearts to this great love of God. Let us take a breath and clear some space both within us and around us. Let us stop, and perhaps fast from one activity, one food, one unkind word.

Let us LOOK at how we are. Look at where we are. Let us assess our life/our lifestyle. Look at those times and places where we miss the mark, where we fail to live in harmony with one another. What one small change needs to happen to turn our lives around? Let us stop and look at the world around us—see a neighbor in need, see the world in need and respond with a prayer of blessing, of protection, of peace. Can we offer assistance, sustenance, a kind word?

And let us LISTEN in prayer to the small gentle voice of God whispering "Come back to me, I love you." Can that love touch the hurting places within? Can we lay down a burden of guilt and pain that we have carried too



long and is no longer necessary? Can we listen to the loud cries of the poor around us needing to hear "I love you" in word and in deed.

Imagine the difference this practice would make in our lives...Imagine who we can become at the end of forty days. Imagine what a gift we would make of ourselves to God, and for our world.

"Come back to me with all your heart," is God's invitation today.

Are we ready to enter a new season of gift giving?

*Sister Pat*

## Inactive Catholics An invitation to Come Home We've missed you.



*Have you drifted away from the Church?*

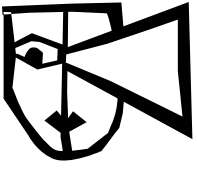
*Do you feel like you don't belong to the Church community?*

*Have you been hurt by the Church, or are you confused or angry because of your Catholic experience?*

Please consider our invitation to speak with us. There is no obligation. There will be no pressure. This is an opportunity to share your stories of why you left and where you are now. We would like to share our stories of faith with you.

A five week series begins  
Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> at 7 p.m.  
At Sacred Heart Church

Call Sister Pat @ 264-5071  
Or, for more information see our website at  
[www.sacredheartchurch.info](http://www.sacredheartchurch.info)



# Perfect Skin

What's your god's name? I recently decided to call mine Zoyt. Let me tell you why.

I thought I knew God pretty well, but of late, I've been puzzled—I figured a name change might help.

Here's my thinking.

Growing up, we were told a lot of stuff about God. Do you ever wonder about some of that stuff? I'm a product of 17 years of Catholic schools—sort of a poster child (albeit a middle-aged one) for traditional Catholic education, eight years at St. Francis (Naugatuck), four at Holy Cross High School (Waterbury) and five at Notre Dame University (South Bend, IN). And yet, now, I have more questions than ever. I can just hear my mother, “Now he's renaming God. Who does he think he is? Why can't he just follow the rules, say the prayers and get into heaven like the rest of us?”

I've been thinking about those early years of religious education (mostly the grade school ones) and wondering how much they might still subconsciously control my view of God. Those early years did not encourage rational thinking, personal reflection or any other individual creative process by which one can experience God. I guess the thinking was that 10 year olds just need to be told, not encouraged (much less taught) to think! No thinking “outside the box” when it came to God. A sign I once saw posted over the driver in a public bus years ago best sums up that approach. Get in, Sit-Down and Shut-Up!

So, I was told a lot of things about God. Most of it presented by

way of the well-honed Catholic fear-guilt methodology. I internalized and I suspect, falsely amplified a lot of it (believe me those black-robed, ruler-toting, bead-twirling nuns back at St. Francis could be pretty persuasive). Here's one: God is perfect—you mean, in a human “perfect” sort of way? Then I guess God would have perfect skin, which would probably be white, smooth and blemish free. But thinking about perfect skin, makes it all unravel. Imagine. Perfect skin! Perfect skin! The all-powerful, all-knowing, maker of heaven and earth, the seer and hearer of all things has PERFECT SKIN. What's wrong with this picture?

I decided that a true analysis of God was in order. So I did the totally human thing for just such an analysis. I imagined I was God. (A little voice is telling me there must be a sin in there someplace!) Anyway, I'm God. I know everything, I got responsibility—actually, galactic responsibility—universes need constant attention (creation, reorganization, downsizing—maybe some outsourcing), and then I have the daily grind to contend with: the ordering of time and space, the fostering and removing of life and the managing of worlds present, past and future. But, at the end of the day, at least I know I got perfect skin. I didn't need to dwell on that long before I got to that happy point in this mental exercise, you know, that point where one feels the amazement of uncovering naked truth.

