

# VISITATION of our Lady

3500 AMES BLVD. MARRERO, LA 70072  
(504) 347-2203 WWW.VOL.ORG



## Ten Ways to be a Great Catholic Dad

I had a great Father's Day last month. I consecrated bread and wine into the body and blood of our Savior. I preached about my chief lobbyist in heaven, my wife Kacky. It is now 11 Father's Days since God took Kacky home, but my love for her just continues to grow. I blessed dads from the altar. I cheered the LSU baseball team from the altar. I heard many confessions. I visited sick parishioners in their homes, in a nursing home and in a hospital. And I had dinner with my son, my daughter-in-law and my two grandchildren. It was a magical day.

I am wonderfully grateful for the gift of being a double father: dad and priest. So, when I went to bed on Father's Day, I thanked God for showering my life with his blessings.

I can't share with you the gifts of being a priest, but I can share with you a list of things I believe we can all do to enrich our lives as dads. Here they are.

### 1. Go to Mass Every Week with the Family

We feed our bodies every week to keep them strong, even though our bodies are just temporary. It's far more important to feed our souls; they will live forever. So, let's go to Mass. Every week! And, let's make it a family affair. What we tell our children is important, but the old cliché is true. Actions speak louder than words. It is critical that Dad become the spiritual leader of his family.

### 2. Be a Role Model at Mass

SING! PRAY! PARTICIPATE! Maybe we can't carry a tune in a bucket. Perhaps Father's homilies bore us. But our children are watching and listening. Chances are excellent they will do later in life what we do now. So let's take a leadership role at Mass.

### 3. Forgive

God tells us in Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Hebrews that He loves us so much that He not only forgives

## Inside

Youth Trade Sleep for Night of Fun	2
Men's Club Surf the "Net"	3
GPS: Guiding Peoples' Souls	4
New Ministries Embrace Works of Mercy	5
Adult Faith Formation Classes	6
Prayers for Hurricane Season	8

Continued on p. 7

## Youth Trade Sleep for Night of Fun

What do you get when you mix two dozen teenagers, tons of snacks, loads of activities, and no bed time? You get a CYO Lock-in!

This month the VOL CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) hosted their very first lock-in in the new multi purpose building, Padre Hall II, and it was definitely a night to remember!

From pizza to popcorn and Snickers to snow balls, CYO members kept their fires burning all night long. Who could sleep? There was a volleyball game going on at 3 a.m., Guitar Hero at 4:30, and donuts at 6 a.m.! For just one night, everyone became a night owl.

The evening started with guest speaker Colin MacIver, Youth Minister at St. Scholastica Academy in Covington and St. Anselm Parish in Madisonville. He shared an incredible story about how he and his wife Aimee attended a retreat together as teens without ever having met. Years later they discovered that they had both prayed for their future spouse at the retreat.

Later in the evening everyone rose to their feet as Christian band *Abundant Praise* lifted spirits with their soul stirrin', foot stompin' music.

CYO members were then invited to participate in a game which taught patience, ingenuity, and teamwork. Teams of 12 had to cross a ficticious "lake" filled with "alligators" without falling in the "lava," using only 4 small pieces of carpet. It took some time, but in the



*Destiny Perkins concentrates during a Guitar Hero competition*



*Macy Mouton challenges Nick Fluharty to a game of ping pong*



*Devin Ragas shoots a game of pool with other CYO members*



*Members of the VOL CYO who attended the Lock-in in July*

end both teams learned valuable lessons about working together.

Pizza time finally arrived, and after eating their fill, the youth were the first to play volleyball using VOL's brand new volleyball nets. No one would have guessed it was 3 a.m. from all the laughter and excitement of trying to smack a beach ball over a net.

But the excitement wasn't over! The brand new CYO room was christened and the youth made themselves at home on the big fluffy sofas. From ping pong to pool and Guitar Hero to foosball, the new room offered unlimited activities!

Everyone had a chance to cool down from all their activity thanks to parent volunteer Melissa Blanchard, who arrived at 2:30 a.m. with a snow ball machine and tons of sweet syrup. It was a refreshing treat, and just what the group needed to wake them up.

