

# CATHOLIC PROFESSIONAL and BUSINESS CLUB OF MODESTO

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF STOCKTON

January 2013

**Don't forget to join us on February 12 when our speaker will be Vera Lord.**

Mass 6:30 at St Stanislaus Church, 7th & J St. Meeting at the Doubletree, 9th and K.  
Networking 7:00 Breakfast and speaker 7:15. Reservations: online at cpbc-  
Modesto.org, chearst@pacbell.net, gerbele2@yahoo.com, Cathy Hearst (209 )  
968-8086

## A word from our President

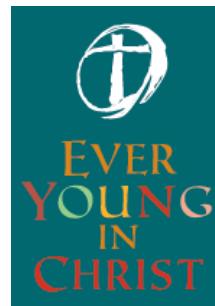
We hope everyone is having a blessed New Year.

January is the “Walk for Life West Coast” whose mission is to change the perceptions of a society that thinks abortion is the answer. As Catholics we need to become a vocal and visual message that we stand for life. Many parishes sent bus loads of parishioners, January 26, 2013, to peaceably protest abortion in San Francisco. Our February speaker will piggy-back on this most important message.

As we continue into the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of our speaking year, we have yet another dynamic speaker coming on Tuesday, February 12, 2013. Vera Lord will be coming in from Florida. Her speaking ministry, Alpha Omega Life, is working to tell the world the devastation of abortion and its after-effects, (which the public rarely hears about). Vera’s talk will enlighten all of us about this “choice” that is before so many people.

We suggest you invite a friend and/or co-worker to this most interesting speaker. Vera has been the keynote speaker at 8 State conventions, and featured workshop speaker at 10 National conferences. In addition she has been a featured speaker and Harvard, Boston University, Boston College, Wellesley, MIT, Holy Cross, Johns Hopkins, among many others.

## **Parish and School News from around the city and county**



Central Catholic High School will administer the placement test on Saturday, February 9, from 11-2 p.m. for all public school students who are interested in attending CCHS next fall. Please call Ms. Tybor at 524-9611 to register for the test. Lunch will be provided for the students.

The Central Catholic High School students will host their 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Blood Drive on Wednesday, February 6, from 8:00-2:00 p.m., at 200 S. Carpenter Road in Modesto. The goal is to collect 130 donations of blood. Make your appointment and save a life. Call Mrs. Kari Paris at 524-9611 or email [-paris@cchsca.org](mailto:-paris@cchsca.org)

What plans have you made for Lent? There are several parish missions, reconciliations services throughout the diocese.

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### **From our spiritual director, Father Sam**

#### Falling in love with Jesus

The popularity of romance novels, movies with romantic-comedic themes, and the secular recognition of the 14<sup>th</sup> of February as a day dreaded by those who are involuntary single reminds us that people desire to be in love or “fall in love;” they want to “feel” love. When considering the notion of falling in love with God, or feeling God’s love, we should be careful not to falsify or limit our understanding of what is love.

First off, each of us is made for and called to an intimate union with God. We should deeply desire to “be in love” with Him. We should desire to feel Him and long for the warmth and peace of His presence in our lives at every moment. However, unlike how some may see the fickleness of romantic love, we should not view falling in love with God as a rare occurrence or as only happening to a select few, only to the saints for example. The phrase “fall in love” may contribute to this misunderstanding and may not be the best way of describing the love we experience in our relationship with Christ. The action of falling, as in “falling in love,” implies an accidental meeting, a pleasant happenstance. However, in our encounter with God, God has carefully planned every detail and has been longing to love each one of us for all eternity. This is the reason we are created and redeemed in the first place. The love of God has much more to do with a decision, first on God’s part to love us and then on our part in deciding to respond to His gracious offer to love Him in return, than any arbitrary, irrational occurrence. Every day we can renew our decision to respond to God’s love for us by earnestly striving to please Him in all things and to follow His will in our lives.

In his first encyclical, *Deus Caritas Est* (“God is Love”), Pope Benedict XVI begins by explaining the different words used in history to describe various manifestations of love. The Pope writes, “That love between man and woman which is neither planned nor willed, but somehow imposes itself upon human beings, was called *eros* by the ancient Greeks” (No. 3). Considered only in this way, love could be seen as a rare experience. Cupid’s arrows only hitting their mark indiscriminately and that falling in love occurs simply by chance. If this were the case, then love could not be a free and rational choice. Love is then irrational and beyond human reason. The Pope goes on to propose by using a different Greek word, *agape*, for love rather than *eros*, the New Testament writers corrected this misunderstanding and affirmed that the highest form of love is so much more than a human emotion or state of

mind. In this way, love's true beauty could shine through more clearly and the meaning of love was necessarily purified of the perversions associated with using the word *eros*, which in its misuse limited love to simply an induced "state of ecstasy" or an irrational "divine madness."

The expanded and fuller understanding of love as shown in our Catholic tradition reveals to us that love is not a chance happening, a one-off occurrence, but is a conscious, rational choice that is to be made with a person's whole self. Love goes beyond partial fulfillment of the human person or the satisfaction of only the needs of the body including a person's emotional well being. By not reducing love to a feeling or emotional state, we can experience and understand more fully who God is because God is Love. We have a choice and are free to accept His offer to love Him by willing sacrificing ourselves for Him and following Him despite how we feel in the given moment.