If I'm it, God, the one described above, would I care about skin (quality, texture or color)? In fact, would I need skin, or for that matter,

a body at all? And talk about irrelevant—gender and sexual orientation; what need or preference would I have for such trivialities? Such things are just oddities that apply to one tiny subset, in a life group, in a beautifully non-descript world, in a faceless universe, of a vast galaxy which is simply ONE in the TOTAL. My Zoyt doesn't care or have preferences on these issues. Perhaps, the culprit in the old tradition is the literal application of the following, “Man is made in God's image and likeness.” (Genesis 1:26-27), a line written by a man. What a nice way to draw a defining box around the infinite.

For me, the name “God” seems to conjure up many of those “taught” images (i.e. perfect skin, and all that other stuff in the “man-made” box). Although you might think it sophomoric, trying a different name seems to lose some of the baggage. It's actually rather liberating. Just think Zoyt! It's easy. Obviously Zoyt's not black or white, young or old, male or female. I think you'd have to agree; to think so would be laughable. So, now you know; my Zoyt doesn't have perfect skin...

I'm going to stick with Zoyt for a while. I'm hoping it will let me lose some of the limiting, sub-conscious images that I've applied to God, leaving room for a new faith experience.

Fifty-something seems like a good time to shed a skin. Wherever you are in your journey, you might want to try it.

*D. Narducci III*

# Sunday

I sighed. Things were going very badly. My glorious leader a/k/a editor-in-chief telephoned me two days ago and wanted to know what happened to my submission regarding my latest narrative involving my angel and me.

“Due a week ago,” the editor-in-chief testily added. I sensed her patience was being pressed. I didn’t think the kiss of peace at Mass would work this time and it was one of my favorite ploys to diminish the editor’s annoyance with me.

“I’m on top of it, boss.” I replied, and hung up before any questions could be asked.

“You never cease to amaze me,” said my angel who I imagined was sitting on the couch just to the left of my computer.

For the readers’ information, this celestial being could make himself seen if he desired, but he limits himself to a voice, neutral in tone, but as you can read, not above sarcasm. He has special dispensation from the archangels to be sarcastic to me. I have often wondered whether other angels have the same privilege or am I one of the lucky recipients. The fact that he may be hurting my feelings is immaterial to him since in his mind, every thing he does is for my own good. And how does one get annoyed with his own angel anyway?

“Good question,” I heard again from the couch. “You can’t, of course, because you know through the Holy Spirit, I can only serve you if you listen to me, and those last few words seems to be a weakness of yours. So let’s go back to my original statement, you never cease to amaze me. But let me add the following that will really put you into a dither...You should be slapped silly.”

“This is doing me good? You just threatened me with an assault (I love to show off my legal background). I suppose I’m to offer my suffering up for Lent?”

“Spare the rod, but beat him in areas where the public can’t see, I always say.”

Can angels lose it? Maybe it is too much of a strain being my guardian. “I didn’t want to say anything but did you know that you have been sighing a lot during our conversations?”

“Every sigh means something, Dennis. No, I am not losing it as you aptly put it. As an angel, I am unable to



“lose it” although there are times you do cause me to reflect on my love of our Savior with a little more zeal and passion than usual.”

“I don’t mean to cause you any concern especially in light of all the world events which must be creating such sorrow in Christ. Who am I in the grand scheme of Christ’s dominions

but one soul?” I earnestly replied.

“Entrusted to my care and that is what makes you very important to me. But I digress. How many talks, conversations or musings have we had on a daily basis? I mean the one’s you actually listened to me. With that minor stipulation, the number would be considerably reduced I would think. Don’t protest. I know when I am talking to a wall and when I’m not. Yet, you sit in front of your computer moaning and that is the correct verb, you have nothing to write regarding us?”

“You sound annoyed with me,” I murmured.

“Annoyed? I can’t be annoyed with you. It is not in my nature to be annoyed but amazed. Now that is something very different. And you continue to amaze me more than you will ever know.”

“Should I be honored?” I said, hoping my angel would notice my sarcasm.

I heard a sigh.

“You sighed. Is everything alright?”

“You still have not been able to recognize the meaning to my sighs. What can I say that a sigh won’t be more descriptive?”

He apparently was talking to himself. Is this another problem I must concern myself with, I wondered. “O.K. But I still don’t get it. What did that last sigh mean for instance?”

“You don’t want to know,” came a curt reply from the couch.