How time flies when you are having fun! As the sun quietly poked its head into the windows of Padre Hall II, the youth knew this special event was almost over. Fr. Steve ended the night of fun and fellowship with a prayer service and a "special song" the youth won't soon forget.

Before leaving the Lock-in, however, everyone filled their bellies one last time with hot fresh donuts and ice cold milk. Ahhh.... What a way to end a night!

## Men's Club Surf the "Net"

The Men's Club of Visitation has used the internet for dozens of reasons, from meeting reminders to purchasing supplies. But now they have a new net to surf! The new Multi Purpose Building, Padre Hall II, has a full-size basketball court complete with six goals, and the Men's Club members are breaking them in.

As the completion of Padre Hall II approached, they began making plans. A schedule was made. Jerseys were ordered. E-mails went out. The excitement began!

Now the men weren't interested in a cute name or formal play, they just were out for the fun of it. And they deserve it!

Much of what the Men's Club does at Visitation involves

physical labor. Countless past projects include installing dry erase boards in classrooms, remodeling the rectory kitchen, and building booths for the annual Cajun Fest. They also played a vital role in cleaning and gutting the fire-damaged home of a VOL teacher.

It was important that the Men's Club members experienced the fun side of VOL, too. The new



*Team members Mark Moore and Sal Dimarco prove that teamwork is the key both in work and in play*

Sporting reversible jerseys and athletic shoes, the men divide themselves into teams, less the two or three players who decide to "sit this one out." There are no referees, buzzers, or time outs. The men keep score on their verbal scoreboard, just yelling the numbers out loud. It keeps the momentum going and the pressure off.

After each game, the men take a break for water and a brief rest, then it's back to the courts! New teams are formed, and the games begin again!

Will all this basketball practice send any of them to the pros? Probably not. But all that the Men's Club members were seeking was fun, and it looks like they have reached their "goals."

*Men's Club basketball games are played Wednesday nights at 7 p.m. in Padre Hall II and are open to all Men's Club members. For more information call Sal Dimarco at 340-8255.*



*Size is not an issue in Men's Club basketball, as Men's Club members Jeff Cancienne and Sal Dimarco show.*

basketball court provided the perfect opportunity for them to have some regular fun.

Playing basketball not only serves as a recreational activity, but also as a stress-reliever and a great source of exercise. It gives the men a chance to unwind from the tension of the day and build comraderie.

Most players average about 5'8" in height, but there are a few who don't have so far to reach to get to the net. But size is not an issue for this group.



*Men's Club members Mark Calderera and Dave Jouandot take time for fun and exercise*

## *GPS: Guiding People's Souls*

**W**e no longer have an excuse to be lost in America. It's estimated that over 20% of us use some type of Global Positioning System, or GPS, in their daily lives. Global Positioning Systems are small portable devices that use satellites to pinpoint exact locations.

While many GPS owners use their systems in their automobiles for driving directions, others have found them useful to locate favorite fishing spots, find safe hiking areas, and even to keep up with their children. Users simply enter an address and the GPS will show a map, list directions, or give verbal directions to their destination. Even if the traveler does not have a specific address, he can search for types of businesses that are near his current position. Some tracking GPS systems allow parents to monitor their children's whereabouts by using small devices neatly tucked away in a watch, schoolbag, and even in a shoe.

### ***GPS Limitations***

Although GPS systems can help us find our way through the streets and waterways, they do nothing to show us the way to heaven. They do not help us choose the right paths to our eternal reward. They do not teach us about the sacraments, God's outward signs of His grace. And they don't give us any support when we travel those rough roads. How does one learn such direction, receive grace, and gain support during rough times? By participating in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, or RCIA.

Participants in RCIA range from Catholics who just want to learn a little more about their faith to those seeking baptism and confirmation in the Catholic faith for the first time. A number of topics are presented, including the bible, history of the church, sacraments, the rosary, and much more. Each topic is like a GPS coordinate, guiding students throughout their journey in life.

### ***Batteries Not Required***

The presenter, usually a priest or deacon, explains Catholic teachings and encourages participants to discuss each topic. It's a time of learning not only about the how's and why's of the faith, but also about oneself and the role God plays in their lives. Unlike a GPS system, RCIA requires no batteries or chargers—just the desire to learn about the Catholic faith.