When our desire to be in love is directed to its proper end, which is God, the source of all true love, and is allowed to be purified by His grace, it becomes life-giving and fulfilling. In comparing the previously distorted view of human love with the true Christian view of what God's plan for love is truly, the Pope writes, "By contrast with an indeterminate, 'searching' love, this word expresses the experience of a love which involves a real discovery of the other, moving beyond the selfish character that prevailed earlier. Love now becomes concern and care for the other. No longer is it self-seeking, a sinking in the intoxication of happiness; instead it seeks the good of the beloved: it becomes renunciation and it is ready, and even willing, for sacrifice" (no. 6). With this said, it does not mean human emotions do not play a role in our experience of love of God. Nevertheless, love is not just about emotions, or how we feel about God.

To gain a further understanding of love of God and neighbor, we can also consider how the word love was translated from the Greek, *agape*, into Latin by the word *caritas* which could be translated as having great affection or a "dearness" for the other. We are so dear to God, and He should be dear to us. Dearness means we are doing everything we can to please Him.

Intimately and essentially tied to our love of God, we are made for love of neighbor. Thus, we are to have genuine affection, "dearness," for each of God's children no matter who they are or what they have done or have failed to do. Caritas, as applied to love of others, means that we should be concerned with the well being and true happiness of others. However, in today's world, this obvious fact, is not as readily acknowledged as one would think. There are many who seem to say, and even vigorously promote, that love of others actually means the exact opposite – to take less interest in the well being of others. For many, love of the other is severely restricted, even perverted, to the point that it means not to be concerned for the whole good of the other. The love of the others has been reduced to simply staying out of other peoples' lives. Considering the promotion of issues such as abortion and gay marriage, the acceptance of such intrinsically evil actions is based largely on the argument that each person should be "free" to do what they want with their own bodies and we must not interfere, or, in other words, we should not be concerned even if they are harming themselves. However, genuine Love is concerned about the whole person, psyche, body, and soul. This means particular behaviors that damage the good of the whole person, the integrity of body and soul, need to be avoided. On the other hand, those behaviors which are good, just, life-giving, nurturing, selfless, etc. should be promoted and encouraged. Real love of our neighbor demands us to be authentically concerned for the good of the other, but, at the same time, not to be oppressive of the other. The love to which we are called and for which we are made is a love which does deeply care about each person, each person should be "dear" to us, just as they are dear to God.

With the help of the Blessed Mother's intercession, we pray for a true understanding of what love is and be given the strength to live out authentic love of God and neighbor in our daily lives. By God's grace, and our relationship with Christ, may our hearts and the hearts of all burn with a true love of God and one another.

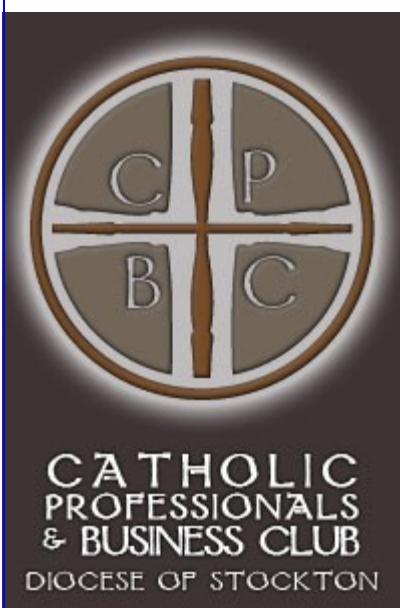
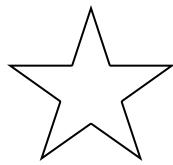
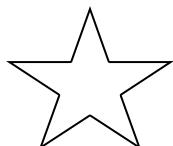
In Christ,

Fr. Samuel West  
Chaplain of the Catholic Professional and Business Club  
Modesto, CA.



Did you come to our January meeting? If not, you missed a wonderful experience. We saw the Sean Bloomfield and Immaculee Ilibagiza film "If only we had listened" about the appearances of Mary in Kibeho, Rwanda, and the Rwandan genocide and recovery. We heard of his life changing experience at Medjugorje. We also heard about his new film project "The Triumph" which sounds like something not to be missed

Sean is shown here talking with Cathy Pietanza.



#### *Mission Statement*

"As Catholic professional business men and women, we are called to live our Christian ethics not only on Sunday, but throughout our daily lives at home and at work."

Our goal in the Catholic Professional and Business Club, an unincorporated association (CP&BC), shall be to gather to share with others who seek a more ethical business environment.

Each of us shall strive to achieve a co-mingling of our ethical and professional obligations, in demonstration of the fact that ethics and business need not be mutually exclusive terms.

## **Executive**

**Board** *The CPBC Executive Board meets the fourth Wednesday of every month, at First Cal, 3224 McHenry Ave. Plans are developed for future meetings. Guests are welcome at the 7 a.m. session. Contact George Erbele, gerbele2@yahoo.com if interested in serving on the board*