

CATHOLIC PROFESSIONAL and BUSINESS CLUB OF MODESTO

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September 2013

A word from our President

Members and Friends of the Modesto Catholic Professional and Business Club,

We are excited to begin our new year at the **Old Mill Café, 600 9th St.!** The Old Mill Café gives us flexibility at each meeting to select our own breakfast menu. Members can select from an egg, pancake or oatmeal breakfast. When you arrive, pick up the color-coded card for your breakfast choice and place it the table. Servers will bring the breakfast selection to you. Parking is readily available in the parking lot and on the street.

We also have a terrific speaker for September. **Michael Nader** will speak on Catholic Work Ethic. A Notre Dame graduate, he is an attorney for E & J Gallo Winery, specializing in Employment Law. Michael has given presentations to a variety of groups, including students of St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park. He recently appeared on the Catholic Business Hour radio show on EWTN's nationwide radio network.

I would like to welcome **Richard Navarro** to the Board. He joins Carolyn Sanny, Cathy Hearst, Dorothy Bengston, Fr. Sam West, George Erbele, John Pesta, Monica Ramos, and Peggy O'Donnell. We are in need of an additional 2 board members. Meetings are once a month on the 4th Tuesday of the month at Catholic Charities in downtown Modesto.



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Mass: 6:30 at St Stanislaus Church, 7th & J St.;

Networking 7 am

Breakfast and Speaker 7:15 AM at the Old Mill Café, 600 9th St. in downtown Modesto.

See you on September 10th!
Cathy Pietanza

From our spiritual director, Father Sam

Recently, I received as a gift a book from a priest friend of mine titled "***The Fulfillment of all Desire***" by Ralph Martin. To better understand a soul's journey to union with God, the author explores the personal experiences and teachings of the Doctors of the Church including, St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Lisieux, and St. Francis de Sales. Each of these saints has a different way to imagine the soul's journey toward union with God. For example, St. Teresa of Avila uses the image of an "interior castle," which represents a person's soul, as the place for the encounter with God. As the person advances through the different "rooms" or "mansions" of the castle, each considered as a stage on the journey having its own challenges and characteristics, the soul gets closer to the final room at the center of the castle in which she has a mystical union with God. In spite of their differences, each of the saints' approaches could be divided into the three major classical stages of the soul's journey to God, which are *the purgative way*, *the illuminative way*, and *the unitive way*. For the next few newsletters, I would like to briefly comment on these stages of the soul's journey to its fulfillment, union with God.

In the first stage, or *the purgative way*, we make the decision to seek out union with God. Desire for union with God is a necessary prerequisite, and we must freely choose to take the journey. But, before we begin, we must be open to the fact that union with God is truly the fulfillment of all of our desires, and union is what we really, really want in the depth of our hearts. This may sound unnecessary because, of course, who does not desire to be with God? But, as silly as it sounds, we may have the desire for union with God in our minds, but our actions and attitudes do not match this intention. So, if we are not really motivated to do whatever it takes to reach our goal of union with God because we may be comfortable with "where we are at" in our spiritual lives, then we pray for the desire to undertake this journey with all the desperation of a drowning person grasping for a life-preserver. With that said, I do not think we actually begin the journey

with the 100% conviction, absolutely to the core of our being of the fact that God alone can fulfill our desires, but we are open to allow God, or wanting our Lord, to lead us to the point where there is no doubt in us (heart or mind) that God, and union with Him, is truly the fulfillment of all our desire. After all, the spiritual life is a continuous striving to enter through "the narrow gate" as our Lord Jesus exhorted us in a recent Sunday Gospel from Luke. For the successful completion of our journey, we need the Holy Spirit to guide us, and, as we move forward, we become more and more convinced of our desperate need of God. Also, as we begin, our motives may not be pure, most likely they are not. We may be undertaking this journey exclusively because of the anticipated and expected rewards we will receive as a result of union with God. However, during the journey itself, the Good Lord will purify us of any selfish and self-seeking motives. We then rightly desire union with God, because of who God is – He is ALL good and deserving of all my love.

The purgative way is the stage at which we all begin, and we allow God to purge those attitudes or circumstances that may hold us back from advancing in our union with God. We remove all possible obstacles to God's grace. Certainly, this means removing any sin - sinful situations and resolving to eliminate all SIN from our lives. All the Doctors of the Church, all the saints for that matter, understood the poison of sin and how really deadly sin, even venial sin, is to the progress in the spiritual life. So, as we enter the first stage we would want to identify all the sins in our lives and make

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

Parish Festivals:

St. Stanislaus—Sept. 27—29

Our Lady of Fatima—Oct. 4—6

Central Catholic High School, at 200 S. Carpenter Road, in Modesto, is offering a youth basketball camp every Saturday from September 28 until November 9, from 10:00 – 11:30 am. The camp is open to girls and boys ages 6-13. Ball handling and basketball fundamentals will be the focus on the camp and will include foot-work, dribbling, passing and shooting skill development. The cost for the camp is \$100 and will include a free camp T-shirt. To reserve a spot, e-mail Coach Wilson at Wilson@cchsca.org or cpadula@cchsca.org. Please contact C. Padula for additional information 524-9611.

every effort to eliminate them. This requires humility and certainly prayer begging for the grace to first recognize our own sins and the courage to face them. Perhaps, we need to take the time to do a very through examination of conscience. There are many good ones available on the Internet.

The *purgative way* is marked by two distinctive characteristics: first, there is the experience of great consolations and, secondly, the purification from habituated sin and the over-attraction to the pleasures of the senses. "Purity of Soul" is said to be the proper end of the purgative way. The forms of prayer suitable for this stage mainly focus on sin, its consequences, death, judgment, heaven, hell (the four last things). We begin to truly seek God's will more and more in our lives. There are 2 forms of the purifications that take place in the purgative way. First is *Active* and this is accomplished by mortifications, sacrifices, labors, and sufferings on the part of the person. The second is *Passive* accomplished by God as a means of purifying the person from attachment to sin. The key point in the beginning stages of the purgative way is that many times, though not always, a soul is given the joys of "sensible consolations" (they enjoy the 'feelings' associated with prayer, sacrifices, mass, etc.), and later these consolations are withdrawn by God and a passive purification begins. It is said that this is to teach the person to go deeper than simply 'feeling' the joys of prayer but to really and desperately desire a relationship with Christ based on greater depth. When a person is in the midst of ongoing stress and great fear they are usually in this stage.

As we renew commitment to our journey toward union with God, let us commend ourselves into the hands of our Blessed Mother asking for her intercession in this all-important and necessary undertaking. Bon Voyage! God bless you all.

Rev. Sam West

**Execu-
tive Board**

The CPBC Executive Board meets the fourth Tuesday of every month, at Catholic Charities, 12th & D. 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.