### ***Money is No Object***

Those seeking direction can expect to pay anywhere from \$100 to \$500 for a GPS system, but the only investment they will make in the RCIA Program is *time*. The classes are free of charge and require no software updates—the Church has been the same for over 2,000 years!

RCIA Classes begin August 19th and are held every Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m. in the Church Meeting Room. These classes are for the unbaptized, those baptized in another Christian faith who wish to become Catholic, baptized Catholics who have not yet received the sacraments of First Communion or Confirmation, and Catholics who wish to learn more about the Catholic faith.

Know someone who could use some "direction" in their life? Share this article with them. Are *you* uncertain about Catholic teachings? Consider the RCIA Program. You won't need a GPS to find us, we promise!

***If you are interested in registering or need additional information, please feel free to contact Fr. Steve by calling the Pastoral Center at 347-2203 or visit [www.vol.org](http://www.vol.org) for an application or schedule of classes.***

---

## New Ministries Embrace Works of Mercy

**mer·cy** \ˈmər-sē\ *n.*,

*compassionate treatment of those in distress*

Most of us have asked for mercy at some time in our lives. Maybe we've asked a police officer to show mercy on us before he issued a speeding ticket. Or perhaps we've asked a spouse for mercy and forgiveness when we've done something to offend them.

Asking for mercy tends to make us feel vulnerable knowing that our fate is based on another's generosity. But *showing* mercy to others fills our hearts with joy when we witness the thankfulness of others. Showing mercy to others plants seeds in the forgiven soul, growing orchards of mercy to share with others.

Visitation of Our Lady has begun two new ministries that will offer parishioners the opportunity to show mercy to others: the ***Makin' Groceries Ministry*** and the ***Prayer Ministry***. Participants in these ministries will provide those in need with food for the body and for the soul.

There will be no meetings, no major time commitments, and no special seminars to attend. All that is needed is the willingness to show mercy toward others.

Please read about these new ministries, and consider becoming a part of one or both of them.

### ***Makin' Groceries Ministry***

It's a dreaded task to some, but *makin' groceries* (as we call it in New Orleans) is necessary for every family. Now you can change that mundane task into God's work by being a part of the ***Makin' Groceries Ministry!***

Participants simply bring in non-perishable food to help stock the St. Vincent dePaul Food Bank—that's it! You decide how often to donate — weekly or monthly. Simply take a paper bag from the vestibule of the church (or use your own paper or plastic bags), fill it with food, and return it to the St. Vincent baskets. Don't worry, we won't be keeping track of your donations. We know that showing mercy comes from the heart!

Anyone can participate, but we ask that you let us know you want to be a part of this important ministry. There will be times when the food pantry is in special need of specific food items, and we'd like to give you a call to let you know about it.

To join, please sign your name on the clipboard in the back of church or call 347-2203 and let us know you want to *make groceries!*

*The VOL St. Vincent DePaul Society currently feeds about 50 families per week and is in special need of rice and dried beans, canned fruit, soup, and canned meat.*

### ***Prayer Ministry***

Have you ever received a special request from a friend or family member for prayers? Maybe someone was undergoing surgery, having difficulty in their marriage, or struggling financially when you've been asked to pray for them.

VOL receives lots of prayer requests from parishioners, which is why a ***Prayer Ministry*** is so essential.

Members of the Prayer Ministry sign up to get phone calls and/or e-mails when there is a special request for prayer, then pray at their convenience. There are no meetings or special prayers to learn, just the desire to be merciful to others in need through prayer.