“None of this is being very instructive for my loyal readers, don’t you think?”

Silence. I was in trouble. There are times like this I wish he would simply give me a slap in the back of my head and get it over with.

“The advantage of being an angel is, I don’t have to

*(Continued on page 8)*

## Sunday

(Continued from page 7)

wish. I can simply do, but do you learn from this?"

I keep forgetting that he knows my every thought. "Quite frankly, probably not."

"But you would learn if you stood before the cross and watched the soldier push his sword into his side. You would feel the pain and look up into our Lord's face and see the sorrow of the world etched into the lines of his face. Everything he has done is for the benefit of your soul. Lent is about sacrifice but for what? To redeem the world. And included within the redemption process, is your soul. So you are very important to me and to him."

There was nothing for me to say. He is so eloquent in his teaching that I have a difficult time even ending our conversation with something witty.

"Well said my dear angel. Thank you again but then, that's why you get paid the big bucks."

The angel sighed, and I think I am beginning to understand.

My life continues under my angel's protection.

Dennis McLaughlin



## JustFaith: A Hunger for Justice

# JustFaith Revisited, Part II

It has become clear to me, through a casual remark by my good friend and fellow essayist Dennis McLaughlin, that with recruiting for the new JustFaith "season" scheduled to begin in March, now is a good time to revisit, for the second time in this column, the JustFaith process. The last time the emphasis was on the effect the process had on me. This time the focus will be on you, because I really want you to join. I think that you will enjoy it as much as I did, maybe even more. In fact, I am so convinced that I am prepared to spend the rest of this article attempting to completely blow away any excuses you might have for not joining. So, if you will give me a few minutes of your time (you are a fast reader, right?) we will get on with it. I promise not to keep you any longer than I have to. If I see that you and JustFaith are clearly not a match, I will issue you an official "bye" and you have my permission to put down this copy of *From The Heart* (or turn to Dennis' article, which will be much funnier than this one) and get on with your day.

Fair enough?

OK, let's hear your first excuse.



**You: I've heard a lot about JustFaith, but I still don't understand what it's all about.**

JustFaith is a post-graduate course in compassion. It runs for thirty weeks, with recesses for the major holidays. It will help you better understand the challenges that the poor, the oppressed and the forgotten face in their daily struggle to survive, and it will prepare you, if not to be part of the solution, at least to stop being part of the problem.

**You: I'm sorry. But I'm just not a joiner.**

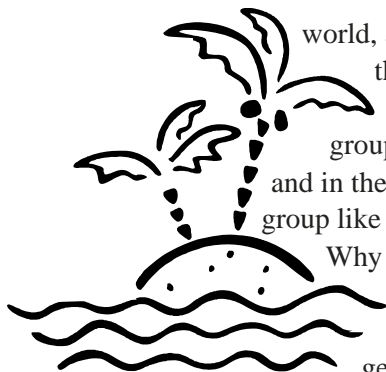
I don't think anybody is less of a joiner than I am. The last thing I remember joining was the Air Force, but that was back around the time of World War I (sometimes it seems that long ago), so it's hardly worth mentioning anymore. Anyway, I made an exception in the case of JustFaith, and I am glad I did. Next excuse?



**You: Thirty weeks? That's an awful long time! I can't make a commitment for that long. Couldn't they have made it shorter?**

Let me tell you why I think they made the process so long. The main reason is that the small JustFaith group is the heart of the process. It takes a while to turn this group from a bunch of strangers into a group of friends and then to almost family. Once it reaches that level the group becomes much more effective. The members listen to each others ideas with respectful attention and are willing to offer their own ideas, even if they don't agree with others in the group. The members pray together in sincerity for the helpless ones of the





world, and for one another. I think that this is what the designers of JustFaith had in mind, a group of people united in purpose and in the Spirit. It takes time to build a group like that.

Why do you say you can't make the commitment? Is it because you might get sick, or get sent on a business trip?

Maybe you have a vacation planned? All of the above, huh? Well the process is more flexible than it might look to you. There's no reason that each group has to be on the same page at the same time for every step of the way. As long as they reach the major milestones at approximately the same time, everything is cool. This is not a race to see who can reach the goal line first. It is the quality of the journey that matters most.

So a group can excuse a member for a week or so, as long as he or she keeps up with the readings. If several members are to be absent, it can skip a meeting and double up the next time.

