

GOD FIRST

Radical Spirituality for a Struggling Society

Personal Formation is Fall Focus

Everyone knows that the Church has established the Sunday readings on a three-year cycle. The fact that we are in Cycle B, and the fact that Mark's gospel is one of little compromise, and the fact that the readings given us for use during the upcoming months present expectations beyond our normal thinking, is pure coincidence. Blame God, not the messenger.

Or better yet, thank God for such wonderful insight, knowing well what one people needed 2000 years ago and still needs today. Thank God for the gift of a Word that is spoken and alive today, and has not lost an ounce of its power or purpose. Thank God that our union with God is the purpose for this word carrying so great a meaning for our lives today.

Our GOD FIRST initiative this fall will focus on the spirituality and prayer of individuals and of families. It is that personal conversion which is essential if there is to be a conversion of heart and mind that affects, changes, the social awareness of our communities and of the world. This personal conversion is what is essential for our choosing to make a difference in the lives of others.

So we first spend time considering our own willingness to follow the word of God, Jesus, and accept the invitation of our Lord to change, to grow, to enrich our lives with all the possibilities God provides. This personal growth in spiritual formation and prayer development is not something that will conclude at the end of this first semester of GOD FIRST. It is meant, however, to place us back on a path that leads more and more in the way of our Lord.

We have scheduled evenings for formation and development for parishioners, families, and friends at every turn of life — singles, young and old, couples, parents and families, the elderly, teens, college students, our children, those who will face the holidays alone, and more. The dates are included in the box on the next page. Other seminars will be scheduled in the spring.

You'll notice that everything is scripturally based. It has a solid foundation in the gospel. Jesus teaches us how to fashion personal spiritual direction and formation in our lives, and how to grow in prayer development. **GOD FIRST** calls us to renew ourselves as children of the Father, dependant on the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. It leads us to a mature Catholic Christian response to growing in union with God in prayer and in life.

Caution: For the one who enters into this initiative seriously it will challenge every aspect of life — how we see everything, how we respond to life situations, and how we seek God's presence in every decision we make.