If you would like to be a part of this very important ministry, simply sign your name on the clip board in the back of church or call the Pastoral Center at 347-2203. We'll be happy to add you to our ***Prayer Ministry!***



**ADULT**

**FAITH FORMATION CLASSES**

**FALL 2009**

**SUNDAYS 11 AM - 1 PM**

**August 2, 9**  
Life Issues from a Catholic Perspective  
Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching  
Office of Justice and Peace

**August 16, 23, 30**  
Mary, Help of All Christians  
How to Explain and Defend Devotion to the Blessed Mother  
Dr. Scott Hahn Video-Assisted Class

**Sept. 27, Oct. 4, 11**  
Why do Catholics Pray to Saints  
How to Explain and Defend Devotion to the Saints  
Dr. Scott Hahn Video-Assisted Class

**October 26 - 29**  
Parish Mission with Glenn Harmon

**Nov. 8, 15**  
One Holy Meal  
The Power of the Eucharist  
Dr. Scott Hahn Video-Assisted Class

**FREE**

Three ways to register:  
~ visit [www.vol.org](http://www.vol.org)  
~ call 347-2203  
~ sign up in church vestibule

**SPONSORED BY VISITATION OF OUR LADY ADULT FAITH FORMATION MINISTRY  
CLASSES HELD AT VISITATION OF OUR LADY SCHOOL LIBRARY  
3520 AMES BLVD., MARRERO**

---

## *Ten Ways to be a Great Catholic Dad (Continued from Page 1)*

our sins, He forgets them. Well, we're human. We can't forget, but we can forgive. So, let's teach our children it's essential we not hold grudges. It's essential that we be compassionate.

### **4. Go to Confession**

Let's get God's forgiveness. In front of the children! And let's encourage them to follow us.

### **5. Play**

Our children are children, not miniature adults. They need a healthy dose of play in their lives. One of Dad's jobs is to give his kids what they need, including playing and having fun.

### **6. Pray**

We need to let our children see us pray. Often. In addition, we need to pray with them. We need to thank God before every meal. At the end of dinner, let's have one member of the family talk about what she or he is grateful for that day. We need to teach our children how to talk with those they love, including and especially God.

### **7. Be Humble**

Let's encourage our children to regularly question us. Let's give honest answers and when we don't know an answer say, "Let's look it up together."

### **8. Live Lives of Integrity**

Let's tell our children what our values are; and, then, let's live those values in front of our children. AND, in addition, let's live our values when our children are out of sight. THAT is integrity.

### **9. Celebrate**

Let's find out what our children's achievements are and, in some special way, celebrate them. Regularly.

### **10. Create Family Traditions**

Traditions become the linkage between generations. They are the legacies one generation gives to another. Traditions are an integral part of our Church; they are an enduring reason why our Church has lasted for 2,000 years. If we want to be good dads, we'll make certain our family also has traditions. If we don't know how, let's Google "Family Traditions."

Don't like my list? Create your own. But let's each of us commit to be living **our** list when Father's Day, 2010 rolls around.

*Father O'Keefe*

---

VISITATION  
of our Lady

3500 Ames Blvd.  
Marrero, LA 70072  
504-347-2203  
www.vol.org

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Marrero, LA  
Permit No. 27



### Prayer for Hurricane Season

O God, Master of this passing world, hear the humble voices of Your children. The Sea of Galilee obeyed Your order and returned to its former quietude; You are still the Master of land and sea. We live in the shadow of a danger over which we have no control. The Gulf, like a provoked and angry giant, can awake from its seeming lethargy, overstep its conventional boundaries, invade our land and spread chaos and disaster. During this hurricane season, we turn to You, O loving Father. Spare us from past tragedies whose memories are still so vivid and

whose wounds seem to refuse to heal with the passing of time. O Virgin, Star of the Sea, Our Beloved Mother, we ask you to plead with your Son in our behalf, so that spared from the calamities common to this area and animated with a true spirit of gratitude, we will walk in the footsteps of your Divine Son to reach the heavenly Jerusalem where a stormless eternity awaits us. **Amen.**

*Originally dedicated to the victims of Hurricane Audrey in 1957. - Fr. Al Volpe, Cameron Parish, LA*

### Prayer for Protection against Storms and Hurricanes

Our Father in Heaven, through the intercession of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, spare us during this Hurricane Season from all harm. Protect us and our homes from all disasters of nature. Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to help us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Prayer to Avert Storms and Hurricanes

Father, all the elements of nature obey Your command. Calm the storms and hurricanes that threaten us and turn our fear of Your power into praise of Your goodness. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**