**You: I just don't have time for another meeting. I'm too busy.**

I hear you. All of us are too busy these days. Even some of us retired guys are busier now than when we were working for a living. But let me ask you a question. Do you spend five hours or more each week watching television? If you do, consider budgeting that time for a JustFaith meeting and for the reading you have to do to prepare for it. You will learn more about the world around you (and about yourself) than you would watching television, even if all you watch is CNN and PBS and the History Channel. And Charter can rent you a DVR for fifteen bucks a month.

Next excuse. Yes, the lady in the front row with the concerned look on your face.



**You: I already do a lot for the church.**

Good for you. But I think you are missing the point, here. You won't be doing it for the church, you will be doing it for yourself.

Well OK, tell you what I'm going to do.

Assuming that any free time that you happen to find will be given over to God's work anyway, I'm going to award you a "bye" Drum roll, please!

See you next year.



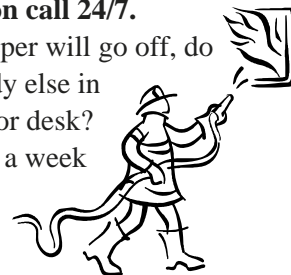
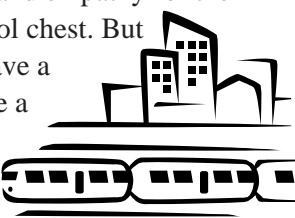
**You: I have an understanding of the plight of poor people. Why do I have to go to school on the subject?**

I tried to use that excuse myself. As a fiction writer, I should have an understanding of and empathy for the human condition as part of my tool chest. But I know now that I really didn't have a clue until JustFaith. Until you live a vicarious day or two on the Streets of the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx, trying to see those blighted streets through the eyes of ordinary people who have to survive there, you can't possibly understand the source of the shadow of helplessness that lies over a large portion of most American cities. Until you've walked in the footsteps of Mother Theresa through the death-filled morning streets of Bombay you will never understand what it means to be an Untouchable. And until you've seen a typical village in Haiti, through the eyes of someone who can really describe what he sees and explain the significance, you can't say you have made the smallest step toward an understanding of the harsh reality of life in that beleaguered country.

The first step toward understanding something is to purge your mind of what you *think* you know about it. JustFaith will help you do that.

**You: I'm a volunteer fireman, on call 24/7.**

Never know when that old beeper will go off, do you? Yeah you get a bye. Anybody else in an on-call situation. A cop? Beat or desk? Desk. Can't you devote one night a week to a JustFaith meeting? Oh, you work alternating shifts—that is a problem. Here's your bye. Anybody else? Oh, you're a commuter? How many hours a day do you drive? An hour to and an hour from? That's doable; I've done it myself most of my working life. Oh, two hours to and two hours from! I'll give you a bye and my sympathy. Oh, the lady in the back—you have five children? Not a problem. It seems to me you could use a night out once a week. Get a family member to cover for you or hire a babysitter. Maybe after the meeting you should go out for a couple of drinks. You don't drink? I'm sorry to hear that.



**You: I've looked at some of the early readings. They seem boring and preachy.**

I had the same reaction. But you remember me saying that JustFaith is a post graduate course in compassion.

*(Continued on page 10)*

## JustFaith Revisited

(Continued from page 9)

Most curriculums have prerequisite courses that have to be taken to bring everybody up to a common denominator of understanding. That's what these early readings are, what Dennis calls "Compassion 101."

After the first readings are over the rest get better. I've already mentioned several that have particularly struck me. Your tour of Mott Haven is one of the early ones. I'll mention one more. Near the end of the course there's a particularly thought provoking book titled (if memory serves me right) *The Powers That Be* by Walter Wink, which questions the motives of the Biggies in our lives. Big Government, Big Business, Big Labor, and even Big Church! We should expect these Biggies to follow Christian principles in their dealings and call them to task if they don't.

The best of the readings remind me of Father Joe's homilies or one of Patty Richards' pre-Mass piano solos, both delivered with skill and at their best, both challenging us to take a new direction toward a familiar topic or melody and rewarding us with a deeper appreciation of its real meaning.

I have time for one more excuse, Yes?

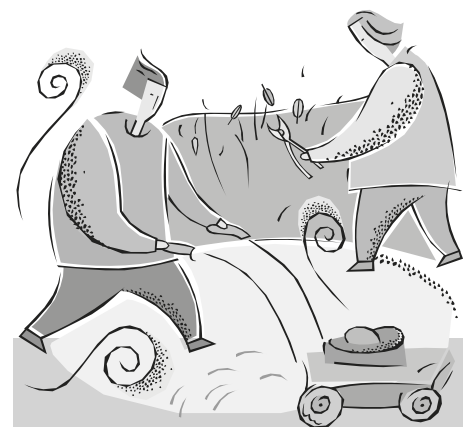
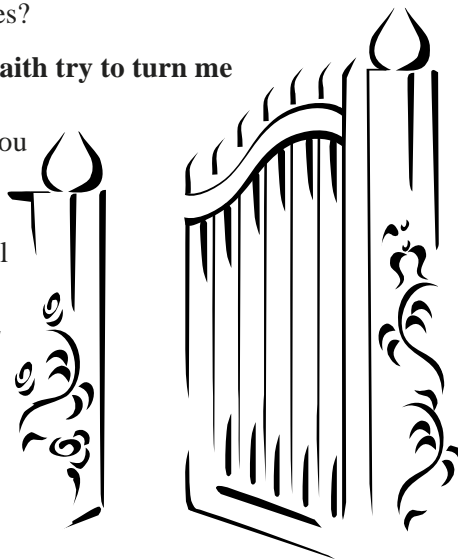
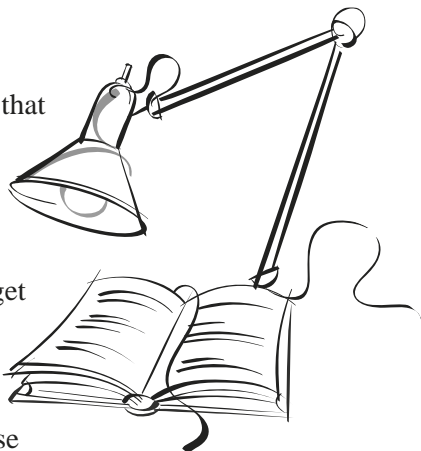
**You: I am a conservative. Will JustFaith try to turn me into a bleeding heart liberal?**

Well, that is a danger, but how do you think they would categorize Christ if he were among us today?

Well I guess we're through here. All of you folks who are still in the room have a decision to make AND I'LL BE HOUNDING YOU UNTIL YOU MAKE IT! I'm kidding. I'm much too busy to hound anybody.

For more information contact Dennis McLaughlin at 264-0984.

W. J. Calabrese



## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

**N**eighbors Helping Neighbors is a ministry at Sacred Heart which reaches out to those among us who need help in many ways such as shopping, doing yard work getting to church or appointments, etc. If you are in need, know someone who is, or if you would like to help, please call: Marilee Adams at 267-5775 or Sue Houlihan at 267-5516.





# Mardi Gras Fair

Tuesday, February 24  
4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Hosted by Sacred Heart's Youth Mission Trip

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Food, live entertainment, music, games, beads, masks, and more. A great opportunity for the whole parish to gather and celebrate **Fat Tuesday**.

All proceeds will benefit the Youth Mission Trip to Port Jervis, N.Y., this coming summer where they will work with other young people from around the country to complete home repair projects for needy resident homes.

Adults (age 13+) \$10 for three food choices and a drink, Children \$5 for two food choices and a drink (family maximum \$35) For dessert: 50¢ Bake Sale and King Cake (your piece could win you a crown!). Tickets will be sold February 21 and 22, after all Masses, or can be purchased at the door.

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## Some Highlights:

- Pizza, Fat Tuesday Pasta, Chili, Chicken Gumbo, Shrimp Andouille Sausage, and more!
- Play games of chance to win beads, masks, or Mardi Gras coins (\$1 for 5 tickets to play).
- Face painting, photo booth, post your Lenten Intentions.





## Our Parish Welcomes You

**A**re you at a distance from or do you feel alienated from either the Church or Sacred Heart parish?

There are many different reasons that people find themselves drifting or walking away. Yet, we are less than who we should be or can be when you are not with us. If this applies to you or to someone whose faith you care about, check out the new link on our parish website. Our parish wants to promote healing, reconciliation and unity among God's people—and we would love to welcome you home.

Website: [www.sacredheartchurch.info](http://www.sacredheartchurch.info)

Follow link to: [www.oncecatholic.org](http://www.oncecatholic.org)



*From the Heart*

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